

## **CHRIST IS GLORIOUS IN WHAT HE HAS DONE, REVELATION 1:4-6**

Let's turn in our Bibles, please, to the book of Revelation chapter 1. We're going to be reading together today verses 4 to 6. Revelation chapter 1, verses 4 to 6.

“<sup>4</sup> John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, <sup>6</sup> and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

As we have been considering together the opening verses of the book of Revelation, we have seen that John has given to us a wonderful description of Jesus Christ in verses 5 and 6. We saw that in this passage, Jesus tells that Christ is glorious in who He is, and John tells us that Christ is glorious in what He has done.

Last week, we began to examine the first half of verse 5, and we saw that Christ is glorious in who He is. We asked ourselves the question, Who is He? and we saw that John gave us a threefold description of this Christ, to whom belongs glory and dominion forever and ever.

We saw last week, first of all, that Christ is the faithful witness, as it says in verse 5. That is, He is absolutely trustworthy and He is completely reliable in all that He represents and in all that He teaches and in all that He represents to us. To hear His voice is to hear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Then we saw last week, secondly, that Christ is not only the faithful witness, but He is also the first begotten from the dead, as it says in verse 5. That is, He has conquered death and He has gained victory over death Himself, but He did not obtain that victory over death just for Himself, but rather, He stands at the head of a vast number of those that He will save from death by His resurrecting power. He is the first to be resurrected from the dead, but He is not the last. There are many, many millions to follow Him.

Then thirdly last week, we saw that Jesus is not only the faithful witness and the first begotten from the dead, we saw thirdly that He is the Prince of the kings of the earth, as it says in verse 5. We saw that He rules over the whole creation and all of the rulers of this world by His authority, by His power, and by His position. All authority has been given to Him, in heaven and in earth. So He is King of kings and He is Lord of lords. All that happens in this world is under His control, and exercised according to His plan and purposes.

We saw, then, that Christ is glorious in who He is. He is the faithful witness, he is the first begotten from the dead, and He is the Prince of the kings of the earth. But our text does not stop

there, with reference to its description of Christ. It says not only that Christ is glorious in who He is, but it also tells us that Christ is glorious in what He has done.

Notice, if you will, the latter part of verse 5 and all of verse 6. Here is what He has done: “<sup>5</sup> ...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, <sup>6</sup> and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” So here we have a description of what Christ has done for His people and to His people—He loved us, He redeemed us, and He elevated us to be kings and priests unto His God.

What we want to do together this morning is to consider each of these gracious acts that Christ has done to us and for us, and see that Christ is glorious, not only in who He is, but Christ is also glorious in what he has done.

So in the first place then this morning, let us consider together that Christ has loved us. Christ. Has. Loved. Us. The last part of verse 5 says, “Unto him that loved us.” It’s an amazing thing to think that Christ has loved us. When we consider the fact that there is nothing *in* us at all to commend us to God’s love because of our depravity and our sinfulness, it’s amazing that He loved us. And when we consider together the fact that God has no need to love anyone outside of Himself, it’s also amazing that God would love us. God has all the love He needs to receive within the Trinity, and the Trinity is sufficient to receive all the love that God has to give.

God’s own selfsufficiency makes it completely unnecessary for Him to love anyone or anything besides Himself. Each of the members of the Trinity receive all the love they need from the other members of the Trinity, and the other members of the Trinity are sufficient to receive all the love that each member of the Trinity has to give.

But wonder of wonders, in spite of our depravity and in spite of God’s selfsufficiency, God has looked down on fallen humanity, and God has set His love upon His people, and the great manifestation of that love was the giving of His only begotten Son. In John 3 and verse 16, it says, “For God *so loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.”

It is not just God as viewed as the Trinity, or God viewed as the Father who loved us. Our text specifically says that Jesus Christ in particular loved us—“unto Him,” that is, Jesus Christ. The antecedent of the personal pronoun “Him” is Jesus Christ, verse 5: “and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness,” unto *Him* that loved us. So the “Him” who loved is clearly Jesus Christ, in particular. Christ has done many things for us, but the first thing He did toward us, and which guides all of His subsequent activity in relationship to us is that He loved us.

Now, what kind of love was this that Christ had toward us? Well first of all, we understand that it was a voluntary love; that is, Christ freely set His love upon us without any duty or without any obligation or without any need to do so. He was free from any obligation or duty or compelling necessity to love us, and yet He loved us anyway. The only source and the only motive of His love was His own nature and His own decision to freely bestow it.

Why did God love us? Not because of something in us, but because God is love. It is the very definition of His nature. His love for us arose solely out of that character and nature. There was nothing in us that would draw out God's love for us. We are specifically told in Romans 5 and verse 8 that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were *yet sinners*, Christ died for us."

Now let me be very clear. There are some things it is impossible for God to do. It is impossible for God to lie. It is impossible that God would deny Himself. It's impossible that God would love sin, and yet while we were sinners, God loved us. So it must have been something other than *us* as sinful fallen creatures that moved God to love. God set His love on us, not because of what we were, but rather God set His love on us *in spite of* what we were. And because there was nothing in us to draw out His love, there is also nothing in us that can drive away His love, because we are not the cause of that love.

As Jeremiah 31 and verse 3 says, He has loved us with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness has He drawn us. So we see that His love is everlasting. It doesn't grow, it doesn't diminish, it doesn't change, and it doesn't end. It is as fixed and as immutable as the very character of God Himself, because it is out of that character that that love arises, and it is from that character that that love extends to us.

I am glad to know that God doesn't love me because of who I am, because I am not very lovable. I am glad to know that God loves me because of who He is, and in *that* is my security, that His love towards me will never change and that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ. So we see that it's a voluntary love.

Secondly, notice that it was a genuine love. This love that He loved us with was a genuine love. Now many people will tell us that they love us. Lots of people will say, Love you! But the proof of the genuineness of their love is not to be found in their words; rather, it's to be found in their actions.

Jesus declared in John 15 and verse 13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ's love for us was not merely one of sentimental feelings towards us, but rather His love was one of sacrificial service to us. His love was proven not by His words, but by His actions. Jesus showed by His actions the genuineness of His love to us by laying down His life for us. Words are cheap, but actions speak. And what the actions of Christ tell us is that His love towards us is a real love, and it's a genuine love, and it's a true love.

Christ does not merely love in word or in tongue, but rather, He loves in deed and in truth, as First John 3:18 tells us. It was no small act, and it came at no small cost that Jesus would leave the throne of heaven and take upon Him the form of a servant and be made in the likeness of men and humble Himself, even to the point of death, even to the death of the cross. It was that action

of coming down from heaven, taking upon Himself humanity, and dying in our place to secure our redemption that showed that that love was a genuine love.

Not only do we see that it's a voluntary love and that it's a genuine love, but thirdly, we see that it was a transcendent love. That is, it was a love that was above and beyond any human love that has ever been shown or has ever been expressed. Now those of you who are married—you love your husband or you love your wife and you love your children. And you love them with the greatest love that you are capable of. But my love for my wife and my love for my child is as small and as insignificant as a cup of water dumped in the Pacific Ocean compared to the love that Christ has for us.

Jesus says in John 15 and verse 9, As the Father has loved me, so love I you. Isn't that an amazing statement? As the Father has loved me, so love I you. And how did the Father love the Son? He loves Him with an infinite love. He loves Him with an eternal love. He loves Him with an unchangeable love, a love that has no boundaries and a love that has no limits and a love that can never be exhausted. That's how the Father loves the Son. And then the Son turned around and loved us in exactly the same way as the Father loved Him.

This is a love that exceeds the ability of the human mind to comprehend or to understand. It is a transcendent love. This love that the Father has for the Son is the measure of the love that Jesus has for us, and just as the Father loves the Son in an infinite, eternal, and unchangeable fashion, so the love Jesus has for us is infinite, it is eternal, it is unchangeable. In a word—it is transcendent. This is how Jesus loves us. He loves us willingly, He loves us genuinely, and He loves us transcendentally—infinately above anything that we could ever ask or think.

Now someone who loves us that much should be loved in return. So let us love the Lord Jesus Christ with all of our heart and soul and mind and strength. And let us love our neighbor as ourselves. So the first thing we see of our glorious Lord is that He loved us with a voluntary, genuine, transcendent love.

But notice the second thing our text says about the Lord Jesus. Christ is glorious in what He did, not only in that Christ has loved us, but notice secondly, He has washed us from our sins in His own blood. That's the last phrase of verse 5: "and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

Now a lot of people lament the problems that humanity has. But you know what? Humanity only has one problem and that is that they have sinned, we have sinned, I have sinned against God. And this sin that we have committed against God defiles us. It defiles our conscience, it defiles our record in the courtroom of God, and it defiles our very nature and our very persons—our thinking, our attitude, and our choices. This sin makes us filthy and unclean before God's eyes, and it brings His wrath to bear upon us.

Isaiah 64 and verse 6 says, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” So God’s assessment of us is that we are unclean and that we are filthy.

In Job 15, verses 14 to 16, it says, “What is man, that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? <sup>15</sup> Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. <sup>16</sup> How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?” Now this is what God has to say about us—that we are unclean, that we are filthy, that we are abominable. And you know what? There is nothing we can do to fix that. There is nothing we can do to wash ourselves from this moral filthiness that sin has plunged us into.

In Jeremiah chapter 2, verses 21 to 23, God says, “. . . I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? <sup>22</sup> For though thou wash thee with [lye], and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God. <sup>23</sup> How canst thou say, I am not polluted. . . ?” This is how God views us. Is there anything in that that would draw out His love to us? There is nothing. Nothing. Selfeffort at selfcleansing by means of selfrighteous works will never wash away the stain and defilement of sin on our persons or on our record. God said, You can take all the soap and all the lye you want, and you can try to morally wash yourself with your good works, but you will never be able to say, on that basis, I am not polluted.

But you see, the good news of the gospel is that what we could never do for ourselves, Jesus has done for us. Our text says, *He* has “washed us from our sins in his *own* blood.” You see, it was not just any blood that could atone for our sins and wash away our defilement before God; rather, it was divine blood, the blood of God incarnate on earth that alone had the power and the efficacy to wash away moral defilement, that which could not be washed away by any other method or by any other means.

We were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold. We were not redeemed with the blood of bulls and of oxen and animal sacrifices; rather, we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ—Christ who was the lamb of God, who had no blemish and who had no spot, and therefore, whose blood had the purity and the power to wash us from all of the blemish and all of the spot that we had. As the old hymn writer says, “Filthy, vile, helpless we; spotless Lamb of God was He; Full atonement! can it be? Hallelujah! What a Savior!”

We’re told in Hebrews 9 and verse 12 that it was “neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” What an amazing washing that was. This washing of us from our sins by the Lord Jesus Christ was a gracious washing. He did not have to do it. It was an act of free grace and unmerited favor to unworthy sinners.

Ephesians 1 and verse 7 says that “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Notice, it wasn’t according to the value of our persons, rather, it was according to the riches of His grace. It was *unmerited* favor given to *unworthy* persons. It was a gracious washing.

But it was also an effectual washing. Jesus did not just try to wash us from our sins; He didn’t just make us washable if we do some things. Rather, our text says He actually did wash us from our sins. He didn’t by His work on the cross just make it possible for us to be cleansed. He cleansed us so that now we are whiter than snow.

As the hymnwriter says, “O precious is the flow that makes me white as snow; no other fount I know; nothing but the blood of Jesus.” You remember the leper who came to Jesus in Matthew chapter 8 and said, “Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.” Do you remember what Jesus said to him? Jesus said, “I wilt. Be thou clean.” Never has any person come to Christ for cleansing who has not received it. First John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and”—what?—“cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” And how does He cleanse us? He cleanses us and washes us in the redemption that the shedding of His blood on the cross procured for all those for whom He died.

And so if you would be clean today, go to the fountain for sin and uncleanness and say, O Lord Jesus, I am defiled with sin, I am dirty with sin, my conscience is weighted down with the guilt and the shame of sin. O, Lord Jesus, forgive me. Lord Jesus, cleanse me. Lord Jesus, wash me. Lord Jesus, save me. Save me from my sins. Wash me in your blood. Apply the benefits and the blessing of your atonement to my soul. Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner. And if you do, you will be washed and you will be clean. And He will present you faultless before His throne with exceeding joy.

That brings us then to the third glorious thing that Jesus did. Christ is glorious in what He did in that Christ has loved us and He has washed from our sins in His own blood. Notice thirdly in verse 6 that Christ “hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” Now there is some textual variation in the word translated “kings” in this phrase in the original manuscripts. The majority of the texts favor the word “kingdom,” while a minority of texts favor “kings.”

So it could be read, “hath made us a kingdom of priests unto God and his Father.” Or it could be read, as the King James has it and the New King James has it, “hath made us kings and priests.” Either reading makes good sense, and both readings are strongly supported by other biblical passages.

Let’s take the first alternative reading, that of kingdom: He hath made us a kingdom of priests. If the reading is “kingdom,” that is, Christ “has made us a kingdom of priests unto God,” then what we have is Christ constituting us in His work to be to Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation unto God. This means that the promise that God made to Israel in the Old Covenant has been fulfilled by Christ for the church in the New Covenant.

Turn in your Bibles please with me to Exodus chapter 19. In the book of Exodus chapter 19, what we have is the making of the Old Covenant. Exodus chapter 19, verse 5 and 6: “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:” Now here it is, verse 6: “and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”

The promise that God made to Israel is that if she kept her half of the covenant, that God would reward her by making her a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. He says, You *shall* be this *if* you do that. Now of course, we know that Israel did not achieve that, and the reason why she didn't was due to her own failure to uphold her half of the bilateral Old Covenant.

But the good news is that when Jesus came, he did achieve this for us. Turn back to Revelation 1 and verse 6. In Exodus, it was a conditional clause: If you do this, then you will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to me. Notice Revelation 1 verse 6 says, “and hath made us”—past tense—“a kingdom of priests unto God.” What is being said here to the church of Jesus Christ is that you *have been made*—an accomplished fact—a kingdom of priests unto God.

So what we see is, in the church, Israel lives on and obtains all of the blessings of the Old Covenant because of the work of Jesus Christ. What God promised to Israel, Christ procured for the church. We are a kingdom of priests and we are a holy nation.

Turn, please, to First Peter chapter 2. Notice if you will, verse 9. In First Peter chapter 2 and verse 9, he says, “But ye are a chosen generation,”—there's divine sovereign election—you are “a royal priesthood,” and we're going to talk about that in a few minutes. But I want you to notice the third description: You are a holy nation, a peculiar people, that is, a unique people that belongs to God. And isn't that what God promised in the Old Covenant? He says to Israel, If you keep my covenant, you will be a peculiar people to me above all peoples, and you will be a kingdom of priests, and you will be a holy nation. We see that Jesus has made us a kingdom of priests. Jesus has made us a holy nation. And Jesus has made us God's special, unique people that He has a peculiar and unique ownership of.

And so what Israel could never obtain through the Old Covenant because of her own failure to hold up her end of the bargain, Jesus obtained for us, having upheld both ends of the bargain all by Himself and given these things to us as a gift. We, then, are a kingdom of priests unto God, a holy nation, who serves Him and represents Him to the world as the New Israel, doing what the Old Israel never was able to accomplish.

However, if the reading of our text in Revelation 1 and verse 6 is as the King James and the New King James have it: “and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,” then what this means is that we have a place of dominion and rule within the kingdom of God. Not only are we a kingdom, we're rulers in that kingdom; that is, royal dignity has been given to Christians because they share in Christ's kingly rule, both now and in the future. Now the Bible also bears

abundant witness to this truth. In fact, the book of Revelation itself bears repeated witness that we will not just be *in* the kingdom, but that we will be kings in that kingdom.

You're in Revelation 1, verse 6, "and hath made us kings and priests." Notice chapter 3, verse 21. Jesus says: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Does Jesus share the rule of the Father? He does. Do we share in the rule of the Son? We do.

Notice the explicit statement in chapter 5 of Revelation, verses 9 and 10. Here's the vision of John in heaven. He's beholding Christ taking the sevensealed book out of the hands of God the Father, who's sitting on the throne. Notice Revelation 5, verses 9 and 10: "9 And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;"—now here it is—"10 and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." So those that Christ has redeemed are declared to be kings and priests, and they will reign, that is rule, as kings in that earth.

Notice Revelation chapter 20, verse 4. Speaking here of the millennial era, that is that era between the first and second coming of Christ, it says in Revelation 20 and verse 4: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them,"—Now who sits on a throne but a king?—"and judgment was given unto them:"—who exercises judgment but a king?—"and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and"—what?—"reigned with Christ a thousand years." And so we're reigning with Christ right now, sitting on thrones.

Notice verse 6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ." So they'll be priests and, secondly, they "shall reign with him"—they'll be kings—"a thousand years."

Now notice chapter 22 and verse 5. This is the final description of the new heavens and the new earth. It says: "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall"—what?—"reign for ever and ever." Furthermore, we're told not only in Revelation that are we kings, but in Second Corinthians 6, verses 2 and 3, we're told that saints will judge the world and we're told that saints will judge angels. And judging is a function of the king, the ruler of the people.

All of the judges in America are members of what? The Executive Branch, right? They are all representatives of the President himself, the king, the one who rules. In Second Timothy 2 and verse 12, it says "if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." The Bible clearly and repeatedly tells us that we are kings in the Kingdom of God, kings who are under the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ.



Now this kingly position and honor and privilege that we have, we exercise to some degree now, and we will exercise it to the complete degree then, in the new heavens and the new earth. As kings now, we overcome the world; as kings now, we defeat sin; as kings now, we rule our own spirits and bring them into subjection; as kings now, we hand defeat after defeat after defeat to Satan and to his people, who try through spiritual warfare to draw us away from Jesus Christ.

Someday we will rule in the new heavens and in the new earth, in ways that we cannot even imagine now. And the blessed news of the gospel is that instead of *being* ruled by the wicked rulers we have now on this earth, we will be the rulers who exercise righteous and godly rule.

Have you ever said to yourself, Man, I wish I were President. I would do X, Y, and Z. Well you know what? Someday you will, and you'll be able to, because you know we're not being ruled righteously now. You know that righteous rule needs to be exercised. You know from the word of God what that righteous rule looks like. And wouldn't you like to implement it? Well the good news is, someday you will. You will be a king in the new heavens and the new earth.

There will be no more corruption or oppression or tyranny or cheating or bribery, like we see in the kings of the earth today. The rule and dominion over the earth that Adam lost to Satan and his people we will regain from and through Christ, and we will once again have that dominion that was forfeited by Adam in the garden and regained by Christ on the cross, where He triumphs over principalities and powers. And in His triumph, we shall triumph as well.

Not only has Christ made us kings, but our text says in Revelation 1 and verse 6 that He has also made us priests. Verse 6 says, "and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." A priest is a mediator between God and men. You see that especially under the Old Covenant. You had God in the holy of holies, and you had the people out there. And who stood between them? The priests, right? The priests brought the offerings and the prayers, and presented them before God, and then the priests took the word of God and presented it to the people.

We're all priests now. As priests, we represent God to the world and we represent the world to God. We represent God to the world by bringing God's word to the world and preaching God's Son to the world. We represent God—the Bible says we are ambassadors for Christ, bringing God and His word and His Son to the world.

On the other hand, we represent the world to God. We bring the lost to God at the throne of grace, and there plead with God for their salvation. We intercede on their behalf that God would have mercy on them and redeem them. We plead their ignorance. We say, God, they don't know what they're doing. God, be merciful to them! They know not what they're doing. Oh Lord, save them! We plead their need that God would have mercy on their darkness and deliver them from their depravity. We plead their ignorance, for they know not what they do.

So the church stands between God and the world, all of us priests, representing God to the world and the world to God. Paul says of the Corinthians, I have presented you as a chaste virgin to

Christ. When those Corinthians were depraved and unsaved and darkened, Paul came and preached the gospel to them, and Paul brought them as saved people, and said, Lord, here—these are your people. Receive them. They have received your Son. Oh Father, receive them.

But not only are we priests in relationship to the world, we are priests in relationship to the church. Turn back to First Peter 2, if you would please. Notice what it says in verses 1 to 5:

“<sup>1</sup> Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,”—that’s who we used to be—“<sup>2</sup> as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby...” These people have been born again, and now they’re feeding on the milk of the word of God. Verse 3: “<sup>3</sup> if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. <sup>4</sup> To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,”—now here’s our verse—“<sup>5</sup> ye also, as [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house,” and not only are you a spiritual house, notice also, you’re “a holy priesthood,” and what do priests do? “to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

We are priests, not only in the world, but we’re priests in the church. When we come to church and we’re sitting here, every one of you are priests, every one of you are offering to God spiritual sacrifices—not physical sacrifices, not animal sacrifices, but spiritual sacrifices. And what do those spiritual sacrifices consist of? Well, we’re told in Hebrews 13 and verse 15, “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. <sup>16</sup> But to do good and to [fellowship] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Under the New Covenant, we have a temple—the church. It’s made up not of this building, but of the living stones sitting in the pews. You collectively, when you gather on the Lord’s Day, constitute a temple of God, and within that temple, you are priests of God and offer sacrifices of praise and worship and thanksgiving to God as you worship and as you respond to His word. All believers are priests. There is no special priestly class like the Roman Catholic Church has. All believers can offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. All believers have direct access into the holy presence of God by the blood of Jesus. All believers are to minister on behalf of others before God in prayer and in service and in witness.

In First Peter chapter 2, notice if you will verse 9. We looked at this verse before, and I promised you we would come back to it. First Peter 2:9: “But ye are a chosen generation,” now here it is, “a royal priesthood.” Two things are said there—you are kingly priests. In other words, what he’s saying there in that one phrase is, You are a kingly priesthood. You are kings and priests. You are a royal priesthood.

So all of this is the privilege that Jesus has elevated us to. Not only did He love us, not only did He wash us from our sins in His blood, but then He set us on thrones and He put us in His temple, and He gave us the privilege of ministering before God. All of this is what Jesus has done for us. He has loved us, He has washed us, and He has made us kings and priests.

Now notice what our response to that should be. Turn back to Revelation 1 and verse 6. Notice here it says He “hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,” now here it is, “to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” These are the two things that we are to yield to Jesus Christ, based on who He is and based on what He has done: We are to yield to Him glory and we are to yield to Him dominion.

To Him be glory, for recognizing who He is. He is the faithful witness. He is the first begotten from the dead. He is the Prince of the kings of the earth. Is there something there by which we may glorify Him?

And then to Him be glory, by responding to what He has done. He has loved us. He has washed us from our sins and made us kings and priests. Is there something there to glorify Him for?

To Him be glory for recognizing who He is, and by responding to what He has done—it is that which fills our worship with content and substance and value and meaning and significance. So we’re not just involved in superficial church, with a few Jesuslovesyou, and love everybody, and go out the door.

You see, there’s a depth and a degree of what Jesus has done and who Jesus is that is sufficient to fill our hymnody and our preaching and our prayers and our worship with content of depth and value and substance. Away with superficial worship! Let us plunge into the depths of all that Jesus is and all that Jesus has done.

Not only does our text say, To Him be glory. It says, To Him be dominion. And you know what dominion is—it’s rule, right? So we yield to Jesus, not only glory, but we yield to Him dominion. That is, we say to Him, You have dominion over me, over my heart, over my mind, over my motives, over my actions, over my thoughts, over the words that I speak. Lord Jesus, have dominion over me in every area of life. I am glad to submit to one who is the faithful witness and the first begotten from the dead and the Prince of the kings of the earth—to the one who loved me and washed me from my sins and made me a king and a priest. Who wouldn’t want to give dominion over their life to someone like that?

So may His praises be sung. May His rule be exercised and executed in my life and throughout the world, forever and ever. Amen. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we thank you for this wonderful, lovely, precious Lord Jesus. We read in First Peter, Unto you who believe, He is precious. Oh Lord, He is to us. Thank you for such a precious Savior. And Lord, we do pray today that we would highly value Him and that our thoughts and our meditations would be *on* Him, and Father, that we would do away with the vain tinsel and trinkets of the world that so occupy us with low and even degrading things, and that we would spend our time seeking Christ and serving Christ and fellowshiping with Christ and speaking of Christ and loving Christ and worshipping Christ.

Father, may we be able to honestly say, along with the apostle Paul, For me to live is Christ. May He have the central place and the preeminent place in our lives, and may our lives be given to His glory and may our lives be submitted to His dominion. And Father, may that witness of that life speak powerfully to the world around us so that they see there is something dramatically different about the central organizing principle of *this* person's life. They are truly a Christian, a follower of Christ. May it be true of us.

And Father, may you save those who are here today who are not yet saved. Lord, have mercy on them. Illuminate their minds, regenerate their hearts, call them to Christ, wash them in the blood. Bring them, Father, into the kingdom and make them kings and priests forever, that they too might serve and worship the Lord Jesus with their whole lives. In Christ's name we ask it. Amen.