

03.08.20

Revelation
Chapter 4
Revealing Things from Heaven's View
Observing from "The Throne"
vs. 3-6

Revelation 4:3-6: And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

The picture that we have in the passage is a picture that is stirring our emotions, and God is working in the hearts of His people; causing you to cry out, “Even so, Lord Jesus, come.” When you look at the pictures that are in the Book of Revelation, it is obviously very graphic and very poignant. But far more than that, it's glorious when you begin to understand what it's about. The point of the matter is of course, obviously, is that you and I have to go into this passage in the Spirit of Christ. In Revelation 19 it says that really, it is the testimony of Christ that really is that spirit of all prophecy, and if you don't have the eyes of Christ when going into the passage, you're not going to comprehend what He's talking about.

1 Corinthians 2 makes reference to this specifically, unless you have the Spirit of God, you don't understand the thoughts of God. So, though God were to paint a picture for you, you'd still go, “What?” Because the realization of what the picture stands for really can't be embraced by a heart that doesn't feel the same things as God. It is the purpose of the church to manifest that light, and we saw

at the very beginning of revelation that interesting picture of Christ among the candlesticks, holding the seven stars in His hand, ordaining the churches to be light in the world; that they might really clarify that which is true. Of course, there's a lot of falseness, a lot of false hope in the world. But there is the true One, and so the purpose of the church is to manifest and evidence that wonderful truth. When you go through the seven churches in Asia Minor, you have seven spirits that are a part of the churches, and those seven spirits in many ways really define the person of Jesus Christ. It is the opposite of what the world offers. For instance, the Church of Ephesus was dealing with the spirit, really, of God's love which is the opposite of a harsh world that we live in, oftentimes condescending and certainly very critical. God has called the church to be very unique and very different. We're actually to forgive people and we're to help restore them, and our desire is to see them have life, obviously not death. In fact, according to Philippians 2, we're to hold others in higher esteem than ourselves, and that really isn't like the world at all, but it really manifests the Spirit of Christ. It is the heart of Christ to love that

way. The same thing was true, and as you go down to seven churches, the fact that God has called like the Church of Smyrna to be fearless. To be fearful is not to really believe in something that can actually win. It is the fearfulness of man; it is the anxiety of men. Well, I mean, once again, it really sells. So, it's something that is always and ever on the TV and in the advertisements. It is what the world is about. Fear is what we live and breathe, but not the church. The church is fearless, and they believe that their life is in the hands of God, and it's the great testimony of the confidence. When you look in Acts 4 and you begin to see the saints being filled with the Spirit, the characteristic, every single time is that they spoke with all boldness. Every single time. They were filled the Spirit, and they spoke with all boldness. Which is telling us that there is no fear in Jesus Christ. Well, it's a wonderful truth, and of course obviously the Church of Smyrna was being referenced to that.

When He goes to the third church, He begins to talk about the necessity for sincerity. When you think about light, of course light is something that should be giving people

hope. It should be giving them joy. It should be giving them a sense of confidence and clarity and all the things that are really necessary to enjoy life and we are the light of the world. But how can you demonstrate light when you're insincere, when you're opportunistic, when an organization is taking advantage of people? The church can't do that. The church should be transparently sincere and genuine, and as Paul says, "We don't seek what is yours, we seek you." And you could just feel that "I think this guy really likes me." The churches should feel, "I don't think he's trying to get something from me. I think he actually just cares for me." Well, the church is supposed to convey that. That's why Christ came into the world. Christ didn't come into the world to take. For God so loved the world that He gave and everything that Christ did was because He loved us. So, you begin to see the genuineness and sincerity of the light and how it draws us to Him. Doesn't it?

Really, when you think about the example or the pictures of the light, it really is a pattern of God expressing. When you think of light, obviously the flame is a passion. Of

course, we read in John 2, "Zeal for His Father's house consumed Him," and He's zealous for His people. God is zealous to save. So, the flame is really the passion of God that begins to display. Not only that, but Psalm tells us in Psalm 119:105 that it's a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path, and what God has given us is not only demonstrating His passion, but it's demonstrating His purpose. He's actually lighting a path for us, a place to go, and He's demonstrating the fact that obviously He is providing a way for us and caring for us. So, what a wonderful picture this light is and whether it's the Church at Ephesus or the Church at Pergamum or the Church at Thyatira, God says, "I want you to be uncompromising because the light can't be compromising. If you're compromising, then where's the light? Where's the clarity? Isn't the purpose of light to demonstrate clarity? When somebody knows and it doesn't change, isn't that true clarity? So, when there's tolerance of evil, then the light becomes obscured, and when true is no longer true, but it's impure, then it no longer is bright, and when in fact there's a lack of confidence, then there's a lack of security and it cannot be light. Where there's a lack of

trusting, obviously, and there's self-sufficiency, how can that be faith? So, all of these things He begins to reveal to us are really the seven Spirits of Christ that say there's something real; there's something genuine; there's something clear that I can embrace and it calls people. Unfortunately, as we see within the seven churches of Asia Minor, the light of the church is often obscured and distorted, and I would say by the influence and the pressures of the world that come into it. So, people go, "What light?" as they walk into a church. "Where's the light? I didn't even see anything." And oftentimes it's darker in churches than it is out in the world. But Scripture is conveying that to us, and it's also reminding us that man can mess up anything. When you go all the way back to Genesis. I mean, we have a perfect garden. We have a perfect world, and man sits back, and he goes, "Ok. Let me study this." And then he just hears a little bit of a voice in the background. He goes, "Ok. So, God's trying to deprive me of stuff." Ok. How did you come up with that conclusion? How could you twist and distort the love of God's creative act for you to a point of God's trying to deprive me of something? It's an

impossible situation, and yet man can do that, and he can take the law of God and perceive it as something legalistic and oppressive and hurtful, but the whole purpose of the law of God is to save, to rescue, to point you in the right direction, to give you security and to give you boundaries so that you'll be safe. The Jews saw it literally as a wall that was built around you, not to hem you in, but to protect you from the evils, and yet man sees the law as something nefarious and even malevolent in their lives, as something destructive to them. Only man could just twist and distort things that way. In every case, what we understand is that God has made things good. He's made things pure. He's made things right, but man has distorted and twisted them. In fact, Paul reminds us that man even twisted distort the gospel. So that he speaks specifically in Romans and he says, "Ok. So, you're thinking that grace is a license to do bad." He says, "Where does someone come up with these things?" "Good. I'm free from all my sin. Now, I can sin more." There's nothing that makes sense about that, but it just shows how bad theology can come from the mind and the heart of man, and Peter makes reference specifically to this, that the unstable and

the untaught distort the Scriptures, and oftentimes the Scriptures are distorted and untaught.

Revelation is telling us that there is an absolute truth, and that absolute truth is Christ, and it forever reigns. It has never changed. God is immutable; the same yesterday, today and forever. He never changes. So that the changing is here, but the picture that we're going to be looking at, specifically in Revelation 4 is the fact that, but in heaven, it never changes. It has always been, and the purpose of God and the plan of God has never in any way been obscured. It is the glory of God that we begin to see radiating, and God is really demonstrating this is what is, and this is what will be, and there will be no change. It has not changed God's purpose. God's not sitting in heaven, going, "Ok. We're going to have to really rework this one." God from the beginning has orchestrated this, and it's this text that Scripture is wanting us to understand that by.

So, as we come to Revelation 4 and we see the wonderful picture, as we looked at last week, of the door in heaven opening. Our door is closing to Him, His door is opening to

us, and it's His goodness to us. Of course, many see within the text the Rapture. I won't go into that because it doesn't talk about the Rapture within the text, but it is an interesting picture of which God is going to take us up, and we look forward to that time in which He does that. The main point of the passage though is to reveal the necessity, first of all, of John to be in the Spirit, to understand what's going on. Let me just say to all of you, you're going to need to be in the Spirit to understand this with me. That is to say that you need to have the Spirit of Christ within you. Now, once again, if you're confused, in many respects, the seven spirits that are revealed in the churches really gives you insight. I mean, you can go to Isaiah 11 and see the seven spirits of God, of wisdom, and insight and things like this, but if you look at these seven spirits that are emphasized with the seven churches, you begin to understand that if I come in this with the Spirit of God, more specifically the Spirit of God's son, that is loving, fearless, sincere, uncompromising, true, confident, trusting, that I'm going to see clearly what God has in store for me. It is seen through things through the eyes of Christ.

So, when we look at Scripture, it's saying, "Ok, you just read something. Stick Jesus in there and now define it." And once you do that, then the passage becomes lifesaving rather than ominous or fearful or stuff because "Oh, that's God saving me. So, now I've got to rethink this picture." Because we all come to Scripture with a preconceived thought based on our own life or the things that have happened to us. So, the infiltration of the world comes and then we open up the Bible and we go, "Ok, so that doesn't look good. I mean, you look at 4 creatures with a bunch of eyes, if you've been watching scary movies, you know that's going to go right into the text. But if you begin to see it through the perception of Christ, everything changes.

So, we're going to pick up in verse 3, and we're picking up, almost conveying what was conveyed in verse 2, and that is the immutability, the consistency, the eternal state of affairs in the heavens. Once again, the wonderful thing to me about the passage is that as He takes us to the throne, we realize that its setting.

The way it's actually described in verse 2,

(Revelation 4:2) “Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven...”

Now, of course, immediately our thoughts go, “Ok. So, a throne is standing; it’s not sitting.” But the word there is making reference to the fact that it that it hasn't moved.

The fact that the New Testament was written in old Greek, it was just a sovereign hand of God, because there are so many words as well as the depth of those words that are understood better than any other language. I remember an individual making a statement that it was God's sovereignty that had the word of God in the Greek in the New Testament. It was also the sovereignty of God that had Rome in charge of the time making roads for the gospel to go out. So, it was God really preparing for that message to go out in many ways.

But what is in this particular word, “standing,” and it's familiar because we've oftentimes talked about it, if you were a different group, I probably wouldn't take for granted, but it has in it the perfect tense. Now, once again, to me, the wonderful definition of perfect tense is that which really describes the picture that He's giving

here, and that is the perfect tense is a completed action with the resulting state of being. In other words, it's God saying, "Done, always been, but will have a lasting effect." So, when he says the throne sitting or standing within the passage, he's saying it's immovable. It's always been. It's this effect that will come about because God has so ordained that what you're about to see is what has always been. It's not God coming up with a new plan. It's the throne has never moved. It remains the same.

So, the consistency of it is made reference to again in verse 3,

(Revelation 4:3) "And He who was sitting..."

More specifically, occupying this throne that never moves. In other words, the decisions that are being made haven't changed. God is always reigning in righteousness. Once again, churches can be obscured and distorted. So, people say, "Well, has God changed His mind?" No. God didn't change His mind. The church did. They're off. But Christ is the same, and that throne and that truth is never changing.

So, he says this,

(Revelation 4:3) “And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.”

Now, you read that and almost immediately, you go, “Ok, jewels, great, next.” But listen to the Spirit of God because if it's being recorded, if in fact all Scripture is inspired by God, and if it is profitable for correction, for training in truth and righteousness, and if it is promising to make us complete, adequate for every good work, then obviously, there's a point to it, but more specifically, we're at the throne. So, God is wanting to convey to you this marvelous picture of His passion and His purpose and His provision for you. In every case, He's going to give these pictures because pictures will stir the hearts. That's why you see dogs looking like they're ready to die on the camera, so that you'll give money. But the pictures stir the hearts, and God is stirring the hearts, and He's wanting you to feel something. Now the question is, what does He want me to feel? Well, first of all, we have to define what He's talking about. Once again, obviously,

someone is occupying the throne. His appearance is describing something. Here again, don't get hung up on the stone. Get hung up on what the stone is portraying. If you're just thinking about the stones, then you're going to lose it. What the stone jasper is portraying is multi colors. So, the particular stone that he's making reference to without going into a lot of detail with you, the point of the stone is that it has many colors. It's multicolored. Now, jasper is multicolored. If you look at sardius, that's flesh colored. So, there's something that He's wanting to convey to us.

There's a great passage, and if you just take a moment, turn with me to 1 Peter 4.

He says this,

(1 Peter 4:7) “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

(1 Peter 4:8) Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

(1 Peter 4:9) Be hospitable to one another without complaint.

(1 Peter 4:10) As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Literally, that word "manifold" is "multicolored". Now, the wonderful picture is, just like light, when you put it in a prism, breaks into many different colors, and that God has called His church to display the multi-faceted glory of God. There are so many wonderful things about God. So, you realize the very difference that God has placed in the people of the church and different ones demonstrate God's lovingkindness in serving. Different ones represent His loving kindness in teaching. You fall in love with God almost all over again, and you go, "I never saw that side of Him. I never saw that beauty" and each color has its own beauty. It's very distinctive. But every one is Him, and the multicolors of His beauty is the multicolor of His grace. It is His favor upon us so that God blesses us in so many ways. So, it's a picture of God's wonderful grace upon us and we're going to see it directly tied with the rainbow

over the throne. So, God has great things in store. Who is it that sits on this throne? The One who desires to give you good and glorious and wonderful things beyond your comprehension; things that go beyond just one grace, into manifold grace. It is the grace of Jesus Christ, and aren't you glad that He's the One sitting on the throne? The fact that the next one is in a flesh color is telling us that He identifies with us. Can you imagine somebody on the throne that didn't identify with us, that didn't care about us? But He was tempted at all points like us, yet without sin. As Hebrew says, we have a great high priest that's been through these things so that He can sympathize with our weaknesses. That's the One I want sitting on the throne. One that cares for me and knows me better. But the fact that these are stones is saying they're immovable. He never changes. It was always God's plan to identify with us. It was always God's plan to give us manifold grace. It was not an afterthought. It has reigned eternally in heaven. What a great and encouraging picture that is. The fact is that there's a rainbow around the throne. Actually one of the reasons why "iris" is oftentimes given as a picture of God is that

actually the word “iris” is the word “rainbow” in the text, but it's making reference to the promises of God; that He is promising good through the storms, that grace is going to reign, but that the storms are necessary for us to appreciate, to enjoy Him forevermore. So, the storms are really signified as a glorious thing in the heavens.

More specifically, if you look within the passage, (Revelation 4:3) “around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.”

If you've ever been at a place where there was a tornado brewing, it's a magnificent picture because the sky just starts turning emerald green. It's just an amazing, amazing picture, and the beauty of it is almost incomparable. If you've ever been to pure water, you see the emerald waters. But it's a wonderful picture of cleansing, isn't it? But it's a cleansing that, just is alluring. It's just wonderful to look at something so powerful, something so majestic. There's power around the throne. It is a power to cleanse. It is a power to give good. It is the power that sits on the throne.

There's a great passage in the Old Testament that to me parallels directly with this description, and if you turn there with me, it's found in Psalm 18. I love the way that the Bible just seems to complement itself. Don't you? I mean, it's just a wonderful thing.

(Psalm 18:1) “... “I love You, O LORD, my strength.””

It's a great picture to start off with, right?

(Psalm 18:2) “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,

My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge;

My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

(Psalm 18:3) I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,

And I am saved from my enemies.

(Psalm 18:4) The cords of death encompassed me,

And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me.

(Psalm 18:5) The cords of Sheol surrounded me;

The snares of death confronted me.

(Psalm 18:6) In my distress I called upon the LORD,

And cried to my God for help;

He heard my voice out of His temple,
And my cry for help before Him came into His ears.

(Psalm 18:7) Then the earth shook and quaked;
And the foundations of the mountains were trembling
And were shaken, because He was angry.

(Psalm 18:8) Smoke went up out of His nostrils,
And fire from His mouth devoured;
Coals were kindled by it.

(Psalm 18:9) He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With thick darkness under His feet.”

Feel the clouds?

(Psalm 18:10) “He rode upon a cherub and flew;
And He sped upon the wings of the wind.

(Psalm 18:11) He made darkness His hiding place, His
canopy around Him,
Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.”

The wonderful thing to me, and I've often made comment about this, everything that we see on Earth, Hebrews clarifies to us, the things on the earth are the shadows. So, He's giving us a picture on the earth of the glories in

the heavens. How glorious it must be. I mean, if you've seen the ominous clouds and that emerald green and lightning shooting forth? How wonderful it is, how fearful it is. But can you imagine seeing the real thing? We've seen rainbows. Can you imagine seeing the real one? We've seen trees. Could you imagine seeing the real one? We've tasted water. Can you imagine tasting real water? How wonderful it's going to be. So, the picture goes,

“...Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.

(Psalm 18:12) From the brightness before Him passed His thick clouds,
Hailstones and coals of fire.

(Psalm 18:13) The LORD also thundered in the heavens...”

Have you ever seen thunder, lightning shooting bolts? Think of God. It should remind you of His throne. You go, “Wait a minute. Why is God so angry? Why is He upset?”

(Psalm 18:14) “He sent out His arrows, and scattered them,
And lightning flashes in abundance, and routed them.

(Psalm 18:15) Then the channels of water appeared,
And the foundations of the world were laid bare
At Your rebuke, O LORD,
At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.”

“God's angry.” No, no, no. He's saving. Remember why He's angry in the text. “The cords of death encompass me. I cry to the Lord, ‘Help.’” He's angry that somebody's coming after me. He's going to rescue me. So, the picture of the throne is a picture of Him rescuing by His power and His Majesty and His might, and who could argue with Him? Have you ever seen anybody argue with a tornado?

(Psalm 18:16) “He sent from on high, He took me;
He drew me out of many waters.

(Psalm 18:17) He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty
for me.

(Psalm 18:18) They confronted me in the day of my
calamity,
But the LORD was my stay.

(Psalm 18:19) He brought me forth also into a broad place;

He rescued me, because He delighted in me.”

When you think of the throne of God, do you think of that? Everything about the pictures that He's going to show us is about our Savior that rescues us, that wants to give us good things, not just one good thing, manifold good things. He has things in store for us beyond what you could even ask or think, and that has never changed. That has always been on the throne.

Ephesians 1 says that He chose us before the foundation of the world. We think of things on the earth, and we say to ourselves, “Well, ok. God has patterned heaven after the things of earth.” No, the earth was patterned after heaven. All those things came first. So, though the church may distort, what reigns and will ever reign and will rule in the heavens, until it's brought to fruition, is this picture. That's the reason why we're taken up, that we might have the confidence in a world that is tumultuous and stirring, all kinds of problems, the wicked are like the tossing sea. They cannot be quiet. They're just always miserable and

upset and you feel anxious. He goes, “Ok, remember Who's on the throne?” You get that wonderful picture when you think of Matthew 8 or John 6 or Luke 8 as well, of Jesus on the sea with His disciples, and the sea starts stirring up. In fact, one of the texts makes reference to the wind as “an angry wind began to stir,” and if you've ever been on the sea with an angry win, you go “Ok. I know what angry wind is,” but everything begins to rock, and they cry out, and He goes, “Peace.” And He calms the waters instantly, and they go, “Who is this that has that authority?” The power of God reigning on the throne can still the waters in a moment. Everything. Well, that's the picture He's going to give us.

Watch this. If you look with me, as we begin to read in Chapter 4,

(Revelation 4:4) “Around the throne were twenty-four thrones...”

Once again, it should not be confusing to us why there are 24 thrones. If you go all the way back to the end of Revelation, it'll tell you that there are 12 Stones that are foundation stones, which are the apostles, and in that

final gate or final city, there are 12 gates in the city, which are the 12 tribes of Israel. Why are they gates? Because the Law was that which began to lead us to Christ.

Remember, the Law was a tutor to lead us to Christ. So, that's the beginning. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. That's the gate. So, they were the gates. Then there were the 12 who are the foundation stones that began to proclaim Jesus Christ alone, and that wonderful message of the 12 apostles. So, you have 24 that bear witness. Once again, you go in the Old Testament, it starts off that day always began with the evening. So, in creation there was evening and there was morning, one day. It always began with the evening. So, what begins in Scripture? Well, the Old Testament is really the evening in which God is revealing to us through the lesser lights. In fact, it was Daniel 12, that He says to His people, "You'll be like stars in the heavens; stars of light giving compass to people that are straying." Look at that star and you can guide your ship to the right place. So, in the Old Testament, the Law was like as it were stars in the night, lights in the night, but Jesus, when He comes, He says to His disciples, "But you are sons of the day." So, now we

have the other 12 hours. In fact, Jesus will actually say in John, “Are there not 12 hours in a day?” So, the fact is that the night was bearing witness by the patriarchs in the Old Testament; the day is being born witness by the disciples, and it says 24 elders.

The passage reads this way,

(Revelation 4:4) “Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments...”

That’s the Lord changing us. It’s that wonderful picture of Zechariah 3, He takes away our dirty garments and puts on the clean ones.

What do they have?

“... golden crowns on their heads.”

In almost every case, “crowns” in the New Testament specifically is the word “*stephanos*,” which is the crown of a victor. Remember, the one word that's repeated over and over again to the seven churches is “overcome,” and that's basically the name to win, to be victorious. So, God wants us to be victorious, right?

1 John 5 says, "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world." So, as we begin to put all of our trust in Him, we overcome. What causes us to overcome? Well, Him. I put my trust in Him. I can overcome anxiety. The peace of God could actually dwell in my heart, according to Philippians 4. According to James, I can overcome anger. I know that the anger of man does not accomplish the righteous of God. I can actually overcome anger, according to James. I can overcome the things of this world, the temptations of my life. I can overcome those through Christ. As I begin to put my trust in Him and do what He tells me to do, I find, hey, faith is the victory that overcomes the world. The day is coming, when we'll come before the throne and we'll declare to Him, "You have made it possible for me to win." If it were not for Christ being on the throne, nobody would be our advocate. But Hebrews reminds us that we have somebody that forever is making intercession for us, always. He forever reigns to make intercession for you. Is there anybody else you want on the throne? Is there anybody else that gives you a promise of a rainbow? Is there anybody else that gives you the promise of things that are just manifold grace? Is

there anybody else that would do that? Is there anybody else that would identify with you like the person on the throne? So, it's a great picture.

(Revelation 4:5) "Out from the throne come flashes of lightning..."

Which by the way, we're going to pick up this picture later on, in the Book of Revelation, in which God begins to move. You have the 7 seals, right? You have the 7 trumpets, and then the final, you have the seven bowls, right? Seven bowls were the seven bowls of wrath. Up to this point, God's revealing and unveiling the things of the earth and He's revealing and unveiling the things of the of the spirit world, but when you come to the end, He now begins to unveil His wrath. Why is God angry? Well, really, all you have to do is go back to Psalm 18. God's angry because somebody's hurting those He loves. So, the great tribulation is really a call of God, and Him standing up and the lightning coming down as God begins to move to rescue His people. Just like in Psalm 18. You have to understand the picture, because if Jesus isn't in the picture, you won't understand what He's talking about.

(Revelation 4:5) “Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder...”

All the way through Revelation, you hear this interjected, “Seven peals of thunder, seven peals of thunder, and then there were seven peals of thunder.” And you go, “What in the world is the seven peals of thunder?” And you finally come to Chapter 19, it's the saints praising God. If you've ever been in a multitude of people and they all just yelled at once, it sounds like thunder vibrating. Can you imagine in the heavens? The sound of thunder is the sounds of the saints giving praise to Him. It's a completed declaration, “Only You are worthy.” And how powerful is that? The declaration is a game changer.

(Revelation 4:5) “...peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

Well, that sure sounds familiar according to Revelation 1, doesn't it? Yeah, the seven Spirits, seven churches. So, once again, the point is, what has God orchestrated to be throughout all eternity? Are you an afterthought or did you and I have a position before the throne of God to be

abiding there forever? Seven lamps, seven churches. Where did we belong? It's always been. We belong with Him, next to Him, proclaiming the Spirit of God through our lives. When Scripture says, "I don't want you to be ignorant about what the will of the Lord is, but I want you to understand it's being filled with the Spirit," what do you think He means? That we've been called to live and to walk. Well, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, kindness, and all these things show the bravery and the fearlessness. It's the Spirit of God, and that's what really makes heaven, heaven, because you could have a garden of Eden, and if you have a snake in the grass, this just takes the fun out of it. But the wonderful thing about heaven is that we'll love each other and we'll want to be with each other, and the Spirit of God will begin to rule our hearts.

"... there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

(Revelation 4:6) and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal..."

It's like the song we sing, *"Around the glassy sea. Holy, holy, holy. All the saints of adore Thee."* Where? *"Around the glassy sea."* That there would be calm and that God in heaven would be able to subdue these old people, as stirred up as we are, tumultuous as our life is, but that Christ could say, "Peace." What sea are we looking at? Oh, that's not water. That's His people, and what a wonderful picture that only God can bring complete peace.

When you come towards Chapter 13 in Revelation, it talks about the people that you saw were the sea, that you saw the harlot sitting on, those are the people and the nations and all those things. But when He reigns, what is the sea like? It's no longer tumultuous. It's a wonderful and glorious thing. It's not something to be afraid of; it's something to be adored. It's in the midst of His great power and His great glory. I can just see the rainbow and the calm of people, and the fact that they're just enjoying being there. Can you think of a better picture than that? So, why do we want Him ruling? Because nobody else ruling would want those things for us. Jesus says to His

disciples, “Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me. I've got a place for you, and in that place, well, not only am I going to supply all your needs,” but He goes on at the very end, “I'm going to give you peace not like the world gives but something very different.” And you sit back, and you go, “I need to be with Him.” I mean, I only want Jesus to reign because He's the Only one really that's looking out for my best interest. He's the only One that really cares whether I have an abundance of grace and blessings or not. He's the only One that really wants me to have a hope for the future and a promise. He's the One. So, it's not a mistake that ultimately what everybody does is, they go, “You made my victory possible.” and they cast their crowns before Him. “You're the One that did this for me, and that's why we're proclaiming that.”

(Revelation 4:6) “...like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.”

Ezekiel 10 makes reference to this in a way. We're going to talk about it more, but because we're not going into

details, we won't get into it too deep. Suffice it to say that the emphasis of this last verse is full of eyes, and the point of the matter is that God sees everything, but there's more. Let me just give you a couple of verses to make reference to this and then let me put it within the context of what this whole thing is about.

In Proverbs it says,

(Proverbs 15:3) “The eyes of the LORD are in every place,
Watching the evil and the good.”

Hebrews 4:13 says,

“And there is no creature hidden from His sight...”

Jeremiah 16:17 says,

“For My eyes are on all their ways...”

But I really feel like it's 2 Chronicles that fits in this text.

So, 2 Chronicles 16:9 reads this way,

“For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro...”

Now, you have to understand, and we're going to see that these eyes are in wheels.

“For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...”

Now, the point of the passage is going to be this, and without giving you too much for next week, that these eyes are on these four living creatures. These four living creatures are going to be identified in specific ways. Each way, each identification is going to point to a kind of power, a kind of authority, a lion for instance, a majestic, ravaging authority, an eagle. Each one is going to be making reference to a kind of authority, a kind of power, perfect in their own making, but insufficient to grant us what the goal of this throne is. So, they were literally endowed with eyes to fill the void, which they could not convey. So, as we began to see the picture of these, they are literally searching, “Who is worthy? Who could fill these shoes? Who could give grace like this? Who could promise peace like this? Who would care like this? Who would want to identify like this? We don't know. We cannot. We must find someone who could.” So, the

declaration will ultimately lead us to Jesus. The pictures of heaven are revealing to us what is.

In fact, if you go back to Revelation 4, it says this,

(Revelation 4:4) “... “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.””

Now, once again, He's not simply saying in the future, the “must take place” is literally described as “what must be” or what must exist. More specifically, what has existed in the past must exist in the future. So, the picture begins to display to us what God has ordained before the foundation of the world, and only One can fill these shoes. So, what a wonderful truth that He gives us, and it makes me want to be there. It makes me want to see Him face to face. But remember, these are pictures not unlike the picture that was given where Jesus is standing, as it's already prepared us for the way to think. Jesus is standing among candlesticks. Are the churches candlesticks? No. So, I mean, you're not going to go to heaven and look at candlesticks. But that the pictures are conveying the emotion, the thought, the purpose of what God is doing,

and if you understand that, then you begin to brace everything He's showing you.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your word and how You reveal to us what must be. We look forward to being with You. I mean, there's Nobody that we know that would come with such zeal if we were in need. If we cried out for help, nobody would bend the heavens down; nobody would stir the winds. But You would come, and You would ride on the winds, and You would ride on the waves, and You would reach down and save us. You would snatch us up. You would give us hope for the future and put a rainbow over us. We would look at You and we would begin to see a manifold grace that we never thought possible. It would be You that would give us that hope of somebody that actually knew what we were going through; One in the flesh that would reign for us; immovable, immutable, never changing, ever for us.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. This is Jesus. This is the One that says, “Behold, I stand at the door knocking.” I don't know what's caused you to shut the door and maybe it is self-sufficiency, like the Church at Laodicea, “We’ve got this. I don't really need You.” Do you have any idea who you're closing the door to? Listen to His voice. Listen to His Spirit. “Come up here,” He says.