

Revelation 4 The Holy God

“Why won’t we be bored in heaven? Because it’s the one place where both impulses – to go beyond, to go home – are perfectly joined and totally satisfied. It’s the one place where we’re constantly discovering – where everything is always fresh and the possessing of a thing is as good as the pursuing of it – and yet where we are fully at home – where everything is as it ought to be and where we find, undiminished, that mysterious something we never found down here...And this lifelong melancholy that hangs on us, this wishing we were someone else and somewhere else vanishes. Our craving to go beyond is always and fully satisfied. Our yearning for home is once and for all fulfilled. Deep satisfaction and the delight of surprise meet and are forever joined together.”

Pastor Mark Buchanan, author of Things Unseen

As you read Revelation 4 you should notice that the worship in heaven is being led. This scene is not a random collection of heavenly people who just happen to be saying something similar. This is organized and deliberate.

What seems to provoke people in heaven to spontaneous, joyful worship is seeing God and the Lamb. Not only that, this worship tells a story. This is victorious, biblical, Christ-centered worship. The elders and the creatures are proclaiming the glory of God. They are simply describing what they see.

The phrase holy, holy, holy Lord God, the Almighty helps to explain the rest of the book. God is holy and He has to deal with sin. God is separated from people because of His holiness. He is totally unique and different than us. You cannot compare Him to anyone on earth because God is beyond all comparison.

Here are some characteristics of God’s holiness in contrast to people.

1) God is independently holy and you are not.

2) God is infinitely holy and you are not.

3) God is immutably holy.

The reason Rev 4 comes before Rev 5 is that it’s the holiness of God that makes sense of the sacrifice of Jesus. Rev 5 places Jesus as the centerpiece of worship in heaven as the Lamb who was slain. That only makes sense if you understand why He needed to die a sacrificial death. You have to understand why we need a sinless Savior to redeem us in order to understand and celebrate Jesus as the Lamb of God. Your understanding of this begins with the holiness of God.

This week, try praying this suggested prayer every day:

My Lord and my God, you are holy and I am not. As I consider your holiness, grant that I might commit to holy ways, think holy thoughts, live in holy obedience and reject evil with a holy attitude.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Have you ever thought of heaven as boring?
2. Have you ever thought of God as being happy? Joyful? Fun?
3. How do you respond to the idea of God as judge?
4. As a Christian, God has judged your sin in Christ and considers you to be holy. Read Colossians 1:2 and know that the words “holy” and “saint” are the same word in the original language.

Some translations say: “To the holy and faithful...”

While other translations say: “To the saints and faithful brothers...”

You can also read Colossians 1:22 and see how God views you right now.

Questions:

Since God views you as holy – How you should you live?

Since God views you as holy – How do you think HE feels about sin in your life?

Since God views you as holy – Are you willing to make personal holiness a pursuit in your life?