

HEAVEN – Our Dual Citizenship and Our True Home

Week 4: PRACTICING OUR PRAISE (REV 4)

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE FOCUS

¹ After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” ² At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. ³ And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, ⁶ and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: ⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. ⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” ⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹ “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Revelation 4:1-11 (ESV)

OVERVIEW OF WEEK 1

Day 1: The Place (Rev 4:1-3)

Day 2: The People (Rev 4:4-5)

Day 3: The Praise (Rev 4:7-8)

Day 4: The Pleasure (Rev 4:9-11)

Day 5: Be Encouraged (1 Thess. 4:18) and Rejoice (Phil 4:4)

VERSES TO MEMORIZE

() **Level 1: Rev 4:1-4**

() **Level 2: Rev 4:1-11**

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Practicing Our Praise

Revelation 4

As we grow as Christ followers we see the biblical reason and importance of our individual worship. For many of us who have been around the church for a long time we've had a very weak view of worship. We thought that worship was something done *for* us by the people in front of the church. But in the Bible we find that worship is active. Worship is something done *by* us as individual believers and as part of a believing community. Worship is our declaration of God's supreme worth. In genuine worship, God is the audience and we are the worshipers. Our goal is to exalt and honor God alone.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What elements make up a typical church worship service? In light of the opening paragraph, decide which elements are most effective in prompting genuine worship and which are least effective. Then discuss how we as believers can more actively participate in each part of the service.

PERSONAL REFLECTION. How do you best express your love and adoration to God—in music, prayer, giving, ministry or compassion to others?

Begin this study by expressing praise to God for the greatness of his character and the goodness of his blessings to you.

When the Bible allows us to look into heaven, we usually see a scene of worship. One of the most dramatic scenes is in Revelation 4. God is in the center of everything and the inhabitants of heaven give him joyful praise. *Re-read Revelation 4.*

1. Imagine yourself as a CNN reporter covering this scene. What images would you want the camera to capture?

What sounds would you want your audience to hear?

What emotions would you want people watching to experience?

2. Who is the one seated on the throne and what impresses you about him?

3. Who are the twenty-four elders and what is communicated by the way they are dressed (v. 4)?

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4. The “four living creatures” (vv. 6–8) are (apparently) angels who surround the throne of God. How are the four beings similar to each other and how are they different?

5. What aspects of God’s character do these living creatures exalt, and why do they focus on those specific qualities (v. 8)?

What aspects of God’s character do you tend to focus on when you worship him? Why?

6. Worship will be one of our main activities in heaven. Does that fact heighten your anticipation of heaven or diminish it? Explain your answer.

7. How would you respond to someone who thinks heaven will just be one, eternal, boring church service?

8. What attitudes toward God are expressed by the elders in verses 10–11?

In what specific ways can we express those same attitudes in our worship today?

9. What would this vision of worship in heaven have communicated to the persecuted Christians who first read it?

What does it say to us when we feel like our world is out of control?

Pray Revelation 4:11 as your own declaration of God’s worth.

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Living It Out

Revelation 5 continues the scene of worship in heaven but attention is focused on Jesus, the Lamb of God. Read through the chapter. Then compose your own expression of one of the “praise songs” (vv. 9–10, 12, 13). Your personal expression of adoration might be a poem, prayer, sketch or painting of this incredible scene, or it might be a song. Use it to give praise and honor to God and to his Son, Jesus Christ.
