

"The Lord Almighty"

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning. Want to say, first of all, just thank you, especially to all the volunteers who have made it here to serve so that we can have the service, even as we're doing it mostly remotely.

There are a handful of people who come from the middle north of our country who are here because, you know, it honestly is not a terrible storm out there. But for your safety, we are glad that many of you are joining us online to serve with us this morning. So I just wanted to say thank you.

The other thing I wanted to say is that if you are a regular here at Trinity, you know we typically do communion on the first Sunday of the month. We are not going to observe communion today so that we can do it together next week.

So if you were expecting that, now you can adjust your expectations. Before Christmas, my family and I went to New York City to see the Rockettes, Christmas Spectacular.

[1 : 11] And if you have not ever seen it, it's quite a spectacular spectacular. It's quite a show. And but we were pleasantly surprised at how clearly the Christmas message was included in the program.

Um, and, uh, that was a blessing to us. Um, but you know, one of the things that as you're watching dancers dance, you know, and watching them particularly when they spin, you wonder, how is it that they don't get dizzy?

Right? You think of this, I think of the same thing of skaters or, or, um, gymnasts when they're up twirling and spinning and doing what they do. How is it that they don't lose their, so I did a little research this week, um, because I didn't want to make it up on, uh, and clear it.

Sure enough, there's a, uh, there's a name for that thing that we get, this disoriented dizziness that happens when we spin. It's called nystagmus.

Okay? I'm not familiar with this word, but, so I probably didn't say it right, but that's what it said, uh, but what I learned from Scientific American, uh, no less, is that, uh, this was a particular article about ballet dancers, but I think it, I saw that it's, it's for all these.

[2 : 26] They, one of the ways that they limit that is by finding a focal point, something to spot and to keep their head in. So you watch their heads and they, they turn to one spot again and again as they're spinning in the air so that they can keep their orientation and not lose and not fall into this dizzy, uh, dizziness and disorientation that most of us would.

Um, I thought of that as I was looking at the passage this week because I think what is true in our physical lives is often true in our spiritual lives as well. It's easy for us to get disoriented in life. Sometimes our lives are full of good things that are overwhelming and wonderful, a busy career, a full social life, family schedules, church service, whatever it is that fills your days.

But it's easy in the midst of that to get disoriented. Where am I going? What is this all about? Sometimes it's just hardship and suffering that make life disorienting.

A physical diagnosis that changes your life, the loss of a loved one, the betrayal, rejection, and a relationship can be so disorienting. Well, we are returning to our series in the book of Revelation because it is written to a church that is facing disorienting circumstances of its own.

[3 : 54] If you were here in the fall, we preach through chapters two and three of Revelation where these letters described and confronted some of the disorienting factors that the church faced.

One theologian summarized the challenge of the situation that the book of Revelation is written to by saying that they were facing the challenges of persecution from the outside, seduction to love the world, and deception of false teachers who were leading them astray.

That was from Vern Poitras. If you're interested, you can track him down. He has a great little book on the book of Revelation. But persecution, seduction, and deception are all things that disorient us in life when they happen.

And so we turn to the book of Revelation for help. And as we know, the book of Revelation is a series of visions, and what we're going to see today is God taking our focus to that point, that point where we can look in the midst of all these disorienting factors and not lose our way.

And so that's the plan this morning. Before we do that, we're going to spend a bunch of time today actually just thinking about how do we study Revelation. Because Revelation, we're going to be looking at Revelation 4.

[5 : 20] Revelation 4 and 5 are one picture. And Revelation 4 is kind of the setup in some ways. So all the action will come next week. So make sure you come back for that. But in the meantime, I want to spend a little bit of time reminding us and talking about the book of Revelation because it's different, right?

And we're going to see it when we read this passage in just a few minutes. It is a genre of literature called apocalyptic literature, right? And there are a number of key things about apocalyptic literature.

But one of them is its use of images. You know, we often use metaphors to say, well, it's like an elephant, you know, or something like that. And that's a comparison. Apocalyptic literature is these visions where everything is imaging.

And it's meant to communicate to us in a particular way. Particular images. And we're going to see them in this passage coming up.

We're going to see seals and scrolls and trumpets and bowls and beasts and horsemen and lots of numbers. And we're going to wonder, how do we read these things? What are they for? Well, the good news is that we don't have to make it up.

[6 : 30] It's not like our postmodern approach to art where whatever we see in the artwork is what is actually there. In fact, the authors are using often Old Testament imagery to communicate truth to us.

And so what we're going to do today is spend a bunch of time looking at Old Testament passages that I'm convinced John is referencing and that God is referencing in these images so that we can have some understanding of what it means.

And so that's a part of apocalyptic literature. The other thing that we want to be clear on in terms of the book of Revelation is that, and we'll see this at the very beginning of chapter 4, it says, After this I looked, and behold.

And some people have read the book of Revelation, and there's a series of after thises throughout the book. And they've said, well, this is a history. This is a chronology of the progress of time.

And I think that's a mistake. I think that the book of Revelation is better read as a series of visions. So the first one, after I heard the vision of these letters in chapters 2 and 3, then I had another vision that was chapters 4 and 5.

[7 : 47] And then there's going to be another vision in chapters 6 through 8. And what we'll see is that these things are not sequential in history that God's trying to say, first this is going to happen, and then this is going to happen, and then this is going to happen.

But instead of saying, here's an image. Look at this. See what this has to tell you about both the present and the future fulfillment of what's going to come. And then here's another vision.

And it's going to talk about probably the same things. And in fact, one of the things you see is that in the book of Revelation, there's a repetition of patterns of final judgment and the salvation of God's people.

And this is seen over and over again. And Kevin, if we can throw it up, we're going to see in the book of Revelation, the structure of the book, where we are, we're going to be in chapters 4 and 5 for the next two weeks.

But following that, there will be a vision of seven seals that will be judgment and then deliverance of God's people. And then seven trumpets in chapter 8 through 11.

[8 : 54] Seven judgment and then salvation. And we'll see this repeated over and over again until we get to the end of the book, where there's this climactic renewal of all things in verses 21 and 22 that is the final end that we do look forward to.

And so I want to make sure I say this clearly. It's not that the book of Revelation isn't looking forward and having a futuristic viewpoint, but it's doing so by saying there are things that we can know now and there are things in the future that will help us now get to this place.

And so this is apocalyptic literature. And this is what we're doing. So that's just a little bit. There's lots more. We may end up doing a Sunday school sometime in February on how to read apocalyptic literature and get some more time for interaction on that.

But wanted to just make sure we're orienting ourselves to this book properly and expecting it to say what it does say. So coming back to our passage this morning, Revelation 4 is coming on the heels of these letters in chapter 2 and 3 that are, again, it's a vision of these letters being sent addressing the church and its needs and its stresses and the disorienting factors that it's facing.

So let's go ahead and read together. Revelation chapter 4. And Revelation chapter 4 says this.

[10:36] After this. 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.

At once I was in the Spirit. And behold, a throne stood in heaven with one seated on the throne.

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. Around the throne were 24 thrones. And seated on the thrones were 24 elders clothed in white garments with golden crowns on their head.

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.

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.

[11:47] 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.

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.

And whenever the living creatures gave glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the 24 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, 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. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for this word.

[12:54] Thank you for the things that you have spoken to us, Lord, in it. And Lord, I ask for your help this morning as we take on this grand vision.

Lord, help us to see it clearly and by your spirit apply it to our hearts and our lives as you would.

Lord, help me to speak as I ought. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. So, what do we see here? There is a vision of a throne upon which God sits.

And we're going to look at what this vision tells us in some of its details. We're going to try to unpack some of the apocalyptic imagery and then we're going to spend a few minutes at the end reflecting on how this vision is helpful or useful for us today as we live our lives.

So, first, what does this vision show us about God? Now, if you were listening carefully, the word throne, I read it seven, eight, or nine times.

[13:59] It's actually fascinating. If you do a grammatical analysis, it's on the throne, around the throne, before the throne, to the throne. There's all these.

The throne is the centerpiece of chapter four. And, in fact, what we'll see is that this is why it's paired with chapter five because we'll see the fulfillment of what this throne room is going to look like when the lamb shows up next week.

But that's for next week. This week, we're just going to look at this throne and think about what is it about this vision of the throne room of God that has to say to us.

And, again, we need to remember that these images, this one's an easy one, right? Because we know who sits on thrones, right? Kings sit on thrones. But remember that even this is an image from the Old Testament.

Earlier in the day of read from Isaiah chapter six, verses one through three. And I'm going to try to just remind us of these passages as we go through.

[15:04] And they'll also, they should, hopefully will be on the screen. And, Amos, I don't know if we can make sure that we can. Yeah, great. All right. So, hopefully those of you who are at home can see these passages as well. Isaiah six says, In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.

And the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings and two. With two, He covered His face. With two, He covered His feet.

And with two, He flew. And one called to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is filled full of His glory. Holy. So, this image that John is picking up in the throne room is not new to us.

But we've seen it from the Old Testament. And this image came at a time when Israel was in chaos. And there was a question of, Will God's people persevere?

Will they persist? And this is the same thing that the church in the first century was facing. And this image of a throne reminds the people, God is on His throne.

[16:14] He is the one, ultimately, who rules over all these things. This is an image that's also been used throughout the Psalms. So, in Psalm 9, verses 7 through 9, it says, But the Lord sits enthroned forever.

He has established His throne for justice. And He judges the world with righteousness. And judges the peoples with uprightness. The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed.

A stronghold in times of trouble. And so, His sitting on this throne brings to mind the image of God with the power to judge and to bring justice and to help those who are needy.

One who provides safety for the oppressed. Psalm 47, verses 7 through 9. Ooh, I didn't get that right.

What is it? Wait, here we go. Psalm 47. Starting verse, well, okay, we'll start in verse 7.

[17:20] For God is the King of all earth. Sing praises with a psalm. Verse 8. God reigns over the nations. God sits on His holy throne. The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God. He is highly exalted. So, again, we see a picture of this throne being above even the nations.

Right? Right? And in the time of the psalmist, we don't know exactly what the nations were that were threatening Israel. But in the first century, we know certainly that the nation of Rome seemed to be the unstoppable power.

And yet, God rules over Rome as much as He rules over everything else. And so, this is the image of the throne that we see. And it's central to this.

So, I wanted to spend a few minutes on it. Now, I'm going to try to go through relatively quickly. A lot of these other images. So, there is one who sits on the throne. And it is God Himself.

[18:25] Right? And, again, this imagery. He starts mentioning stones. Jasper and carnelian. And if you try to go to a geologist today, whatever these stones are, probably different from what these words are used today.

They're just... We're trying to capture the image of these things. So, it reminds us of a vision that Ezekiel had in Ezekiel chapter 1.

Ezekiel chapter 1, verse 26. And above the expanse over their heads, there was the likeness of a throne, an appearance like sapphire. And seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance.

And upward from what had the appearance of His waist, I saw there were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire, enclosed all around.

And downward from what had the appearance of His waist, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around Him. And the appearance... Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around.

[19:39] Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. Lord. So, again, we have this quote from Ezekiel chapter 1 that is picturing this one on the throne.

And there's this picture of glory and jasper and carnelian and a bow that's around that's like the rainbow but also like an emerald.

You understand these... As you see these, these images are not one-to-one correspondences. We need to not read these like a scientific textbook. We need to read them like a painting, right? And if you look at each... It's like looking at a pointless painting. If you look at each brushstroke, it's not going to make sense. Each brushstroke doesn't have its own meaning. It only has meaning as it's a part of a whole. And so, these images are meant to be pictures that evoke certain ideas. And jasper and carnelian and emeralds are meant to picture glory and splendor, right?

[20 : 45] And human kings have always recognized this. They always have crowns and jewels. I've never been to it, but I hear that going to see the crown jewels in England in the Tower of London is amazing because they're these ornate and beautifully crafted things.

And they sparkle and they shine and they have their own luminescence and glory. And what these images do is remind us this is what God is like. God has this splendor that shines.

And the best image we can have is like the brightest jewels in the world. This is what God is like, but more so. And then around the throne, as we keep going, we see in verses 4 through 6, there is... We'll get to the people in a minute.

Around the throne, what comes from the throne? Lightning and thunder. And this will raise to mind, in those who know their Old Testament, God appearing to Moses on Mount Sinai in chapter 19 of Exodus.

It also reminds us of Psalm 97. Here, we'll read this one for you. Psalm 97. That says this.

[22 : 04] Psalm 97, 1 through 5. It says this. The Lord reigns. Let the earth rejoice. Let the many coastlands be glad. Clouds and thick darkness are all around him.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him and burns up all his adversaries all around. His lightnings light up the world.

The earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth. So again, these images are not taken out of nowhere.

I mean, we humanly all know that lightning and thunder are these big things that are beyond our control and power that are awesome. But specifically, these are Old Testament images that talk about God's complete power over the world.

And his power to come and rightly shape and judge the earth. And around them, around this throne as well, there are seven torches that are the seven spirits that when you go back to Revelation chapter 1, you see this is most likely talking about the spirit of God working in the churches, the seven churches.

[23 : 16] So the spirit of God who is the one who reveals God and is active in the world. And around this throne, there is a sea of crystal. Well, if you look actually carefully at Revelation, it says it is like a sea, if I remember correctly.

Let's just double check that. So verse 6. Before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal.

Right? So John himself is even reminding us, this is imagery. Was there really a sea? How big was it? We don't know. There are lots of—this is one of those images that's a little harder to nail down. There's some fascinating suggestions. Is this referring to the Red Sea that was a tempest that God controlled for the salvation of his people? Yeah, maybe. It seems that when you read the description of the temple, there was a pool in the outer court of the temple that was a part of its splendor?

Maybe. Maybe. But my best read on the sea of glass is that crystal is something that, particularly back in the first century during biblical times, was very, very difficult to create.

[24 : 38] Even just clear glass would have been so difficult to create during that time. And the image of a throne room that has a sea that is like glass points to a perfection and a splendor again that would be beyond the imagination of reality.

You wouldn't be able to see a throne room like this. And yet, this is the image that we see. And so, in this picture of a throne room, glory, majesty, bedazzling splendor.

This is the God that John wants us to see. Then he goes on, and he describes the attendance.

There are creatures in this throne room, around this throne.

There are two groups of them that we see. The first one is in verse 4, the 24 elders. And everyone says, okay, why 24? Well, there are lots of interesting things that we can do with numbers.

And some people have taken the numbers in Revelation and gone all sorts of crazy places. Let's think again, biblically, what is the number? Well, when we look in Revelation 21, when we see the fulfillment of the throne room of God in a recreated world, right?

[26 : 06] On the lintels, there is the names of the 12 apostles. And on the floor, there is the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. I might have gotten that reversed. You can look it up for yourself.

So you have two groups of people, one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, represented by 12s. And you have two 12s, and as we all know from math, 12 by 12 is 24. So God is representing the unity of his people. And these beings seem to be representing the unified people of God.

I don't think they are actually people, even though the word is elders. I think they're probably angelic beings that are representative. Again, one of the commentators says, the elders are angels who operate in a priestly capacity by presenting the prayers of the saints to God.

And we'll see this in chapter 5, verse 8. And by interpreting the heavenly visions to the people, this is in chapter 5, verse 5, connection to a Levitical priesthood idea.

[27 : 14] So, because this is the other number where 24 shows up in the Bible, is that there are groups of 24 that serve in the temple as priests.

And so one of the ideas that I think John is incorporating is that this throne room isn't just a kingly throne room, but it's also a temple throne room. There is a place of worship that's religious, not merely political and sovereign.

So, these 24 who have crowns that they lay down before the feet of the one who sits on the throne, we see that in verse 10, are there representing the fullness of people of God and being like priests in some ways to them.

And then, inside of...and then between them are four living creatures. This is what we see in verses 6 and following.

To understand this, we want to go back to Ezekiel chapter 1. Ezekiel 1, starting in verse 4. Ezekiel had a vision that went like this.

[28 : 26] And I looked...as I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud with brightness around it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were, gleaming metal.

And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance. They had a human likeness, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings.

Their legs were straight, and their soles of their feet were like the soles of a calf's foot. And they were...and they sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings, on their four sides, they had human hands, and the four had their faces and their wings thus.

Their wings touched one another. Each one of them went straight forward without turning as they went. As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face.

The four had the face of a lion on the right side. The four had the face of an ox on the left side. And the four had the face of an eagle. Such were the faces.

[29 : 28] Okay. What do we do with this? Again, what we do know is that John isn't just picking these four things, an ox, a lion, a human, and an eagle out of nowhere and thinking, I don't know, what should I pick?

He's picking an Old Testament imagery. And again, what does this mean? Well, there's some interesting conversations about that. One of the more compelling suggestions is that the lion is the strongest animal in the wild animal kingdom, right?

The ox is the strongest animal in the domesticated animal kingdom. And the eagle is the strongest animal in the flying avian kingdom. And the human being is unique in its place in creation.

And so, representing all of these. That's a bit of speculation in terms of why these creatures have these faces. But it could mean there's an idea of great strength and representing the breadth of created world in it.

What you also heard, if you were listening carefully, is that the image in Ezekiel isn't just like the image in Revelation chapter 4. There were parts of it that sounded more like the revision from Isaiah 6, where there were eyes and six wings instead of four.

[30 : 57] And you notice that in Revelation, each creature had one face, whereas in Ezekiel, there were one creature with four faces. So, again, let's relax in this and say, okay, what is this?

This is imagery. And the question is, what does the imagery point us to? Creatures who serve God. Creatures who, as we'll see further on in Revelation, will bring judgment, God's judgment, upon a rebellious world.

We'll see these four living creatures being instruments or used by God to bring judgment in Revelation 6 and Revelation 15. So, the image of strength would make sense in light of that, that they have that power to do it.

But the other thing is, because they are surrounded by eyes, it means that though they are elements of judgment and they see all, they are also a reminder that God sees everything. And imagine what that would mean to a first-century Christian who's facing persecution. God sees you. He knows you. He will act.

[32 : 16] He has these agents ready to do what he's going to do. So, this is the second part of the image. And then the final part that I know you're all waiting to get to is the songs that they sing in the throne room of heaven.

These beautiful songs. In verse 8, we see the four living creatures, as they bow down before the one who sits on the throne, they say, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come.

And the threefold is a repetition to underline and to support this idea that God is a holy God. Holiness meaning he is distinct.

He is apart from all other. He is not like the kings of this world. He is not like the rulers of this world. He is greater and more majestic and more glorious than any other.

He is the Lord God, the Almighty, who has all power and who was and who is and who is to come. He holds the past in his hand.

[33 : 25] He holds the present in his hand. He holds the future in his hand. There is no one like this God.

There is no power like the power that God has. There has never been a time when he does not reign. And as these four bow down and recognize God for who he is, we see in verse 9, the elders then bow down before God as well.

And they throw their crowns in signs of loyalty and fealty to him. And they say, 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. These are words that we throw around in church a lot.

Oh, worthy. Worthy are you, oh God. What does it mean? It means that the intrinsic or inherent value of something is of such inestimable worth that we recognize it and respond to it by saying, it's like seeing the crown jewels and saying, wow, that's really worth something.

[34 : 43] Or when we see people do amazing things, wow, that's really worth something. When we see God sitting on his throne, the 24 elders say, you are worthy of all glory and power and honor.

And why? In verse 11, for you created all things, and by you all things exist. Nothing in this world exists apart from God's work.

He is the force that created it all. He is not a blind watchmaker who's created something and just let it go. He is not a deist who has started it all and then is letting it run without being involved.

Nor is he a God who has retired from his duties and just said, no, I'm not interested anymore. He is the God who creates and sustains all things. And so the songs that these creatures in the heavenly throne sing is to make us focus again on the throne and to look at the one who sits on it.

It is God in his splendor and majesty and power and sovereignty and greatness. How is this vision helpful?

[36 : 00] Is it just too heavenly minded to be any earthly good? This is our fear, right? When we read the book of Revelation, how can this be helpful?

Well, let me see if I can say, I think it's helpful because it gives us an answer. It gives us a focal point, a place where we can look in the disorientation of our world and find help.

When we ask certain questions, when we face certain things. So the first question is this, am I abandoned in my suffering? This is a question we ask when we suffer the hurts of living in a fallen world.

And it's something that the first century church would have faced not only in that, but also because they were facing persecution. Likely this vision came after the persecutions of Nero and of Domitian in the 50s and 60s.

And so it's likely that the church knew what it was like to see friends killed for Christ, to see Christians treated terribly, to see the church be driven underground.

[37 : 19] And this passage gives us an answer, that God is on the throne. He sees it all. Nothing is beyond His gaze. And He's not unable. There's nothing outside of His power.

And He is active. And we will see, because this is the setup, we will see in the next chapter in verse 5 what He will do. Because He will call His Son to be the Lion of Judah and the Lamb who was slain, the one who will conquer by offering Himself up to die for us for our sins, to rescue us from sin, and to establish a kingdom that will outlast any earthly kingdom.

This throne room is a picture, is a part of a new creation that God is going to create one day. And by faith in Christ, as we're facing the worst of our suffering, we can look to this throne room and say, I know that this suffering will not end, or will not last forever.

It will end. There will be a day when this will be no longer. The second thing that this question answers is, who rules my life?

This will have two senses for us. The first one is familiar to the first one, when we feel out of control. Some of you feel out of control, that there are powers, whether it's your parents, or your school, or your work, or your addictions, or whatever it is.

[38 : 50] There are other forces in your life that feel like they control you, and you feel defeated, and unable to overcome, and helpless.

God, sitting on the throne, reminds us, there is no greater power in this world than Him. You may be out of control, but you are not out of God's control.

You may feel helpless, but He is not without power to help. I remember the day I got into a car accident, and it was kind of terrible, and I was disoriented and in shock.

I just started to go in the green light, and someone just came out of nowhere, and I didn't even see them until we were, you know, one lane over and 30 yards up. But my dad was sitting next to me in the car.

He's like, okay, are you okay? Okay, what do we need to do? He came alongside, and though I was completely out of control, he was able to say, I know what's going on.

[39 : 59] How much more does the God who sits on the throne of the universe, is He able to be that for us? So this is the first sense in which this is helpful when we feel out of control.

But the fact that He is the God who rules over our lives also has a second part that may be a bit more of a challenge to us. Because it's worth asking the question, do we see God as the one who rules our lives, or do we kind of rule our own lives, let Him rule just as much as we want Him to? I want to ask you this morning, have you allowed your desires or hopes to control you? Have you allowed other people to take control of your life and lead you in your life decisions?

It's easy to do this when you want a career to turn over the control of your life to those who can help you advance. It's easy when you long for a relationship that you don't have, or when you're in a relationship that you do have, to give power to that other person to control how you live.

Or maybe you've just taken control of your own life. I worked with crew for a while and they have this really helpful circle. There's some ways in which it's unhelpful, but here it's really helpful because it says your life is like a circle and in the middle there is a throne and the question that we all need to ask is who's sitting on it?

[41 : 38] Is it us or is it Christ? Do we let Him say this is what you should value, this is how you should live, this is what you should worship?

And if you're wondering whether that's true or not, here's a little test for you. Just look at how you spend your time and spend your money. And what's the thing that if God said, hmm, I want to change that, you would most want to say, no, no, no, no, no, you can't.

You can have the rest of it, but not that. Those are the places where God isn't sitting on the throne of your life yet. But this vision calls us to embrace God as sitting on the throne of our lives as a good God who will do good things for us as we submit ourselves to Him.

And the final question is similar to this. And the question of where should my worship go? Jesus tells the parable of a man who finds a field and in it there is a treasure.

And in the joy of finding this treasure, He goes and He sells everything else that He has so that He will get, by this field, so that He can, excuse me, so that He can get this treasure.

[43 : 08] He reorients His whole life about getting this one thing. And this is what the picture of the throne room shows us.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come. Worthy are you, O Lord our God, to receive all power and glory and honor.

This is worship, seeing that above any earthly good, God Himself is the one great, glorious good that we have in the world.

And His worth is beyond the value of all of His creation. And so, seeing the throne room reminds us to turn our hearts to worship Him.

and as we will see, we will worship Him who is not distant and far off and uncaring, but who has come and in the lion and the lamb has suffered and died for us and has risen again so that the risen King is our reigning King in our lives.

[44 : 25] And then we know what we should worship. worship. We should worship Him. So, this is my encouragement to you this week.

Read Revelation 4 and 5 a couple of times. Prepare for our service next week and remind yourself of the greatness of the God that we serve.

Let's pray. Lord, thank You for this passage and for this word. We pray that You will help us Lord, to understand these things and as we understand them, Lord, that we would Lord, have our hearts turned towards You in worship.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.