

Prayer:

We have been on earth in our study during this present church age, but we are set to go to heaven today as we enter into Revelation 4. Revelation 4 takes us into the future. Here we enter into the prophetic portion of the text in earnest.

The word “church” is found 19 times in chapters 1-3, but then it is distinctly missing in the book of Revelation until we get to the very last chapter and Christ’s final parting remarks in reference to the church as seen in Revelation 22:16. In chapters 2-3 over and over we see the same refrain in reference to the churches hearing but then in the middle of the Tribulation Period we have the same exhortation but not in reference to the churches.

Slide # 1

Revelation 3:22 (NKJV)

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ’ ”

Revelation 13:9 (NKJV)

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

Strangely, the 7-fold repeated formula of “***He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches***” is missing in Revelation 13, being replaced with simply, “***If anyone has an ear, let him hear.***” But that makes total sense if the church is no longer represented as being on earth. This is the logical deduction.

In chapters 6-18 (which deal with the Tribulation Period), nothing is said in reference to the churches because it simply doesn’t apply to the churches. The church is not on earth at this point. The church is not in the Tribulation Period. Thus, a major shift takes place between Revelation 3 and Revelation 4.

If we miss this divine division of the book we have lost the key to its understanding. – **Lehman Strauss**

Slide # 2

Revelation 1:19 – Inspired Outline

Revelation 1:19 (NKJV)

19 “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

- “have seen” – Past (Vision of Christ) – **Ch. 1**
- “which are” – Present (Church Age) – Ch. 2-3
- **“after this” – Future (Post-Church Age)** – Ch. 4-22
- - Scene in heaven – Ch. 4-5
- - Tribulation – Ch. 6-18
- - Second Coming – Ch. 19
- - Kingdom – Ch. 20
- - Eternal State – Ch. 21-22

The scene in Revelation 2-3 is in relation to the churches here on earth; the scene in Revelation 4-5 is in heaven, where the focal point is on God and what He is about to do in relation to judgment on the earth.

A major SHIFT takes place at the beginning of chapter 4. Suddenly, the emphasis on earth is largely about Israel and not at all about the church. From the opening of the seals until the marriage of the Bride – that is, from Revelation 6-18 the focus on earth is on the nation of Israel in particular, although the entire world is under the siege of God’s judgment.

The 144,000 who are sealed are from the 12 tribes of Israel (Rev. 7); The focus is the Jewish temple in Jerusalem in Revelation 11:1-2; the special two witnesses in Revelation 11 are Jewish; Jerusalem is the site of a great earth quake in Revelation 11:13; Israel is the woman who delivers the male child who was then caught up to God and His throne as seen in Rev. 12:1-5; it is the woman Israel who is targeted for special persecution from Satan as seen in Rev. 12:13; and so forth.

Revelation 4-5 presents the throne room of heaven, which is the command center of the universe. Here we have a double emphasis on God. In chapter 4, the emphasis is on God the Father as Creator; in chapter 5, the emphasis is on God the Son as Redeemer, and in both cases, the emphasis is on WORSHIP. God is to be worshiped as both creator and redeemer!

Want to go to heaven? What do you expect to see when you get to heaven?

Some have claimed to go to heaven and come back and merchandise it. They go on tours to talk about it (for a fee, of course). They write books and make movies. But in truth, they are all liars.

A few prophets had a glimpse of heaven, such as Isaiah (Isa. 6:5); Daniel (Dan. 7); and Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:26-28); but in each case, we merely have glimpses. Paul was taken to heaven, but on his return, he said he heard ***“inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”*** (2 Cor. 12:4). And of course, we would like to know why not – we would like to know more.

If you want to know what heaven is like before you actually get there – look at Revelation 4-5. John actually was taken there “in the Spirit” and did give us a report. Prophetically, the context is after the church age in preparation for the Tribulation Period. That is the setting. Revelation 4-5 presents the scene in heaven that we as believers can expect to see following the RAPTURE!

“We are in the realm of the unfamiliar. It is like being in a strange country where language, customs, and architecture are sufficiently like our own to be recognized, yet sufficiently exotic and strange to make us feel somewhat ill at ease.” – ***John Phillips***

Revelation 4:1–11 (NKJV)

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

Note the double emphasis in this verse on ***“After these things”*** at the beginning and then ***“after this”*** at the end. ***“After these things”*** – after what things? Well, after the church age things dealt with extensively in chapters 2 and 3. Everything from chapter 4:1 on deals with things that follow the church age. This corresponds with the inspired outline of Revelation 1:19 where John is told to write the things which he had seen (vision of Christ), the things which are (present church age) and the things which will take place after this (after the church age).

Suddenly, John saw a door standing open in heaven. And he heard a voice like a trumpet saying to him, ***“Come up here”***. Clearly, this was the voice of Christ as so described in Revelation 1:10.

Some Bible scholars believe that this symbolizes the rapture of the church of which John is representative. At the voice of Christ, the church will be summoned up to heaven as seen in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

The timing fits because the church is missing after chapter three; however, the emphasis here in Revelation 4:1 is simply on John being summoned to heaven so that he can be shown what must take place after this.

Slide # 3

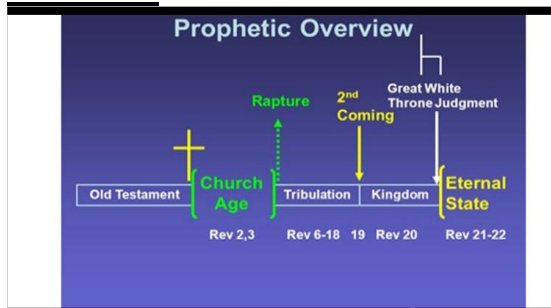
The words “come up here” indicate John’s personal transferral from earth to heaven. They do not specifically teach the Rapture of the church, although in the pretribulational understanding of prophecy the Rapture would occur at this point in the book. – **Charles Ryrie**

It was no coincidence that the first thing to happen after John described the seven churches was his conveyance into heaven.

– **Tim LaHaye**

So the answer is this text or Revelation 4:1 does not officially teach the rapture, but it fits here.

Slide # 4



Confusion in the interpretation of Revelation stems almost entirely from the failure to observe this divine outline [1:19]. The opening of chapter 4 with the phrase “after this” referring to the churches should make clear that from chapter 4 on, the Book of Revelation is dealing with future events. One of the important conclusions in prophecy is the concept that the church composed of the saved of the present age will be in heaven while the events of the Tribulation and of the end time take place. This is exactly what is described in Revelation 4-5. – **John Walvoord**

“A door in heaven is opened to enable the prophet to enter its portals and see what transpires in heaven, that he may understand what takes place on earth.” – **G.R. Beasley-Murray**

The scene is now in heaven, which gives us the KEY to understanding what is happening on earth!

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

John uses this terminology “in the Spirit” four times in the book of Revelation, and each time it refers to a visionary experience given to him by the Holy Spirit (cf. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10; also see Acts 10:10; 22:17-18). In this visionary experience, he was caught up to heaven, and there he saw a throne and one sitting on the throne. The word THRONE is a KEY word in this chapter, being found here 12 times in eleven verses. It is found 37 times in the entire book.

For this reason, the book of Revelation has been called “the throne book.” This One on the throne is thought to be God the Father because Christ takes the scroll from Him in 5:7, and the Spirit (in figurative language) is said to be before the throne in verse 5.

Footnote: God is omnipresent, but there is a focal point in heaven emphasized in relationship to His sovereign throne. Jesus emphasized God as the “heavenly Father” or “Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:48; 6:1, 9, 14, 26, 32, 33; 15:13; 16:17). In various place in the OT God is pictured as being on His sovereign throne as ruler over all (cf. 1 Kg. 22:19; 2 Chron. 18:18; Ps. 11:4; 47:8; 97:2; 103:19; Isa. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26-27). God’s throne represents the central command headquarters of the universe.

3 And 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.

Heaven is a gloriously colorful place. If you like bright/brilliant colors, you are going to like it. Note the emphasis on the word “**like**” here. It really is impossible to describe God adequately, and so he uses the word “**like**”.

He who sat on the throne had the appearance of a jasper and sardius stone. He does not describe Him in terms of shape but in terms of color – in terms of light. Psalm 104:2 says God is robed in light. 1 Timothy 6:16 says God “***dwells in unapproachable light***”. God’s appearance is defined in part by LIGHT.

Jasper is thought to be a clear translucent gem, perhaps comparable to a brilliant diamond. Revelation 21:11 says jasper is as clear as crystal. Sardius was a deep, fiery red or a blood-red ruby color. These stones were the first and last stones on the breastplate of the high priest (cf. Ex. 28:17-20).

And there was a rainbow all around the throne in appearance like an emerald, which is the color green.

Rainbow in the Bible emphasizes that even in judgment, God is merciful and faithful in keeping with His covenant promises (cf. Gen. 9:11-17; Hab. 3:2). The rainbow promise in Genesis 9 was in relation to every living creature.

This emphasis on God's relationship with the whole of creation comes out strongly in this chapter. The emphasis here is on Him being Creator-God.

Slide # 5



We really can't imagine how it looked, but certainly it was a flashing blaze of glorious color beyond comprehension.

4 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.

The big question is, who are these elders? There are 12 references to them as a group in the book of Revelation (cf. 4:4, 10; 5:5, 6, 8, 11, 14; 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4). There have been three main views put forth: 1) a special category of angels, 2) a representative group consisting of Israel's tribal leaders and apostolic church leaders; 3) Representative leaders of the Church.

View # 1: The least likely is that they are a category of angels. Angels are never referred to as "elders". Furthermore, angels never age, so it doesn't seem to fit. Angels are not said to receive an enthroned (ruling) position. And they are never said to receive a victor's crown, as emphasized here. The angels are clearly distinguished from these elders in 5:8-11, and 7:11.

So I would take it that either view 2 or view 3 is most likely correct.

View # 2: An argument for view number 2, which sees this as a combination of Israeli and Church leaders, comes from Rev. 21.

There the 12 pearly gates are inscribed with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel (cf. Num. 11:16), and on the 12 foundations of the wall are inscribed with the names of the 12 apostles of the Church. This combo of Old and New Testament leadership equals 24 (cf. Rev. 21:12, 14). So perhaps the 24 elders represent this combination.

It is further suggested that this is the heavenly court referenced in Daniel 7:9-10 (cf. Rev. 20:4).

View # 3: In favor of the 24 representing the Church only is the following: Elders in the Church are often shown to be representative of the Church (cf. 1 Pet. 5:4). Overcomers in the church are promised enthronement as joint rulers with Christ (cf. Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21); Overcomers in the church are promised arraignment in “white robes” (cf. Rev. 3:5, 18; 19:8). The word “crowns” is the Greek word (stephanoi) which refers to the victor's crown which is promised to Church Age overcomers (cf. Rev. 2:10; 3:11; also see 1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; Ja. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4).

Only saints of the church age are promised crowns as rewards.

– **Charles Feinburg**

The time reference in this vision follows right after the completion of the Church Age, prior to the conversion of Israel generally, and prior to the death of the Tribulation saints. This would argue for the Church alone being represented here by the 24 elders.

From the OT, we find that the number 24 is representative. There were thousands of priests in the OT, but there were 24 representative shifts (cf. 1 Chron. 24:7-19). The Church is said to be a priesthood in the NT (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6).

The combination of “white robes” and “crowns,” promised overcomers in the church age, which in context immediately follows the church age, strongly suggests that these elders represent the Church Age saints.

Slide # 6

Some would split the twenty-four elders into two groups of twelve, one representing the church and the other Israel. There is no compelling exegetical reason, however, for so dividing them. In all their appearances in Revelation, they appear as a unified group of twenty-four, never as two groups of twelve. – **John MacArthur**

The parallels between overcomers and these elders in terms of sitting on thrones (Rev. 3:21), clothed in white robes (3:5), and wearing crowns (2:10) are a strong argument that the 24 elders represent the glorified church in heaven prior to the start of the Tribulation Period in Revelation 6. In my view, it makes sense that the Church completed is thus represented as being in heaven immediately following the rapture.

5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

The lightnings, thunderings, and voices evidently portend coming judgment. They, in effect, are storm signals. A storm of judgment is coming in which God's awesome power will be displayed (cf. Ex. 9:23, 28; 19:16). Thunder is mentioned 8 times in Revelation (cf. 4:5; 6:1; 8:5; 11:19; 14:2; 16:18; 19:6). Consistently, it signals that something ominous is about to happen. God has prepared His throne for judgment (cf. Ps. 9:7; 77:18).

The seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven Spirits of God are thought to represent the seven-fold character of the Spirit (see Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 5:6; cf. Isa. 11:2; Zech. 4:10).

Fire is often associated with HOLINESS. The Holy Spirit is holy. His ministry is often associated with the holiness of purging fire. Compare when at Pentecost He came in conjunction with divided tongues as of fire that rested on all of them who were filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:23). Hebrews 12:29 says, "our God is a consuming fire." (cf. Deut. 4:24; Isaiah 33:14-17). Those who refuse the wooing of His call to repentance in the end will experience the purging fire of His judgment!

Here the Spirit is symbolized by blazing torches of fire, representing God's wrath and judgment ready to be poured out on the ungodly.

– *David Levy*

6 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.

Before the throne, there was a sea transparent as glass. This perhaps had a mirror-like effect reflecting the very glory of God and all the glorious colors involved. It was a glistening sea! What a sight!

Some suggest this signifies absolute calm, peace, and tranquility in contrast to a troubled world symbolized by a troubled sea (cf. Isa. 57:20).

And in the midst of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. Literally, these were “four living ones.”

There has been a lot of discussion as to their identity. Some think they are merely representative of the attributes of God since they are said to be “***in the midst of the throne.***” They further connect their attributes to the four gospels and attributes related to Christ. However, we find their function is really that of being the WORSHIP LEADERS of heaven as seen in verses 8-9. It doesn’t make sense that God is the worship leader of Himself. Rather, it makes sense that He is worshiped by others.

I believe these “living ones” represent the highest order of angels who are closest to the throne.

The description of these “four living creatures” in many ways parallels those defined as cherubim in Ezekiel 1 (1:5-25) and 10 (10:20-22), and also those defined as seraphim in Isaiah 6 (6:1-7). In fact, the cherubim and seraphim (lit. “burning ones”) may actually relate to the same classification of angels. Verse 7 describes them as the cherubim of Ezekiel, while verse 8 describes them as the seraphim of Isaiah 6.

Cherubim and Seraphim are consistently associated with the immediate presence of God. Satan, before his fall, was called “the anointed cherub who covers” (Ezek. 28:14). The cherubim are first mentioned in Genesis 3:24 in reference to guarding the entrance to the garden of Eden. Their likeness was embroidered on the veil of the tabernacle (Ex. 25:18; 26:1). Figures of the cherubim overshadowed the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 6:23-28). It was the cherubim who accompanied the Shekinah glory as it departed from the temple before the Babylonians destroyed it (cf. Ezek. 9:3; 10:4, 18-19; also see 43:1-5).

Slide # 7

Ezekiel 10:18–19 (NKJV)

18 Then the **glory of the LORD departed** from the threshold of the temple and stood over the **cherubim.**

19 And the **cherubim** lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD’s house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

These four living creatures were full of eyes in front and back. Nothing gets by them as they guard the throne of God. This signifies both their perception and protection role.

Four is the number of universality, denoting every direction. They are full of eyes, signifying they keep watch – probably in a guarding - protecting capacity. They guard and proclaim the HOLINESS of God.

7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.

This description is taken from Ezekiel 1:10 where the prophet essentially saw these same beings.

Slide # 8

Ezekiel 1:10 (NKJV)

10 As for the likeness of their faces, each had the **face of a man**; each of the four had the **face of a lion** on the right side, each of the four had the **face of an ox** on the left side, and each of the four had the **face of an eagle**.

The emphasis in Revelation 4 is on God as Creator and Him being worshiped as Creator. These high-ranking angels represent bringing worship to God on behalf of animate creation. The lion is representative of untamed animals; the calf (or ox) is representative of domestic animal life; the face of a man is representative of humanity; and the flying eagle is representative of creatures that fly (cf. Gen. 9:10).

Together, then, the four living beings picture all animal life from the perspectives of greatest nobility, strength, wisdom, and speed.

– Robert Thomas

God is first and foremost the Creator of all! The very existence of all depends on Him! For this, He is to be worshiped and praised! These angelic beings represent this most basic reality intimately before God!

These four “living creatures” relate to the four principal divisions of God’s created order on the earth. The climax of this scene in chapter four is to praise God in reference to His creation! And the context here may suggest that these living creatures have a special judicial role in some capacity.

Angels do have an important but largely unknown role related to the governing of the world (cf. Dan. 10)

Slide # 9

“A merging of these four aspects result in the following identification of the four living beings of the Apocalypse: they are of an exalted angelic order engaged in worship, who bear a special relationship to those angelic beings described in Ezekiel and Isaiah and whose special function in the context of the Apocalypse is the administering of divine justice in the realm of animate creation.” – **Robert Thomas**

8 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!”

The appearance of these “living creatures” parallels that of the seraphim in Isaiah 6.

Slide # 10

Isaiah 6:1–3 (NKJV)

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

2 Above it stood **seraphim; each one had six wings**: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

3 And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!”

With full perception (full of eyes around and within), they do not rest day or night, saying, “**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!**”

They are continuously praising God for His holiness without stopping. Holy means “separation”. It denotes God as totally unique in that there is none other like Him, and it denotes Him as the absolute standard of purity and moral perfection. Holy stated three times is stated in the superlative. The emphasis here is as strong as it can be made. Actually, in many manuscripts, the word holy is repeated 9 times instead of three, making it for an off-the-charts emphasis!

Lord (kurios) means “Master). God (theos) means deity. Almighty refers to His omnipotent power. It literally means “all ruler”. God RULES over all! This title “Almighty” is found nine times in the NT with eight of them being in the book of Revelation (cf. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:15; 21:22; and 2 Cor. 6:18). God has all power and apart from Him none would have any power. All power is dependent upon Him and He has all power as the Almighty!

He is thrice holy, He is Lord God Almighty, and He is the One “Who was and is and is to come!” This refers to His eternity. Not only is He all powerful, He is also eternal! This phrase “Who was and is and is to come” is reflective of God being “I AM”. He just is! He has always been (who was); He is (presently) and He is to come (meaning He will always be). He is forever. He is eternal.

These highest of angels are continually praising God for WHO He is.

Slide 11

Holy – (Set Apart – None like Him – Moral Perfection)
Lord – (Master over all)
God – (Supreme over all)
Almighty (All-powerful)
Who was and is and is to come (Eternal)

Footnote: This is the first of 14 doxologies in the book of Revelation. Not only is it the “throne book” it is a “praise book”.

Slide # 12

1. The Anthem of the Triune God – 4:8
2. The hymn of creation – 4:11
3. The new song of redemption – 5:9-10
4. The angels' Chorale – Rev. 5:12
5. The Crescendo of the universe – Rev. 5:13-14
6. The Martyr's Canticle – 6:10
7. The song of salvation – 7:10
8. The antiphonal amen – 7:12
9. The kingdom carol – 11:15
10. The Psalm of judgment – 11:17-18
11. The Shout of overcomers – 12:10-12
12. The song of Moses and the Lamb 15:3-4
13. The Hallelujah chorus – 19:1-4
14. The Symphony of the Marriage Feast – 19:6-7

Their six wings denote their supreme responsibility and privilege to constantly worship God. From Isaiah's vision, we learn that the seraphim (possibly the same beings as the cherubim) used their six wings in the following manner: "with two [they] covered [their faces], and with two [they] covered [their] feet, and "with two [they] flew" (Isa. 6:2). Four of their six wings related to worship; with two they covered their faces, since even the most exalted created beings cannot look on the unveiled glory of God without being consumed. They also used two wings to cover their feet, since they stood on holy ground. Worship is thus their privilege, calling, and permanent occupation. – **John MacArthur**

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,

The major activity of these living creatures is to worship God. They continually bless Him for His holiness and give Him glory, honor, and thanks.

To give God glory means to credit Him with all that is great and good. It is to recognize and appreciate God for Who He is and for what He does. It openly acknowledges God as God! To give God glory is to magnify Him, to exalt Him. It is to make much of Him above all others! It is to admire, value, and extol God's attributes and actions.

To give God honor is to VALUE Him above all else. It means to show Him supreme reverence and respect. It means to esteem Him supremely!

Giving thanks to God means expressing gratitude. It expresses appreciation for Who He is and what He does! It recognizes that all we are and all we have is because of Him.

Giving God glory, honor, and thanks is the stuff of true worship!

And then there is another acknowledgement that He lives forever and ever. God is eternal – eternal life. He is life!

Amazingly, conventional science claims that life originated from non-life. Talk about being unscientific. There is NO experimental evidence for this claim. It is simply a mythological claim entirely without merit!

What is irrefutable is that existing life has only been confirmed to arise from preexisting life. – **Dr. Michael J. Boyle with ICR**

The reality of life is self-evident! But where did it come from? Life must come from life, and the Bible shows us that this LIFE source is God. He is the One Who “***lives forever and ever.***” The eternity of God is something we simply cannot fathom! It is an undeniable reality, but unfathomable. God is to be worshiped for WHO He is as the eternal living One!

Really, the four living creatures are the WORSHIP LEADERS of heaven. Whenever they give glory, honor, and thanks to Him Who sits on the throne...

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

When the four living creatures lead in worship, the twenty-four elders join in. They fall down prostrate before Him who sits on the throne and worship.

Worship means “to bow down before” in the sense of acknowledging a superior! It means to acknowledge the superior worth of the One bowed before. The English word “worship” originally meant “worthship”. It acknowledges the surpassing WORTH of God as all-important and supreme!

Worship is the activity of heaven! Earth is the dress rehearsal!

Do you want to go to heaven? Why?
What do you want to do there?

So many claim to want go to heaven, but why? This is the place of true worshipers! This is the place of worship. If one is not a true worshiper now why would they ever want to go to heaven? And in truth, only true worshipers will go to heaven! All true believers are true worshipers!

The first act of true worship a person ever does is SAVING FAITH!

In John 4 in an evangelistic context Jesus told the Samaritan woman that God is seeking for true worshipers. This is what God wants. To be a true believer is to be a true worshiper! In saving faith we recognize Jesus as our Lord and Savior. That is an act of worship! In doing so one enters into the realm of being a true worshiper!

“Jesus was born of a virgin, suffered under Pontius Pilate, died on the cross, and rose from the grave to make worshippers out of rebels!”

– **A.W. Tozer**

Slide # 13

Philippians 3:3 (NKJV)

3 For we are the circumcision [the true covenant people of God], who **worship God in the Spirit**, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

To often Christians tend to as Gordon Dahl said...

Slide # 14



So I ask again: Why do you want to go to heaven? If you answer to worship, then I would ask you, “Does your life prove it in the here and now? For many, 'worship' is not a priority either privately or corporately and yet they want to claim to be Christian. Really?

True believers are true worshipers!

And yet, again, the emphasis on the elders worship is on “Him who lives forever and ever”. This is now the third time in 3 verses that the eternity of God is emphasized.

Slide # 15

v. 8 “Who was and is and is to come!”

v. 9 “who lives forever and ever”

v. 10 “worship Him who lives forever and ever”

We are dealing with the ETERNAL GOD here, and the whole of heaven knows it and worships Him accordingly!

The 24 elders express their worship in two ways. They fall down before Him, and then they cast their crowns before the throne as if to credit God for all their rewards. Crowns in the NT represent rewards! Again, this argues for the church being in view as she has already been judged and rewarded.

Casting their crowns before the throne worshipfully acknowledges that it's all grace! It's all God's doing! He deserves all the glory! All that we have accomplished redounds back to the glory of God. God deserves ALL the glory! This is supreme worship -giving back to God their all!

11 “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.”

In worship, the 24 elders say, ***“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.”***

The Lord is worthy! He deserves this! People often say to other people, ***“Oh, you deserve this.”*** Actually, we don't! We deserve nothing but hell. It's all grace that gives us anything else. But God truly is deserving. He truly is WORTHY of receiving glory, honor, and power.

In the Greek glory, honor, and power all have their own individual definite article, so that very literally it reads, “the glory, and the honor, and the power.”

He is worthy “the glory”- that is, of supreme unparalleled exaltation and all the credit! He is worthy of “the honor”, that is unparalleled recognition, respect, and reverence. He is worthy of “the power”, that is, in being recognized as the all-powerful God that He is.

And then they take it back to creation – where it all began. They ascribe the creation of all things to Him who sits on the throne. He is Creator-God. He created all things. It all came from Him. He is the uncaused cause of all!

Who can just “will” things into existence? Only God!

By God's own will (determination) they exist and were created! If you want an explanation for the source of everything you need look no further than the first verse in the Bible – Genesis 1:1.

Slide # 16

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Acknowledging the God of the Bible as Creator is the first step toward putting your trust in God's Son as Savior! The great Hall of Faith chapter (Heb. 11) starts out by saying...

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Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV)

3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

And then he says...

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Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

It starts there. We must believe that God is (that is that He exists) and that He is the Creator of all! In Acts 17, as Paul shared with the pagans, this is where he started – that is, on God as Creator. This is where the Bible starts! True worship starts there.

In Revelation 4, true worship recognizes God as Creator; in Revelation 5, it recognizes Him as Redeemer. Thus, true worship (as seen in heaven) recognizes the Lord as Creator and Redeemer!

We were created to worship! And people will worship, its just a matter of what they will worship. In Romans 1 Paul explains that people who refuse to worship the true God...

Slide # 19**Romans 1:25 (NKJV)**

25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served **the creature rather than the Creator**, who is blessed forever. Amen.

In some form, in some form of idolatry, this is what all people do who are not true worshipers of the One true God. But heaven is all about the WORSHIP of the One true God – the Creator of the world. And in the end the Creator of all is the Judge of all. In the meantime, He has provided salvation for all who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior!

In 1715 king Louis the 14th of France died after a reign of 72 years. He had called himself “the Great” and was the monarch who made the famous statement “**I am the state**”! His court was the most magnificent in Europe.

But one day he died!

However, he had planned out every detail of his funeral to be as self-serving and self-exalting as his life had been. His body lay in state in a golden coffin. Orders were given that the cathedral should be very dimly lit with a lone special candle set above his coffin to dramatize his greatness.

At the memorial service, thousands waited in hushed silence for the service to begin. Then out of the shadows stepped the pastor (Bishop Massillon) – he bent down, snuffed out the candle, and said, “Only God is great.”

Worship God!

For He alone is holy, holy, holy.
 He alone is Lord God Almighty!
 He alone is eternal!
 He alone is Creator of all!
 He alone is worthy of glory, honor, and thanks!
 He alone is worthy to receive the glory, the honor, and the power!

Worship God!