

Jesus: Our Sovereign Savior

Resolved 2010

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I want you to take God's word and turn with me to the book of Revelation to Revelation 5, and this morning in our time together, I want to speak to you on "Our Sovereign Savior." As you're turning to the book of Revelation, I would remind us all that the title of this book, the Revelation, is in the singular. It's not the plural. Sometimes I travel around the country and hear people say, "Have you been reading the book of Revelations?" And they're well-meaning and well-intended but not well-instructed. It's not the Revelations, plural, it's the Revelation, singular. And what the book of Revelation is, it is the revealing of a single subject, of a single person, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the unveiling of Christ. It is the disclosing of Christ in ways that the previous 65 books have not done. This is the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ as he has shown to us in ways that should bring about a shock and awe to our hearts.

This morning, we'll look at the entire chapter but I want to simply read the first five verses that we would wade out into the water and wade out into the stream of this text. The word of God reads,

1 I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. 4 Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; 5 and one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."

The greatest vision ever to be set before our eyes is always the vision of our sovereign Savior the Lord Jesus Christ. It was A. W. Tozer who said what comes into your mind when you think of God is the most important thing about you. And I want to tighten the focus of that quote, that the most important thing to ever come into your mind is what you think of when you think of Jesus Christ because Jesus is the image of the invisible God. A high view of Christ leads to high and holy living, and a low view of Christ leads

to low and gutter living. There is no thought, no sight any more compelling in the heart and the mind of the believer than the glorified Jesus Christ.

It is important this day that we see him not as he once was, but now as he is. He is not in a manger. He is no longer in the temple. He is no longer on the cross. He is not in the tomb. Jesus has now risen. He has ascended. He is exalted. He is enthroned, and he is ruling and reigning in the heights of heaven. Jesus is no longer the meek Messiah as he once was. He is no longer the humble Galilean. He is no longer the gentle carpenter. Jesus Christ is now the King of kings and the Lord of lords. We do not worship a babe in a manger. We do not bow before corpse on a cross. We worship Jesus as he now is and he is in the center of all that is transpiring in heaven. All of the lines are intersecting in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. He is the object of worship of all the saints and of all the angels, and he is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high and he is the sovereign Savior over heaven and earth. That the Lord Jesus Christ is our sovereign Savior means that he is the Redeemer of all of his people and that he has purchased us with a great price, and none of us will ever perish. That he is the sovereign Savior means that he is the Lord of history and the Lord of eternity, and that he is the controller of all that comes to pass.

In this passage, John has been caught up in the heaven and given a vision that the church so desperately needed at the end of the first century. It was a time in which the Roman Empire was dominant and Caesar was reigning and the church was suffering persecution, and the Ephesian church had left its first love, and the Laodiceans were lukewarm, and the persecution and the fires thereof were increasing, and all of the apostles except for John have died. In many ways, the outlook was so bleak for the church. It looked as if to look around that the church, what might be but a passing fad of the day, that there would be no more growth. And so John is caught up into heaven in chapter 4 and verse 1, and he has given a vision of the glorified Christ in heaven that puts everything in right perspective. This is the divine perspective. This is the eternal perspective, and every one of us must have this perspective seared into our conscience and into our mind that we would understand that Christ is ruling and reigning in heaven and that all history is being ushered forward to its appointed end.

As we look now in chapter 5, I want to give you several headings just to hang our thoughts on as we walk through this glorious chapter. I want you to note first the scroll. We read in verse 1, "I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book." This book is a scroll. It has been rolled up, and as we will see, there is writing on the inside and the outside of this scroll, and it is this scroll that captures the attention of the Apostle John.

He says this scroll is "in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne," and in chapter 4 we were introduced to him, this is none other than God the Father, and upon John's entrance into heaven everything is revolving around the throne. As soon as John steps into heaven, he is not preoccupied with streets of gold or gates of pearl. He is not looking around necessarily to see who's there or who is not there. What dominates the attention of John is this throne. In chapter 4, verse 2, he says, "Immediately I was in the Spirit; and

behold, a throne was standing in heaven." This throne is the very center of the government of the entire universe. It is God the Father himself who is seated upon this throne. And this throne is standing in heaven; it is fixed it, it cannot be moved. And everything in chapter 4 revolves around this throne. In verse 2 of chapter 4, the Father is on the throne. In verse 4, there are the elders around the throne and thrones, subordinate appellate thrones that are around his throne. In verse 5, there are flashes of lightning and peals of thunder that are going out from the throne. In verse 6, there is before the throne a sea of glass and in the center and around the throne four living creatures. And in verses 8 and 9, there is praise that is going to the throne. And in verse 10, the 24 elders are falling down before the throne. Everything in heaven is measured by its proximity to the throne of God. Whether it's under, above, around, next to, in the center of, everything finds its identity in heaven by where it is in relationship to the throne.

And that is why now in chapter 5, verse 1, this is such a dramatic scene. John says, "I saw in the right hand," and the right hand is that strongest hand, a place of authority and strength. "In the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book." That God is on the throne is signifying that he is reigning, that he is ruling, that he is presiding over all of the affairs of the universe. And now John looks at this book, this scroll. Notice what it says, "written inside and on the back." This scroll is not blank. This scroll contains very detailed writing. It is so detailed, it is so precise, it is so full of information that the inside of it cannot contain the whole, and the writer has been forced to write on the outside because it is so lengthy and so detailed and so exhaustive and no detail is left unaddressed in this book.

The mere fact that it is written down indicates that it is unalterable, that it is fixed, that it is settled. It will never be amended or changed. It will never be edited. And the fact that it is in the right hand of God means that God himself is its author. God has written and God has recorded all that is in this book, and at the end of verse 1 we read it is "sealed up with seven seals." It is a closed book. No human eye has ever peered into this book. No angelic being has ever had a glimpse of what is written inside this book. What is inside this book is a concealed mystery and it is sealed up such that it cannot be opened with seven seals. A Roman document, they would write, for example, a title deed or a last will and testament, there would be a long scroll and a certain amount would be written and then they would roll it up and seal it with a seal. They would continue to write and after a while they would then seal it with a second seal to seal that portion shut. That is what is transpiring here until the entirety of the whole has been written and it is sealed shut with seven seals.

So the question is: what is this book and what is written in this book? I do not believe that this is the Lamb's book of life. What is in this book is the consummation of human history. What is written in this book are the climactic events of world history at the end of the age. What is written in this book is God's predetermined eternal plan for all that will come to pass at the end of the age, that God will bring all of redemptive history to its appointed end. It is this book that records the coming judgment of God upon the earth in the time of the Great Tribulation. What is in this book contains the final act of God's unfolding drama of redemptive history. What is in this book is the final salvation of lost

souls and the final judgment of every unbeliever. What is in this book is God making right every wrong and God punishing evil and God rewarding what is good. In this book is recorded the end of human history and the take-back of planet earth. And beginning in Revelation 6:1, this book will be successively opened and there will be the pouring out upon this world the final judgment of God that must fall, that must fall upon this evil world system.

That is where this scene begins with the scroll. Before we go any further, I want to say to us this day that the future of this world has already been recorded by God. It is prescribed. It is foreordained. It is predetermined. History is not up in the air. History is not a jump-ball waiting to be determined which way it will come. But God from all eternity past before the foundation of the world, God has already recorded his plan for human history. Every minute detail, every molecule, every event, every circumstance, every person, every being, every influence, it is all recorded in this book.

Now I want you to note, second, the search. As we look in verse 2, a voice interrupts John's focus, "And I saw a strong angel." The name is not given. The name Gabriel means literally "strength of God." Perhaps Gabriel is this strong angel, "proclaiming with a loud voice," loud enough that its sound would go out for all to hear, inviting a response, "proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?'" Who is worthy to grab the reins of history and bring this world order to its appointed end? Who is capable of overturning evil? Who can usher in the kingdom of God upon the earth? Who is strong enough to defeat Satan and defeat the demons and enthrone the kingdom of God? Who is confident?

And verse 3 says, "And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it." This is the futility of the human race. This shows that our problems are beyond ourselves. No one in Washington has the answers. No one in New York or London or Moscow can take the reins of human history. No one in heaven, no one on the earth, and no one under the earth is able to take this book and to open this book and to execute what is in this book. No elect angel, no glorified saint, no earthly ruler, no devil, no demon, no pastor, no church, no denomination, no nation, no President, no Prime Minister, no king, no sultan, is able to bring to pass what God has ordained for the end of the age.

Verse 4, "Then I began to weep greatly." Here are the only tears in heaven. "I began to weep greatly." John is reduced to sobbing tears. John has an emotional meltdown and John begins to sob uncontrollably. His emotions overtake him "because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look inside of it." And the reason that John is weeping because it seems that there will be no final triumph of good, that there will be no ultimate victory for God, that there will be no glorious ending for human history, and at this very moment, as John is confined to hard labor on the island of Patmos as a political prisoner of the Roman Empire, at this very moment, the church seems destined to lick the dust. Unbelief seems to be mightier than faith. Caesar seems to be Lord at this moment, not Jesus. Wrong appears to be being rewarded and right has the noose around its neck. It appears from John's vantage point that God's plans have been defaulted, that his will

appears to be cancelled, that God's purposes seem to be negated. It seems as if history is adrift. It seems as if as the world is becoming more and more corrupt, that God is not on his throne, or somehow God is not in control. This is the heart cry of every believer as we look around us and with mere human eyes assess the situation around us.

I want you to note in verse 5, third, the sovereign because in the midst of John's weeping there is an interruption. John is unexpectedly addressed. And the difference between a dream and a vision, in a dream you simply are observing, as with Daniel, what is being played out before your eyes, but a vision is interactive and there will be things handed to the one who is receiving the vision, and there is talking that goes back and forth. And John, his body is on the island of Patmos, his spirit is catapulted into the throne room of God above, and in this vision there is this interaction that is taking place between heaven and John and John and heaven.

"And one of the elders," verse 5. There are 24 elders in heaven who are the spiritual leaders, perhaps 12 for Israel in the Old Testament and 12 apostles for the church in the New Testament, the spiritual leaders of the redeemed of the ages. "One of the elders said to me, 'Stop weeping.'" It is a rebuke. "Get ahold of yourself, man. There is no need for this. This is inappropriate. This is a wrong response. You have lost your perspective. You have lost your viewpoint. There is a right end to the story. Stop weeping, behold," and attention now is to be drawn to what follows, "behold," catch a vision of this, catch a glimpse of this, "the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah," has overcome. The lion here is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is seen in heaven as this king of the jungle, this one who is ferocious, who is kingly, who is aggressive, who is dominant, domineering, conquering, consuming, devouring, stalking, preying, pouncing upon and consuming his enemies. Jesus Christ, this lion "from the tribe of Judah." This kingly line. Judah was the leader among the 12 tribes of Israel and Jesus here is represented as one who is strong and who is dominating and ready to consume his enemies. "The Root of David." He is a legal heir to the throne. He is from the messianic line, a descendant of David. He "has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals." To overcome means that he has triumphed over all his enemies. He has defeated all those who would resist him. He has defeated Satan. He has defeated sin. He has overcome hell itself. He has defeated death. He has defeated the grave. He has defeated darkness. He has defeated this world system. He has defeated unbelief. He has defeated demons. He has defeated evil. He has triumphed over all. And by virtue of his victory at Calvary's cross and his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ alone is qualified to approach the throne and to take this book and to break open its seals and to execute all that the Father has written from eternity past. He is the dominant lion of heaven and earth and there is none who can resist him. There is no opposition that can hinder his government.

I want you to see the Savior. Look at verse 6. John eagerly turns his head to see the lion but he is not prepared for what he is about to see. As he turns to look behind him, he is expecting to see a kingly figure, a dominant lion. But what he sees, it catches him completely off guard. Verse 6, "And I saw." This is such a visual book. It is the revelation. And John now sees the most extraordinary sight that his eyes would ever behold while he is still in his body upon the earth. I would remind us that John was the

only disciple at the foot of the cross. John was the one who heard the words, "Son, behold my mother. Mother, behold your son." It has been 60 years since John has beheld with his own eyes the physical body of the Lord Jesus Christ. John is the last living apostle and John, it has been 60 years. "And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb." Expecting to see a ferocious dominating lion, John instead sees the antithesis, the very opposite. He sees a little pet lamb. Gentle. Meek. Seemingly defenseless. Vulnerable to his enemies. Vulnerable to the attacks that would come upon him. He sees a lamb. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Every sacrifice in the Old Testament was but a prefiguring of this lamb who would be given by God to die upon the cross for our sins. This lamb is the Lord Jesus Christ, the sacrifice for our sins, the one who would shed his blood and make the only atonement for our sin. Every Levitical sacrifice, every priestly sacrifice throughout the Old Testament era was one finger pointing ahead to the coming of the lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would die upon the cross for our sins.

He sees this lamb but this is no ordinary lamb, "standing as if slain." Can you imagine a greater oxymoron than this? A greater paradox than this? A lamb standing as if slain. What a contradiction as this word "slain" means to be slaughtered. It means to be cut up and mutilated as a butcher would take the carcass of an animal and literally mutilate it and cut it up so that it might be devoured. This word "slain" means to be wounded, to be pierced, to be crushed, and speaks of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross. When we arrive in heaven there will be this dominant focus upon the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. We will forever stand in amazement before this Lamb in total bewilderment and astonishment and wonder that one so pure and so lovely and so innocent and so holy would have given himself to be slain for rebels so hell-bound as we were.

But he is standing. This implies that he has been raised from the dead. This implies that he is alive again, that though slain and put to death, he has been raised from the dead, and not merely raised from the dead but that he is standing in triumph and standing in victory, standing in authority and standing in dominance, presiding over the entire universe. And it is by his humble submission as the lamb that he has been granted the authority as the lion of the tribe of Judah. Because Jesus humbled himself more than any man who has ever lived, he has been exalted higher than anyone has ever been exalted. Because he lowered himself unto death, he has been raised by the Father to the heights of heaven and seated at the right hand of God above.

Notice how dominant this lamb is. No other lamb is like this lamb. He has seven horns. Seven, you know, is the number for fullness or perfection or completeness. Horns represent the strength of an animal to butt another animal and with those horns show dominance. That he has seven horns means that he has absolute power and unrivaled strength and total dominance over all.

And seven eyes. This means that he is all-seeing, that he is all-knowing, that he possesses all insight and all wisdom and all discernment. In the execution of his plan, nothing will catch him off guard. Nothing will surprise him. He sees it all. He knows it all. He sees the

future. He sees the past. He sees the present. He sees into hearts. He sees into attitudes. He knows the events. He knows all circumstances.

This is an invincible combination. He is omnipotent and omniscient. He has all power and all knowledge. And so in verse 7, "And He," this lowly lamb with seven horns and seven eyes, "He came," meaning he approached the throne of God and he "took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne." What no, man, no angel, no demon, no devil could do, Jesus Christ now does as he takes the book out of the hand of God and he now secures the reins of human history with all of its demands and all of its challenges and all of its complexities, it is now in his hands.

And I want you to see what he will do at the end of the age, look at chapter 6, verse 1, what he will do with this book as he will now open the book and begin to carry out the executive orders that are in the book. In chapter 6, verse 1, "Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals." Verse 3, "When He broke the second seal." Verse 5, "When He broke the third seal." Verse 7, "When the Lamb broke the fourth seal." Verse 9, "When the Lamb broke the fifth seal." Verse 12, the sixth seal. And then we come to chapter 8 and verse 1, and the seventh seal is opened and that then gives way to seven trumpet judgments. And when we come to chapter 11, the seventh trumpet judgment is sounded and that issues seven bowl judgments in chapter 16. And it is all being executed by the Lord Jesus Christ. The wars, the famines, the death, the martyrdom, the terror that will be unleashed on this world in the last days, it is all being initiated and it is all being executed by the Lamb/Lion, the Lord Jesus Christ as he is pouring out his fury and his vengeance and his wrath upon this world that has rejected God and has rejected him, and this world is so ripe for judgment and Christ will be this executer of the wrath of God upon this world.

This is an extraordinary moment as all of all of heaven now is beholding this scene as Christ takes this book out of the hand of God. We need to understand that Jesus has already assumed this position of absolute sovereignty. We are not awaiting the time of the Second Coming for Jesus to assume this posture and position of sovereignty. He now possesses all authority to convert his enemies, to overturn circumstances, to build his church, to grant repentance, to author saving faith, to cause his word to triumph, to raise up workers for the harvest, to send out laborers, to open up the nations for the gospel, to open a door which no man can close, to remove rulers, to raise up the lowly. Jesus Christ today, this very moment, is ruling and reigning in the heights of heaven and we are awaiting the end of this age for what is recorded in the rest of the book of Revelation to come to pass. Upon this earth there is no such thing as random occurrence, good luck, bad luck, accidents, chance events. Every event and every circumstance and every person and every molecule is under the authority of this Lion/Lamb.

What is the response in heaven to this? Do you think they're lukewarm in heaven to this transaction? How will heaven respond? How must we respond? Look at verse 8. I want you to see finally the singing. High theology always demands high doxology. And we read in verse 8, "When He had taken the book," meaning immediately, as soon as he took the book without any delay. Immediately, instantly, as soon as he took the book, "the four

living creatures," which refer to the four angels that are on the four corners of his throne who are guardians of his glory, who protect any and all access to the throne of God, these four living ones, "and the twenty-four elders," the 24 spiritual leaders of all the redeemed of all of the ages, "fell down before the Lamb." They are overawed by this dramatic takeover of human history by the Lord Jesus Christ. They are humbled. They are brought low. They fall prostrate like cut timber before the throne and before the Lamb, "each one holding a harp." A harp is an instrument of celebration. It is an instrument of jubilation and exultation. It is an instrument that communicates joy and gladness. "Each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints." God has kept all of the prayers of all of the saints of all of the ages in a bowl. Not one of them will go unanswered. They will all be answered at the proper time in the right way. And down through the ages, the saints have prayed, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is being done in heaven," and there is coming a time and coming a day when those prayers will be answered by God and God will usher in his kingdom upon the earth.

And so verse 9 we read, "And they sang a new song, saying," the elders and the redeemed saints, they began to sing. If you are in the presence of God, you are singing. If you know this Lamb and this Lion, you are singing. And they are singing a new song as they have come to this revelation of this greater understanding of the absolute sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ, they must sing now a new song to the Lord because they have a new awareness of his infinite power and his absolute dominance over all.

And this is what they are singing, and one day you and I will find our voices in this chorus, and we will be singing this as well, "Worthy are You." They are singing this to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals." You alone are worthy to direct human history to its God-appointed end. You alone are worthy to usher in the kingdom of God upon the earth. You alone are worthy to judge Satan and to judge all the forces of darkness. You alone are worthy to be the Savior of your people.

And notice what they all say, "for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Throughout all the ages of eternity, throughout all of the time that will be forever, we will never lose sight of the victory of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. We will never grow weary. We will never grow tired of lifting up our voice and singing yet another new song to this Lamb who has overcome all and has secured our eternal salvation. It will take all eternity for us to gaze upon those nail-pierced hands and upon that wounded side and be reduced to astonishment, amazement, throughout ages to come, forever and ever singing this to the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"For you were slain," you were put to death, you were slaughtered but it was through this death that you "purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe," that speaks of a genealogical descent, "and every tongue," that speaks of every language group, and "people" speaks of every ethnic group, and "nation" speaks of every national identity. No matter how you want to cut the pie whether linguistically, politically, ethically, or racially, Jesus Christ at the cross purchased for God the elect of God and he has redeemed them with his own blood.

Would you Please note that this was a definite atonement that our Lord made, that he actually purchased for God. There was a real transaction that occurred upon the cross. Jesus died not to make people hypothetically redeemable if they will only believe. He did not hypothetically reconcile if people will, by their own faith, join with Christ in being their own co-Savior. But that upon the cross Jesus actually purchased. It would be like I'd give you a dollar bill and you give me four quarters back. There is a definite transaction that occurred upon that cross. Jesus was not gypped. Jesus was not short-changed. Jesus purchased all that he went to the cross to secure in that death.

Please note he purchased out of or from every tribe. It does not say that he purchased the entirety of every tribe and the entirety of all nations. It does not say that he purchased all people and the people of all tongues but that he purchased out from among them those who had been given to him by the Father from eternity past. Beloved, I can never go to the Lord's Table the same again knowing that Jesus did not die for an anonymous blob of people but that as he went to the cross, it was with great intentionality and eternal and divine design that Jesus laid down his life for the sheep. And what a triumphant victory at the cross.

Verse 10, they continue to sing, "You have made them to be a kingdom," that is, a community of believers under God's sovereignty, "and priests to our God," which is a community of worshiping servants being presented before the throne of God, "and they will reign upon the earth." Revelation 20 gives great explanation to this reign of Christ upon the earth, and all of the redeemed reigning with Christ for a thousand blessed years upon this earth.

Verse 11, "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands." The word "myriads" means 10,000. It's the highest number in the Greek language. There is not a higher number than myriads. It's in the plural, which means ten thousands, plural, times ten thousands, plurals. That's billions. And then thousands of thousands, both of those are in the plural, that's millions. There are billions and millions of elect angels and elect saints around the throne of God in this extraordinary worship service all riveted upon the Lord Jesus Christ, "saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.'"

I want to bring to your attention in that verse power, riches, wisdom and might. This is what we call God's intrinsic glory. We cannot give to him power, for he already has all power. We cannot give to him riches because he already possesses all riches. We cannot give to him wisdom and might, for he is already omnipotent and has all wisdom. So what does this mean that they are giving to him this that he would receive it? And it is the recognition of the worship of these attributes that form his intrinsic glory that is taking place here, and the last three, honor, glory and blessing, these are what we call ascribed glory. It is the glory that we give to God that he so rightly deserves. The more we behold his intrinsic glory, the more we will give him ascribed glory. The more we understand of

his power, his riches, his wisdom and his might, the more we will give him honor and glory and blessing. The higher our understanding of his intrinsic glory, the greater will be the rendering from our lips of ascribed glory.

And now this statement in verse 13, "And every created thing," that is a universal statement, "which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them." This is anticipatory to the end of the age. As this looks ahead to the consummation of history, this looks to the end after the Lamb has broken the seals and he has rendered all of the seal and trumpet and bowl judgments and as he has brought all of human history to its appointed end, then every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth will all say this to him, "To Him who sits on the throne," that is, God the Father, "and to the Lamb," that is, God the Son, and here is the co-equality of the Father and the Son, "be blessing and honor and glory," that is, ascribed glory, "and dominion," that is, intrinsic glory, "forever and ever," and ever and ever. This is where all of human history is headed. This is where all of human history will end up with all the created beings on their knees, on their face before the Lord ascribing this worship, at the very end praising and giving the acknowledgment of who God is, some with tongues that are redeemed and others with tongues that will be damned forever and ever. This is Philippians 2:9 through 11 that we spoke of last night. "Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

And so verse 14 and we conclude this chapter, "And the four living creatures kept," falling down, they will keep falling down throughout all of the ages to come, throughout all of eternity future. There will never be an end to this scene. It will be replicated over and over again as far as the worship is concerned. They are crying out, "Amen! Amen! Amen!" Which means it is so. It is right. Yes, God, yes! And the elders fell down. They are overwhelmed with the manifestation of the glory of God and worshiped, and this word for "worship" means to kiss toward; to give allegiance; to give affection; to give adoration to God. And the more they behold the sovereignty and the sovereign grace of the Father and the Son and the Spirit, the more they will pour out their worship forever and ever.

Beloved, this scene needs to be taking place in your heart this very moment. This scene that we have seen needs to be replicated in our lives constantly. As Christ is the center of heaven, he must be the center of our lives upon this earth.

The name C. T. Studd may not be familiar to you. C. T. Studd was the Michael Jordan, the Tiger Woods of his day. He was the greatest athlete in all of England in the 19th century. He was one who grew up in one of the most affluent and rich families of England. He was given privileges that it would be impossible for us to understand. He lived a life of affluence and luxury and he was the greatest cricket player in all of England. His parents sent him to Cambridge where the elitist would go to school and C. T. Studd won fame and fortune on the cricket field that was second to none. He was the envy of the nation and Dwight L. Moody came to England and he preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and C. T. Studd recognized that, "I am a hell-bound race runner," and God dramatically saved this athlete with all of the affluence and he gave his life to Jesus

Christ and he announced at Cambridge he was going to the mission field. And not just any mission field, that he would go to China. And he formed a group called the Cambridge 7, and they were the elitists of the elite who had been conquered by the grace of God, and they began to dress in Chinese attire so that all of their classmates would know, "We are going to the ends of the earth with the gospel of Jesus Christ." And C. T. Studd and the other six got on a boat and they sailed to the other side of the world and they said goodbye to fame and goodbye to popularity and goodbye to fortune and goodbye to wealth, and they left it all behind to go to the mission field to tell others of this saving death of Jesus Christ.

While C. T. Studd was on the mission field, his father died and left him a king's ransom. He got on the boat and he sailed back to England and he took his inheritance and in 24 hours he gave away 9/10 of this vast estate. He just dissolved it, liquidated it and gave it away and got on a boat and went back to China. While he was there and then coming down to Africa, he met his wife to be. He gave her the other 10th of the vast estate and she gave it all away to missions. And someone asked C. T. Studd, "Why would you make such sacrifice?" C. T. Studd said, "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice is too great for me to make for him."

When we stand before the Lord in heaven and when we join our voices in this anthem of praise, it will become all the more real to our hearts and to our souls that no mountain was too high, no ocean too wide, no valley too deep, for us to forge or to climb or to crawl in the service of our Master as long as we are on this earth to extend the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Lord has been enthroned in the heavens and his sovereignty rules over all and he is ruling over your life, and he has created you for himself, and he has made you for a great purpose and that purpose is that you would glorify him. How would the Lord have you invest your life? How would the Lord have you give yourself to his work and to his kingdom? How should you spend the rest of your days here upon the earth? How can your life count most fully for this Lamb who was slain but is now standing? How can this Lion employ you in the rest of your days here upon this earth? May every one of us in this room rise up to bless his holy name and to ascribe to him the honor and the glory and the blessing that belongs exclusively and only to him. And the keyword is "only." It only goes to him.

Let us pray.