

Adore Christ's Loveliness

LHC: Message Twenty-One (980628AM)

Week 21: Adore Christ's Loveliness

(Revelation 4)

As the end of days approaches, you can find hope as you adore Christ's loveliness!

SUNDAY: Adoring the Loveliness of Jesus

*Your eyes will **see the King in His beauty**; they will see the land that is very far off.*

—Isaiah 33:17, emphasis added

Revelation is one of the few books that has a divinely inspired outline. Look at God's outline in 1:19: "*Write the things which you have seen [chapter 1], and the things which are [chapters 2–3], and the things which will take place after this [chapters 4–22]*" (emphasis added).

Revelation 4 marks the beginning of our Lord Jesus Christ's re-conquest of the cosmos. As this chapter opens, we step into the worship center of the universe. By faith, gaze at the One seated on the eternal throne. Exalt God in your spirit for the endless praise ascending around His throne. Be still and know who it is before whom you stand. Adore the *loveliness of Jesus* as the center and focus of your worship. See Christ in all His resplendent beauty, for He alone is worthy of all worship and all praise!

To worship Jesus is our duty and purpose for existence. In fact, the amount of time we spend worshipping Christ reveals His true "worthship" to us. True worship is to ascribe to Him the honor, praise, glory, and majesty of which He is worthy. This day, stand with me in the vestibule and peer through the door into the chambers of the Most High God!

Adoring the loveliness of Jesus fills the entire fourth chapter of Revelation in which we see the awesome Sovereign Lord on the throne (vv. 1–3, 5); the awesome scene around the throne (vv. 4, 6–7); and the awesome song before the throne (vv. 8–11).

That faithful and true disciple of love, the lone heir of the apostolic band, tried to voice with his pen that which, when Paul saw it, was inexpressible. Listen to the choirs of angels in numberless circles about the glassy sea and its throne as they speak His worthy praise. Listen to those eternal creatures chant, "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!*" (v. 8b). Let us see with John that band which no man could number and listen to their songs of adoration and praise. Do you know Him, Christ the Lord, who merits such praise? See Him now as the Lamb that was slain! For He is to be praised by we who owe Him our all!

My Prayer for You This Week: *Oh Father, we thank You for Your Word that transports us to that place of inexhaustible peace, that quiet haven, our eternal refuge! Yet, Lord, we are reminded of what is ahead in the book of the Revelation. How our hearts break when we think about the carnage, the bloodshed, the din of warfare, the dreadfulness of the pestilence, the scorching sun, the demonic hoards screeching from the pit causing havoc and horror upon the earth, and the malignant sores of oozing blackness that will destroy half the population of our planet. Nevertheless, we praise You that while all that is going on, above it all You are seated upon the throne. And before You rises endless adoration as You, the awesome Sovereign of the universe, sit upon the throne. Before You the breathtaking scene of thunder, lightning, and the colors of the rainbow mingle with the brilliantly awesome song of the redeemed before Your throne as the bowls of prayer are poured out as the voices of the saints rise before You. We long to join that day, that scene, that moment, that wonder. Sometimes it seems so far away . . . I pray that Your Spirit would minister to our hearts; help us to realize that we are only a heartbeat away from eternity, and we should get ready. Perhaps today You may gloriously come for Your saints, or call for us through the door of death. We don't know for sure if we are going to be alive tomorrow, no matter how many plans we have made, or how many commitments we have set up. We pray that this moment would be a time of preparation. Stir our hearts to worship; prepare our souls for that awesome scene before Your throne. Oh, worthy Lamb, Creator, and Redeemer, fill our hearts with praise and adoration that overflows for You! Open our eyes to behold wonderful things from Your Law! Thank You for letting us join in Your worship! In the precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen.*

MONDAY: The Awesome Sovereign on the Throne

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice . . . was like a trumpet . . . saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place **after this**.”

—Revelation 4:1, emphasis added

The phrase “*after these things*” is a key: by the inspiration of God’s Spirit, you are now looking into the future. All that God says is going to happen in chapters 4–22 of Revelation will come to pass exactly as predicted. Now step with me into the worship center of the universe to hear heaven rejoicing in our Lord Jesus Christ as He prepares to take back what Satan has usurped.

Worship of God and His loveliness is at His invitation. Because God is the One who invites us into His presence, worship is not to be taken lightly. Worship is not a *right*—it is a *privilege*. God will invite us to worship when we are going through cave times (like David); He will also invite us when we are enraptured with joy (perhaps by inspirational music). No matter where we are on the spectrum, God invites us to come into His presence. We can thus worship the Lord anywhere, anytime, and anyhow—just as the apostle John did while imprisoned on Patmos.

In his classic booklet, *My Heart—Christ’s Home*, Robert Boyd Munger compares being saved to Jesus taking over our “body house” by moving in and systematically

cleaning out each room. My favorite chapter is the “Dining Room” where Jesus sits every morning, noon, and night inviting us to come and eat with Him (Revelation 3:20). He wants us to dine with Him daily, and linger lovingly in His presence.¹

Worship of God must acknowledge that He is in charge: *Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne* (Revelation 4:2). Worship is Spirit-energized; it is a spiritual activity. It is not carnal, or something we can pump up. All true worship will focus on God, not on the human level. Worship lifts us out of the mundane and into God’s presence.

We cannot fully worship God, however, if we are trying to run our own lives. Anything that is out of control is not under His control. All the areas of our lives must be under God’s control: emotions, appetites, family, and finances. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man, sits on the throne, and He wants us to acknowledge that truth anywhere, anytime, and anyhow.

Worship of God is utterly beautiful: *He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald* (Revelation 4:3). Jasper is a clear gem, and sardius is red. Like Saturn, the throne of God is ringed: vertically, like a 360-degree arch, a rainbow surrounds God’s throne; horizontally, like a vast plain, the saints gather at the foot of God’s throne.

Do you want to see the emerald rainbow, the jasper, and the sardius Ancient of Days sitting on His throne? Then *pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord* (Hebrews 12:14; see also Matthew 5:8).

Worship of God unites the redeemed of all the ages at the feet of Jesus: *Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads* (Revelation 4:4). The number 24 suggests many biblical ideas. There were twenty-four courses of priests in the service of the tabernacle and temple (1 Chronicles 24:3–5). There were also two groups of twelve that represent God’s saints: the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of Christ’s church. God says, “I want an everlasting constant priesthood before My worship in the tabernacle.” The number twenty-four also speaks of: priests offering ceaseless worship; the gates and the foundation stones of heaven; the old and new people of God, the redeemed of all time; and the Old and New Testament saints merging together into the people of God who offer worship to Him.

Will you be among these worshiping saints? I hear a lot of people say they are going to heaven. In some locales, it seems that everyone is a Christian, or at least they think they are. So I ask them, “Have you made your reservations? Are you *‘registered in heaven?’*” (See Hebrews 12:23a.) Have you ever gone to a hotel and been told that your reservation had been lost, that no one knew you were coming, and that all the rooms were full? A lot of people who are in churches every Sunday are going to have that horrible experience when they face Jesus (Matthew 7:21–23). I therefore exhort you to *serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire* (Hebrews 12:28–29).

TUESDAY: The Awesome Scene around the Throne

*And from the throne proceeded **lightnings, thunderings, and voices.***

—Revelation 4:5, emphasis added

The writers of Scripture, seeking to describe the indescribable, have portrayed the presence of God as an unbelievable display of power filled with thunder and lightning, blinding light, and a sparkling, dazzling array of colors and rainbows. That very thought of Him should make you want to burst forth in worship exclaiming: *Give unto the LORD the glory due His name: Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness* (Psalm 29:2)!

Worship of God flows when we heed His holiness. In his visions, Ezekiel saw what Moses saw at Mount Sinai (Ezekiel 1–2); when God came down to give the law, thunder and lightning accompanied Him (Exodus 19:16; see also Hebrews 12:18–23). God’s voice was so powerful that it frightened them; they thought that they were going to disintegrate! God told them, “I am so holy and you are so unholy that if even your animals get near Me, kill them.” His theme of all the Old Testament legislation was thus: “Stay away from Me; you are unholy!”

Worship of God is unceasingly offered in His presence: *Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back* (Revelation 4:6). This verse hearkens back to Ezekiel and what he saw. The “*four living creatures*” seem to be a hybrid of the cherubim (living ones) of Ezekiel and the seraphim (burning ones) of Isaiah. In verse 7, below, they are the living-burning ones with four faces. Note that even though Scripture writers usually used terms that no human fully understands, they always did so with a view of magnifying the Lord.

Worship of God is to reflect Jesus’ attributes of kingship, servanthood, humanity, and deity: *The first living creature was like a lion* [royalty], *the second living creature like a calf* [servanthood], *the third living creature had a face like a man* [image of God], *and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle* [divinity] (Revelation 4:7). True worship will always reflect God’s attributes.

When God came down and expressed himself in an image, what did He look like? *Jesus Christ*. He looked like us because we are created in the image of God. In the Old Testament there are four prophecies of Christ called the Branch Prophecies. Jesus was prophesied to be: King—the Root of David (Isaiah 11:1); My Servant—denoted by the calf (Zechariah 3:8); my perfect man (Zechariah 6:12); and God—the eagle (Isaiah 4:2).

The New Testament begins with the four Gospels which have corresponding themes: Matthew—the Perfect King; Mark—the Perfect Servant; Luke—the Perfect Man; and John—the Divine One, God in human flesh.

These “*four living creatures*” in 4:7 seem to be connected with the whole revelation of God, and thus reflect His attributes. As a child of the King, what attributes of His life do you reflect?

WEDNESDAY: The Awesome Song Before the Throne

*The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: “**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty**, Who was and is and is to come!”*

—Revelation 4:8, emphasis added

Night and day “*the four living creatures*” focus solely on God’s holiness. In Hebrew, when something is repeated three times (as in “*Holy, holy, holy!*”) it indicates an utter and complete emphasis. “*Almighty*” is used nine times in Revelation; the only other time in the New Testament is in 2 Corinthians 6:17–18 where our utterly holy “*LORD God Almighty*” tells us that if we will separate ourselves from false religion and sinful practices, He promises: “*I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters.*” Oh, how getting to experience the full richness of being His child should prompt us to worship and adore our almighty God!

Worship of God is to be centered on Him. Isaiah told us that with two wings the living creatures covered their feet, with two they covered their face, and with two they flew. This speaks of total submission before God—utter humility seeking holiness and utmost service to God.

If you want to enjoy God’s presence by lifting your heart and voice in worship to Him, avoid anything that will detract from your relationship with Him and His holiness. Instead, expose yourself daily to His Word. For if you hunger and thirst for God and His righteousness, and separate yourself from the world, *He shall give you the desires of your heart* (Psalm 37:4b). If you do not want God’s presence on earth, however, you will not have it in eternity. The Lord will give you what you want.

Worship of God is to always honor and glorify Him: *Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, . . . the twenty-four elders fall down before Him . . . and worship Him . . . , and cast their crowns before the throne* (4:9–10). In verse 10, the twenty-four elders are saying to the Lord, “I don’t want the crowns; I am not in charge of my life any more. God, You are the One who deserves all that I have!”

A popular notion is that “*cast their crowns*” refers to giving our rewards to the Lord, but that is not all that the Apostle John meant. To understand that verse, we need to apply the first law of interpretation: *What did the author mean, and what did the primary audience understand it to mean?*

In the first century, the Roman Empire was approaching its zenith. When a kingdom was conquered, the Romans had triumphal processions that began with all the conquered citizens, soldiers, and the spoils; then the conquering general followed in his chariot. When the Roman general got to the center of the Forum before the emperor, the conquered king was brought in and, on his knees, would cast his crown at the feet of the general, who then put his hobnail-sandaled foot on the defeated king’s neck. Afterward, the king was executed.

It will be a far different scene for us when we appear before the Lord God Almighty. We won’t be marched in with chains; we will come before Him saying, “You don’t have to put Your chastening foot on our necks or drag us with chains. We willingly

and lovingly want to serve You!” Worship demands our total submission to God, which says to Him: *King of my life I crown Thee now—Thine shall the glory be; Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow, Lead me to Calvary.*

THURSDAY: Worship Fills Revelation

“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”

—Revelation 4:11, emphasis added

At this point in God’s plan for the ages, we will have already arrived in heaven by way of “the snatching away,” the Rapture. Thus, we will be part of the redeemed of all the ages who will worship in this celestial atmosphere around the throne.

Worship—to glorify God and enjoy Him forever—is our main purpose for existence. And true worship will always center totally on God, as is seen in the fourth stanza of this glorifying old hymn: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth, and sky, and sea; Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty! God in Three persons, blessed Trinity!*

Let us now look in chronological order at chapters 4–22 and see Christ, the Lamb, being exalted by the faithful angelic hosts and the redeemed saints. You see, worship is the background music of God’s kingdom. Songs of worship and triumph, which occur in eleven chapters of Revelation (4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, and 22), make up the background music to the story.

Chapter 4—Jesus is worthy of worship as the Creator. God, as Creator, is on the throne. Salvation starts with the acknowledgment of Jesus as Creator: *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him* (Colossians 1:16; see also Acts 14:15; 17:24).

Jesus is worthy of worship because *He is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

All the angelic hosts worship Him: *“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”* (Revelation 4:8). By this point we will get to join in the worship of heaven! At last, we will blend our voices with all of the angels and all of Creation and start our eternal, sacrificial service to our King.

The twenty-four elders worship Him: *“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created”* (Revelation 4:11; see also Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Corinthians 4:6).

Chapter 5—Jesus is worthy of worship as the Redeeming Savior. In this chapter, the focus turns to Jesus the Redeemer, God’s Son, who is before the throne. And the twenty-four elders worship Him: *“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth”* (Revelation 5:9–10; see also Titus 2:14).

In Revelation 5:13 the worship goes to Father and Son, which affirms Christ's deity: "*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing! . . . Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!*" (5:12, 14). The innumerable angelic hosts and all Creation worship Him, for He is our blessed Savior for all eternity!

Chapter 7—Jesus is worthy of worship as the Giver of Life. The innumerable multitude cries out in worship: "*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*" (Revelation 7:10). This is salvation from death's power. Eternal life liberates us to see that we are only temporarily in this body. All the angels and creatures fall and say, "*Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen*" (Revelation 7:12). He is worthy of all praise, for He is the giver of life (John 14:6; Acts 5:20)!

The heartbeat of God's Word is worship. In fact, Jesus defines believers as *worshippers* because the driving message of salvation is to worship the God of heaven. The Scriptures open in Genesis with God walking and talking with Adam and Eve, His worshipers. Exodus contains elaborate plans for a tent—its sole purpose being to bring worshipers to God. Psalms, the longest book at the heart of God's Word, is a manual on ways to worship the God of the universe. The rest of the Old Testament is a series of prophets lamenting the neglect and abandonment of worship by God's people who were to be a kingdom of worshipers (priests).

The New Testament opens with the introduction in the Gospels of the God of heaven, on earth, seeking creatures who would be willing to be worshipers. The book of Acts records what happens when average people from every walk of life, every strata of society, and every depth of sin, are bound together with a common passion for being lifelong worshipers. The Epistles are a manual on how to grow as worshipers. God's Word then closes in Revelation with all of God's worshipers home at last with their Creator—and joyfully worshipping Him!

Is your heart the heart of a worshiper? The word "worship" is full of meaning; it expresses the idea of "falling down, prostrating oneself, and kissing the feet or the hem of the garment of the one honored." We should ponder William Temple's wonderful definition of worship, which is "to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open up the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."²

FRIDAY: The Essence of True Worship

*For we . . . **worship God in the Spirit**, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

—Philippians 3:3, emphasis added

Worship that focuses on God and God alone is true spiritual worship—worship that is energized by the Spirit of God. How do we know when we are operating in the power of the Holy Spirit? Here is a test: where God's Spirit reigns, believers relate to the Word—this is Spirit-filled teaching; where God's Spirit reigns, believers relate to each other—this is Spirit-filled fellowship; where God's Spirit reigns, believers relate to the

Lord—this is Spirit-filled worship; where God’s Spirit reigns, believers relate to the world—this is Spirit-filled evangelism.³

God is the cause of all things, the fountain of all perfection, without parts or dimensions, for He is eternal. He is an *infinite* Spirit—*filling* the heavens and the earth—*pervading, governing, and upholding* all things!

God can be pleased only with that which resembles himself. Therefore, He must hate *sin* and *sinfulness*; He can delight only in those who are made partakers of His own divine nature. Since all creatures were made by Him, all owe Him obedience and reverence; but, to be acceptable to this infinite Spirit, the worship must be of a *spiritual* nature—springing from the *heart*, through the influence of the Holy Ghost. It must be in truth, not only in *sincerity*, but performed according to that divine *revelation* which He has given men of himself.

God is worshiped in *spirit* when, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, “believers bring all their affections, appetites, and desires to the throne of God; and God is worshiped in *truth*, when God’s Word guides every purpose and passion of a believer’s heart, and regulates every act of a believer’s worship.”⁴

The essence of worship is spiritual. In John 4, Jesus told the woman at the well, “The location of worship is no longer the main concern. The issue is not *where* you worship, but rather *whom* you worship and *how* you worship.” God is an immortal, invisible, and omnipresent Spirit. He cannot be seen or touched, and He cannot be represented by an idol or any kind of likeness. Yet, just as an earthly son looks like his dad, so Jesus came to give us the image of the invisible God. And so *Father* was Jesus’ favorite title for God.

The Gospels record about seventy times when Jesus spoke to God, and every time He called Him Father, except when He was on the cross bearing the judgment for man’s sin. Then He said, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” (Matthew 27:46).

Jesus spoke three times in John 4 of worshiping “*the Father*.” But only once does Jesus refer to God as “*our Father*,” and that was not a direct address to God. It was a sample prayer, as the content shows, for Jesus would not have asked for forgiveness (Matthew 6:9).

The woman at the well needed a lesson in what real worship was all about. She was looking for the proper method of worship, but saw only two options—the Samaritan method and the Jewish method. Look at how John MacArthur compares the differences between man’s worship and God’s:

Samaritan Worship	Jewish Worship	True Worship
Done in ignorance.	Done strictly.	Flows from God’s Spirit within us.
Samaritan spiritual knowledge was limited because they rejected all of the Old Testament except the Pentateuch.	Jews were full of knowledge and accepted all the books of the Old Testament.	When God’s Word is honored, and God’s Spirit is honored, God is pleased with the worship.

Warm heresy is enthusiastic worship without proper information.	Cold orthodoxy is dead worship with the right information.	Eager, excited, enthusiastic heartfelt devotion to the truth of God is worship that flows from the inside out.
They worshiped in spirit, but not in truth. That is why Jesus said, “You worship that which you do not know” (v. 22).	They worshiped in truth but lacked the spirit.	God seeks those who will worship in spirit and in truth.
Enthusiastic heresy is heat without light.	Barren orthodoxy is light without heat.	Worship is not an external activity for which an environment must be created.
Sincerity, enthusiasm, and aggressiveness are important, but they must be based on truth.	Truth is foundational, but if it doesn’t result in an eager, excited, enthusiastic heart, it is deficient.	It takes place on the inside, in the spirit. Psalm 45:1 is the expression of David’s worshiping heart: “My heart overflows with a good theme.”
Worship that occurred on Mount Gerazim was enthusiastic heresy.	Worship offered at Jerusalem was barren, lifeless orthodoxy.	The same two extremes are still with us today.
Gerazim had the spirit but not the truth.	Jerusalem had the truth but not the spirit.	Jesus rebuked both styles of worship when He said, “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24) ⁵

Spiritual worship is an evidence of salvation. One who is not saved cannot truly worship; One who is truly saved will be motivated by the indwelling Holy Spirit to worship. It is fair, then, to examine ourselves on the basis of our worship. If you have trouble worshiping, maybe you are not saved. If you get bored in church, or if you do not mind missing church altogether, it may be because the Holy Spirit is not in you prompting your heart. If He is there, you must yield your will to His power.

SATURDAY: Adoring Your King

*“The kingdoms of this world [will] become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and **He shall reign forever and ever!**”*

—Revelation 11:15, emphasis added

In Wednesday’s devotional, we saw that in the first century the Roman Empire held triumphal processions and victory ceremonies to honor conquering generals. The apostle Paul had that imagery in mind when he wrote: *God . . . always leads us in triumph in Christ* (2 Corinthians 2:14). Jesus is the conqueror of all kingdoms!

Chapter 11—Jesus is worthy of worship as the conquering warrior.
When it is announced in heaven that *“the kingdoms of this world have become the*

kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Revelation 11:15), the twenty-four elders “fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned” (11:17). At this point, Jesus is reigning over all!

Chapters 12, 15, 16, 17—Jesus is worthy of worship as the crusher of Satan. First John 3:8 tells us that the person who practices sin is *“of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning,”* but Jesus came to *“destroy the works of the devil.”* Because Satan was defeated by Christ at Calvary, we can have victory over our adversary’s attempts *“to steal, and to kill, and to destroy”* (John 10:10) us here, and in heaven we will never face his hatred again.

In Revelation 12:10–12, Satan and his angels are cast out of heaven—to nevermore have access to God: *“Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”* That is cause for great rejoicing and worship—forever and ever!

In Revelation 15:3–4, the victorious Tribulation warriors *sing the song of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? for You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.”* His saints sing songs of victory!

In chapters 16 and 17, the angels of the altar, the waters, and the earth all say, *“You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due. . . . These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called chosen, and faithful”* (16:5–6; 17:14).

Chapter 19—Jesus is worthy of worship as our just judge. Creation echoes the majesty of His worthy judgment and sacrifice! In Revelation 19:1–5, the redeemed multitude and the twenty-four elders proclaim: *“Allelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.”* Again they said, *“Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!”* And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, *“Amen! Alleluia!”* Then a voice came from the throne, saying, *“Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”*

They then fall before their just judge, to whom they submit. In unison, the multitude cries out to the Lord in exultation: *“Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb*

has come" (19:6–7). This is the shout of anticipation for unbroken union with the King of the universe!

Chapters 21–22—Jesus is worthy of worship for coming as the Bridegroom, our Emmanuel. All praise Emmanuel! God is now with us as He promised (Matthew 1:22). Look at what is in store for His children: *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away"* (21:3–4).

At the end of Revelation, the voice of Jesus is calling all who are thirsty to come to Him: *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."* And the Spirit and the bride say, *"Come!"* And let him who hears say, *"Come!"* And let him who thirsts come. *Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely* (22:16–17).

Make a choice to live in hope: To live in hope, it is vital that you understand three aspects of the nature of true worship: (1) true worship of God must be founded on God's Word (Colossians 3:15–17); (2) true worship of God must be clear of sin (Psalm 66:18); and (3) true worship of God must be Spirit-energized.

All true worship is a spiritual activity that centers on God, not on the human level. As you yield to Him, the Holy Spirit will energize you to adore Christ in all His loveliness—the One who is a multi-faceted diamond in eternal cascading glory. Jesus Christ is our eternal Creator, our Redeeming Savior, our giver of life, our conquering warrior, our crusher of Satan, our just judge, and our Bridegroom, Emmanuel.

A God-honoring way to conclude this wonderful week's visit to the worship center of the universe is to adore Christ's loveliness by worshipfully singing this beautiful song to your King!

O Worship the King

*O worship the King all glorious above,
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.*

*O tell of His might and sing of His grace,
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.*

*Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.*

*Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer and Friend. Amen.*

—Robert Grant (1779–1838)

¹ Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986.

² William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel, First Series*. (London: Macmillan and Company, 1940), p. 68.

³ R. Kent Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1996), p. 50.

⁴ Adam Clark, *Clarke's Commentary: John* (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999), electronic edition, in loc.

⁵ John MacArthur Jr., *The Ultimate Priority* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), electronic edition, in loc.