

INTRO

- What was a personal highlight from the summer? What are you looking forward to in the Fall?

Any period of crisis, change or transition is disruptive and disorienting (e.g. new parents, job, bad diagnosis), but is also an opportunity for deep reflection and renewal. *A Persevering People* series is about exploring how to flourish in times of disruption and transition.

READ

Heb 10:19-25; Heb 11:6; Heb 4:16

Today we look at v22: A Persevering People **draw near** to God

REFLECT & RESPOND

The ongoing effects of the pandemic have left many people in a state of languishing—a sense of stagnation and decline. If you're not languishing, you probably know someone who is. On the other side of languishing is flourishing—living fully into our human and personal fullness.

The Bible presents a compelling vision of human flourishing and sober assessment of why it so often eludes us.

Qu: what aspects of your life do you think need to be good to qualify as flourishing?

Communion with God is a deep need for every human, a big part of our design as humans, and an unrivalled source of the human flourishing we seek. Drawing near to God is about cultivating this primary relationship in your life. So how?

1. Person — through Jesus

We draw near to God first and foremost through Jesus and his atoning work which removes all barriers and makes us right before God.

2. Posture — through the right approach

Heb 11:6, 4:16 help us frame the right heart posture that draws us nearer to God. For example:

- **Awe:** Do I apprehend the greatness of God's sovereignty and reality over all of life?
- **Desire:** Do I desire God because of his goodness, grace and mercy?
- **Confidence:** Do I trust Jesus' atoning work in such a way that brings me sincerely and confidently before God?

Qu: what are unhelpful ways we can approach God?

3. Practices — cultivating a rhythm of spiritual practices that keep us available to God and one another

Whilst Christ brings us to God, the quality of our relationship can grow or decline depending on the effort we put in (like any relationship). We cannot transform ourselves but through certain practices, we create the conditions in which God can move in and through our lives. 3 areas of practices we need to cultivate:

- **Personal** (solitude, scripture, prayer, sabbath)
 - **Communal** ("consider others, meet together, encourage one another" Heb 10:24))
 - **Missional** ("love and good works" Heb 10:25)
- (Note: we'll go deeper on communal and missional practices in future weeks)

Qu: in your personal life, what spiritual practice do you most want to grow in? What's your plan?

RESPOND & PRAY

- Pray over one another for sustained perseverance and flourishing despite the ongoing challenges