

God First: Building a prayer-centered relationship with God – Week One

The Pleasure of His Presence

The Most Important Thing You Need to Know about Prayer – Revelation 4:1-11

Main Idea: The activity of prayer in the present is a foretaste of heaven. Engaging in this activity *now* builds and nurtures our delight in God. Since he'll be our preoccupation forever, it makes sense that we delight in him as a regular discipline by entering and enjoying his presence. Here are three things that increase our delight, seeing...

1. GOD AS OUR CONFIDENCE – He is in total control. Rev. 4:1-2

- A. The vision of the throne is a reminder that God is in total control. 4:2
 - 1. When you look at the world *by sight* you can forget this truth and default to cynicism.
 - 2. But the throne is a call to live by faith.
- B. The vision of the open door is a reminder that we have access to God. 4:1
 - 1. The door was opened by Jesus Christ. (Jesus issues the call to John.)
 - 2. The one behind the door is one whom we call “Abba Father”.
- C. Implications for prayer – Prayer is designed to nourish confidence in God. (And with confidence comes delight.)

2. GOD AS OUR HOPE – He has granted you a tremendous future. Rev. 4:3-9

- A. Vision of God – The first vision is one of color and light. 4:3
 - 1. John begins with two symbols representing God’s holiness and separateness.
 - 2. John continues with two symbols representing God’s grace and promise.
- B. Interlude – John sees a vision of believers in heaven. 4:4
 - 1. The church – corporately – is in an exalted place (on the thrones, sitting).
 - 2. Believers – individually – are in an exalted place (clothes and crowns).
- C. Vision of God – The second vision is one of sound and peace. 4:5-6a
 - 1. He is a God of judgment. (thunder and lightening)
 - 2. He is a God of grace. (The Holy Spirit and the Sea of Glass)
- D. Interlude – John sees a vision of angels in heaven. 4:6b-8a
 - 1. Where they live: They’re “throne dwellers.” (in the center and around)
 - 2. What they’re like: Full of eyes=insight, The 4 pictures=dignity, The 6 wings=activity
 - 3. What they do: They are worship leaders.
- E. The character of heaven – It is the exact opposite of boring!

3. GOD AS OUR SATISFACTION – He will be your continual delight in heaven. Revelation 4:10-11

- A. The four living creatures will call out an attribute of God. 4:8-9
 - 1. Notice they’ll do this in a corporate setting.
 - 2. Remember that we’ll always be learning new things about God.
- B. The believers will respond.
 - 1. Worship with our bodies.
 - 2. Worship with our possessions.
 - 3. Worship with our voices.

4. APPLICATION – We need to capture this now. Psalm 37:4

- A. Communication with God will be automatic in heaven
- B. It’s not automatic now. It’s a learned trait. It’s a command to be obeyed. Psalm 37:4
- C. Where is the delight factor in your life, *right now*? First step is repentance. Prayer response