

Sermon Outline September 11, 2016
"A Door to MORE" Revelation 4:1-11

**After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing open* in heaven.
... (Revelation 4:1 NKJ)**

What is the meaning of life? What is the chief end of man? Why did God create us?

An ungodly world tells us there is no purpose or meaning to life! It tells us, meaning must be added by us, we have to create, imagine, and manufacture meaning for ourselves, for our otherwise meaningless lives.

Shakespeare through his character Macbeth cries -

*"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."*

*The Apostle John, banished to the prison Isle of Patmos, could have possibly (not likely) thought such things BUT he saw: a door **standing open in heaven**. A door showing something MORE!*

*I. A Door to MORE, we were created to live for
Heavenly / Spiritual Things -*

After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing open* in heaven. (Revelation 4:1 NKJ)

- 1. What kind of door was this? Wood? Metal? Pearl, like the pearly gates? ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. (Revelation 21:21 NKJ)*

*It does not matter what kind of door this was, John does not tell us!
What matters is what this door opens to, it opens to HEAVEN!*

I believe it opens to Heaven as it is NOW, and in some sense, as it always will be ...

- 2. What happens to John, in Revelation 4, is similar to what we see happening in 2 Kings 6:15-17*

And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" ¹⁶ So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who *are with us* are more than those who *are with them*." ¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.* (2 Kings 6:15-17 NKJ)

*As Elisha's servant, in answer to Elisha's prayers, was enabled to see spiritual warriors which were all around him. John through this door open in Heaven is enabled to SEE the invisible throne-room of God! Note in verse :2 how John describes himself, **Immediately I was in the Spirit;** In this state He was enabled to see SPIRITUAL THINGS and a vision of the invisible God!*

- 3. This tells us we were created for more than the here and now, the things we can feel, see, smell, taste, hear, we were created for a world that is Spiritual and Eternal –*

¹¹ **He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He (God) has put eternity in their hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJ)**

- 4. We were created to embrace SPIRITUAL, HEAVENLY THINGS, even now –*

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 NKJ)

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1 NKJ)

Some of you know I have been reading, as you have, a book that seems to be banging the drum ... 'Heaven is physical, Heaven is physical, Heaven is physical! Heaven has the best hamburgers!

However, the best MEALS, even here on our EARTHY EARTH are spiritual – But He answered and said, "It is written, `Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4 NKJ)

Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is good*; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him! (Psalm 34:8 NKJ)

Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were

filled.²⁷ "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." (John 6:26-27 NKJ)

And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35 NKJ)

In his book, Rumors of Another World, Philip Yancy, summarizes another book by Ernest Gordon, which I will summarize MORE:

- Prisoners in Japan worked in 120-degree heat, with limited clothing and no shoes!
- If their work slowed they would be beaten to death, if they kept going they usually died of illness or exhaustion.
- Gordon himself almost died in this place.
- A shovel was missing; all would be punished if no one confessed to taking it...
- One man, a Christian, confessed, in spite of not taking it, to save the other men – **John 15:13**
- Though the prisoners had hated and fought with each other before this event, now they started loving, caring and living for each other, because of Christ!
- They actually started a little university in the prison, teaching various subjects and languages according to each man's background – they truly found –

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 NKJ)

and

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred. (Proverbs 15:17 NKJ) See also Galatians 5:22-23

II. A Door to MORE, we were created to live for God's Kingdom, under His Sovereign RULE -

Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. (Revelation 4:2 NKJ)

This THRONE is of central importance in this passage, note the word throne (or thrones) is used 14 times in the 11 verses of this chapter and 5 more times in chapter 5,

Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.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.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.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.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. (Revelation 4:2-6 NKJ)

Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,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: (Revelation 4:9-10 NKJ)

And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. (Revelation 5:1 NKJ)

And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. (Revelation 5:6-7 NKJ)

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, (Revelation 5:11 NKJ)

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13 NKJ)

1. Note the throne is not described in detail, was it wood? Was it gold? No, it is symbolic of God's gracious and sovereign rule!

And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?" (Daniel 4:34-35 NKJ)

2. Note it is surrounded by twenty-four other thrones, sat on by the

twenty-four elders, representing the twelve tribes of the Old Testament and the twelve apostles of the New, who represent all true believers of all ages, meaning we have a role to play in God's kingdom –

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:8-10 NKJ)

3. How do we live for God's Kingdom?

A. We pray for it, and make it our highest priority –

Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. (Matthew 6:10 NKJ)

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:33 NKJ)

Note, it is not MY kingdom come, we are supposed to pray, but THY Kingdom Come, THY will be done!

B. We fight for it, and against Satan's as those "delivered"

**He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, (Colossians 1:13 NKJ)
See also Ephesians 6:10-13 ----**

C. We fight in different ways, He is a different King –

**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.⁴
For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, (2 Corinthians 10:3-4 NKJ)**

D. Our King is called a Lamb –

fell down before the Lamb ... (Revelation 5:8 NKJ)

E. His ways are not our ways –

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJ)

• *The rainbow around the throne shows us His great grace - and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an*

emerald. (Rev 4:3 NKJ)

- The lightning, thunder and voices from the throne communicate His perfect Law and Justice –*

⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. (Rev 4:5 NKJ)

- The Seven Spirits represent the Holy Spirit: fire, light and life which He gives -*

Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (Rev 4:5 NKJ)

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. (John 6:63 NKJ)

You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.³⁰ You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth.³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever; May the LORD rejoice in His works. (Psalm 104:29-31 NKJ)

“Well then, I will tell you. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions will die for Him. . . . I think I understand something of human nature; and I tell you, all these were men, and I am a man; none else is like Him: Jesus Christ was more than a man. . . . I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would have died for me . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them, I lightened up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man toward the unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy; He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him, experience that remarkable, supernatural love toward Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great

destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This is it, which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ.”
Napoleon Bonaparte, Answering the question who is Jesus Christ?

III. *A Door to MORE, We were created to live for God's glory –*

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!"⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,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: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." (Revelation 4:8-11 NKJ)

1. *Note the wonderful four living creatures:*

- A. *Each has six wings, enabling them to do God's will QUICKLY*
- B. *Full of eyes, in God presence, they behold His glory, this requires superior vision*
- C. *Full of eyes "within" they know themselves, they are mere creatures though gloriously made, they stay humble*
- D. *They rest not; they are NEVER TIRED, NEVER BORED, how could they be? They are forever in the presence of He who is Holy, Holy, Holy!*

They are particularly fitted for their environment, nearness to the throne of God, just as polar bears and penguins are fit for cold weather.

- 2. *We are different, at least now, from the four living creatures; Through God we are fit to give God a different kind of glory –*
 - A. *Our mobility is relatively more sluggish, Jacob limps (Genesis 32:31) and even the young grow weary (Isaiah 40:30) except by God's special empowering –*

But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31 NKJ)

B. Our vision of God is much more limited –
For now we see in a mirror, dimly, ...1 Corinthians 13:12 NKJ)

And apart from God's grace we are blind to God's Kingdom –
Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJ)

C. Our vicinity to God seems more distant, farther from God's throne –
"I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (Revelation 2:13 NKJ)

D. Yet, we were created with the capacity to give glory to God even in weakness, suffering and death, as our Lord Jesus Christ did –
Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Romans 8:35-37 NKJ)

“Before the winds that blow do cease,
Teach me to dwell within Thy calm;
Before the pain has passed in peace,
Give me, my God, to sing a psalm,
Let me not lose the chance to prove
The fullness of enabling love.
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.

Before I leave the desert land
For meadows of immortal flowers,
Lead me where streams at Thy command
Flow by the borders of the hours,
That when the thirsty come, I may
Show them the fountains in the way.
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.

AMY CARMICHAEL

Arnold Brevick