

Praise and Thanksgiving: Praise the Creator

by Warren Wiersbe

Warren Wiersbe emphasizes the importance of worshiping the Creator as central to a balanced Christian life.

Duration: 38:19

Scripture: Isaiah 40:11-12, Isaiah 40:22, Isaiah 40:25, Revelation 5:9, Revelation 5:13

Topics: "Heavenly Worship", "Gods Presence"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Revelation chapter 4 and highlights the central theme of worship in heaven. The chapter describes John's arrival in heaven, where he sees a throne at the center, symbolizing God's presence. The preacher emphasizes the repetition of the word 'throne' throughout the book of Revelation, emphasizing its significance. The sermon also mentions the four living creatures and the 24 elders who offer praise and worship to God. The preacher concludes that everything in heaven revolves around the throne and the worship of the God of creation.

Transcript

That masterful hymn of praise that we have just sung is based upon inspired scripture in Revelation chapter 4. The Apostle John writes, after this I looked and behold a door was opened in heaven and the first voice that I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me which said come up here and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

And immediately I was in the spirit and behold a throne was set in heaven and one sat on the throne and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardius stone and there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like an emerald and round about the throne were four and twenty thrones and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns of gold and out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God and before the throne there was a sea of glass like crystal and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind and the first living creature was

like a lion and the second living creature was like a calf and the third living creature had a face like a man and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle and the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him and they were full of eyes within and they rest not day and night saying holy holy holy Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come and when those living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him that is seated on the throne who liveth forever and ever the four and twenty elders fall

before him that is seated on the throne and worship him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory and honor and power for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were

created may the Lord help us to worship on earth even as God is worshipped in heaven the greatest need in our lives personally today and the greatest need I think in the life of our churches today is for true spiritual worship I appreciate the privilege you give me of ministering in other places I learn a great deal from it there are some churches that I visit where the emphasis is devotional and the important thing is walking with the Lord there are other churches that I visit where the emphasis is on serving the working for the Lord and there are places where I visit where the emphasis is on witnessing getting out and telling others about the Lord and each of these is important but the tragedy is that they are not blended together into a balanced Christian life and I think the reason

why they are not blended together why as churches and as Christians we get out of balance is because with all of our emphasis on walking and witnessing and working we forget worshiping because walking with the Lord and witnessing of the Lord and working for the Lord are all byproducts of worshiping the Lord some years ago the Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple gave us what I think is the greatest definition of worship I've ever read he said to worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God to feed the mind with the truth of God to purge the imagination by the beauty of God to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God and if we ever worshiped like that it would keep us in balance and we would be walking with the Lord and witnessing of

the Lord and working for the Lord in Revelation chapter 4 John in the spirit goes to heaven and when he gets to heaven he finds himself involved in a worship service I suppose there is no chapter in the Bible that has more of an awesomeness of the worship of God than Revelation chapter 4 and perhaps it would improve our own worship as a church and quicken our own worship as individuals if we would join John in this worship service and discover from Revelation chapter 4 some basic truths that will help us to have a balanced Christian life the first truth that comes to me as I meditate on Revelation chapter 4 is simply this rather obvious heaven is a place of worship when John arrived in heaven he didn't say where's James I want to see him you know James had his head cut off by a Herod and

I want to see him didn't say that at all when John arrives in heaven in the spirit he looks and he listens and he learns he looks and he sees all of heaven centered in a throne 46 times in the book of Revelation you'll find the word throne 14 times in Revelation chapter 4 what is the center of heaven a throne and everything in this chapter is related to the throne on the throne is God and he doesn't even begin to describe him because he can't he refers to two beautiful stones the Jasper which was clear and the Sardius stone which was red it's as though we have the holiness of God depicted there in those stones on the throne is God around the throne and emerald rainbow and around the throne 24 thrones and seated on each throne a white robe gold crowned elder and in the midst of the throne

and around the throne for amazing living creatures one with a face like a lion and the other like a calf and the other like a man and the other like a flying eagle and they're around the throne and before the throne a sea of glass clear as crystal and before the throne seven torches burning symbolizing the Holy Spirit of God and out of the throne thunder and lightning and voices as though God is saying a storm is about to break loose on the world and to the throne comes the praise of the four living creatures and to the throne comes the praise of the 24 elders everything in heaven is centered on the throne and they're praising the God of creation the living creatures are saying holy holy holy Lord God Almighty and the 24 elders are

saying thou art worthy to receive glory and honor and

power for thou has created all things and for thy pleasure or by thy will they are and were created heaven is a place of worship you see all of the furniture of heaven and all of the arrangement of heaven parallels the temple on earth in the temple there was the throne of God in the Holy of Holies there's a throne of God in heaven before the throne on earth there was the labor filled with water before the throne in heaven is a sea of glass before the throne on earth there was a seven branched candlestick before the throne in heaven are seven torches speaking of the Holy Spirit embroidered upon the veil of the temple were these creatures the chariot beam but standing before God as he is on his throne and worshipping him are these four living creatures in other words all of heaven is a

temple and in that temple heaven is worshipping God and John not only looked and beheld these things but he listened and he heard the living creatures praising God he heard the elders praising God in chapter 5 he hears the living creatures praising God and the elders praising God and then the angels join in that mighty chorus verse 11 of chapter 5 and I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice worthy is the Lamb that was slain and when you go through the book of the Revelation you'll find that it is a book of praising God verse 13 of chapter 5 every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth joins in that

great chorus of praise to God heaven is a place of worship and we're taught to pray thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven earth ought to be a place of worship John learned from this the importance of worship what is heaven doing worshipping what is the focal point of heaven a throne God on the throne everything is related to that throne and the praises of heaven are presented to the throne of God now someone says that we aren't in heaven that's rather obvious but interestingly enough we are able to praise God even though we're here on earth did you notice please not only is heaven a place of worship that's the first truth that we get but heaven worships the Creator it's not until chapter 5 that they worship the Redeemer and then later on they worship the judge and then they worship

the King but when John first gets to heaven he doesn't hear worthy is the Lamb that was slain they aren't singing hallelujah for the blood and the lamb that was slain they are singing to the Creator I recall when I was in seminary one of the students had been out to preach at a youth meeting and he came home very disgusted he said do you know what kind of songs they sang at that youth meeting I said no I don't know well he said they sang this is my father's world I said what's wrong with the song with this is my father's world this is my father's world what's wrong with praising God for being the Creator not only is heaven a place of worship but when heaven worships God heaven worships the Creator this is the purpose for the four living creatures look at verse 7 before the throne of God

and around the throne of God are these four living creatures some people equate them with the cherubim some with the seraphim but one living creature like a lion now there you have the wild animals one like a calf there you have the domesticated animals one like a man there's the human kingdom and one like a flying eagle those are the birds these are the same creatures that God talked about to Noah turn back with me to Genesis chapter 9 and let's uncover a truth that we as Christians need to rediscover Genesis chapter 9 verse 8 and God spoke unto Noah and to his sons with him saying and I behold I establish my covenant with you there's man and with your seed after you and with every living creature that is with you of the fowl there's the eagle of the cattle there's the calf and of every

beast of the earth there's the lion with you from all that go out of the ark to every beast of the earth now what is his covenant and I will establish my covenant with you neither shall all flesh be cut off anymore by the waters of a flood neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth then God gives the rainbow as the token of the covenant now let's go back to heaven God made a covenant with nature in the flood God had seemed to destroy everything that he had made but God made a covenant with nature he made that covenant with the birds and the domesticated animals and the wild animals and with man and he said I will never again destroy you you are under a curse ever since the sin of Adam you've been under a curse but I'll never again destroy you with water and to give you

the assurance of this I'm gonna make the rainbow the token now back up in heaven there's a rainbow not not part of a rainbow but all of a rainbow all around the throne the rainbow of the grace of God all around the throne whenever God sends forth judgment he always remembers mercy and before the throne are the representatives of nature worshipping God do you know what the truth is we get from this right now all of nature is worshipping God these creatures up in heaven represent nature God's covenant with nature and the nature that God the Creator has made is worshipping God they're worshipping God constantly and they're worshipping God together and they're worshipping his holiness and they're worshipping his power he's Lord God Almighty and they're worshipping his eternity who was and is

and is to come nature is worshipping God you see we evangelicals have the idea that to talk this way makes you a liberal a pantheist but read the book of Psalms when David looked out upon nature he saw all of nature praising and worshipping God the heavens declare the glory of God the firmament showeth his handiwork Psalm 148 storms and winds fulfilling his word everything in nature worships the Creator except people and we're made in the image of God and we have the most to gain from it and we have more reason for doing it and yet the lowest the lowest life praises God I've been reading over in Psalm 96 if you want to have an interesting encounter with something read Psalm 96 and then reads part of Psalm 98 let me read it to you Psalm 96 Oh sing unto the Lord a new song now if you do

that people will get mad at you but do it anyway sing unto the Lord all the earth sing unto the Lord bless his name for the Lord is great and greatly to be praise verse 8 give unto the Lord the glory do his name worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness verse 11 let the heavens rejoice let the earth be glad let the sea roar and the fullness thereof let the field be joyful and all that is therein then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice before the Lord for he cometh for he cometh to judge the earth Paul tells me in Romans chapter 8 that all of creation is standing on tiptoe stretching out its neck looking for Jesus to come back that's more than Christians are doing the trees of the field are looking for the Savior to come back one of them was used for his crucifixion one of them was

used for his cradle Jesus was a carpenter no wonder the trees are looking for him to come back how about Psalm 98 verse 7 let the sea roar and the fullness thereof the world and they that dwell therein let the floods clap their hands you ever stand by the ocean and look upon the waves and think of the waves as clapping their hands let the hills be joyful together before the Lord for he cometh all of creation is groaning and travailing in pain but all of creation is represented before the throne of God worshipping the Creator and anticipating his return and so we're living in a world that worships God a world of nature is it not tragic that the human beings in this world don't worship God this is why nature and man are not getting along with each other this is why you have pollution and all

these troubles because nature is here to glorify God and man is here to glorify himself and man's here not to exalt God through nature but to exploit nature and forget God and that's why we're in the mess we're in

and yet I wonder how many churches today would pause to praise the Creator there's a third truth that comes from Revelation chapter 4 heaven is a place of worship and heaven is worshiping the Creator and the church should worship the Creator I notice here that when those four living creatures praise God then the elders who represent the church fall before the throne cast their crowns before him and they praise God when nature praises God the church should praise God now these 24 elders are generally considered to typify the church they aren't angels angels don't sit on thrones

and wear crowns these are the representatives of the resurrected glorified transformed church and when the church hears nature praising God then the church falls down before God and praises him likewise and says thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory and honor and power for thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created now you cannot really praise the Creator if you don't know the Redeemer these people had been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ mr.

Moody said when he got saved the sky was bluer and the grass was greener and the birds sang sweeter than ever before and when you know the Redeemer you can praise the Creator and you know it would cure a lot of the sicknesses of the Saints if they'd learn to praise God the Creator I'm just going to list quickly for you some of the benefits that you and I would receive if we just take time to praise the Creator remember he's the Creator not just the Redeemer the Creator not just the judge the Creator what are some of the benefits well number one it'll help to keep you from sinning the essence of sin is to worship and serve the creature not the Creator and when you forget the Creator you become your own God and sin is a lot easier over in Romans chapter 1 that's where the whole trouble

begins they worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator and they went from idolatry to immorality to indifference to indulgence to judgment I tell you my friend when you stop to worship the Creator who made your body you'll be careful what you do with your body one of the good benefits that comes from worshiping the Creator is it helps to give you victory over sin I'm just the creature he's the Creator he's the one who should control my life something else when you worship the Creator you have no problem with obedience they fell down before him and took their crowns and cast them at his feet when you realize he's the Creator he's in charge of everything he speaks and a plant grows up to shelter the Prophet he speaks again a little worm comes and destroys the plant God's in

control of the galaxies the black spots out there he's in control of the the genes and the chromosomes he's in control of every detail of nature and he wants to be in control of our lives and when you worship him as the Creator the holy almighty Creator it makes you realize you're just a piece of clay and you'd better let him mold your life makes it easier to surrender and obey I think something else is true when you worship the Creator it makes you a better steward of what God gives you you don't take for granted things like food and water and clothing and shelter and you make better use of them as I said before the reason we have polluted water and filthy air and contaminated food is because men have divorced creation from the Creator and they're worshiping and serving the creature and

we have broken the laws and forgotten the principles that God has laid down in this world and so we've made a mess of it by the way in the book of Revelation chapter 11 and verse 18 God says I'm gonna destroy them that are destroying the earth 80 times 80 times in the book of the Revelation the earth is mentioned God's concerned about the earth God's concerned about what we're doing with his air and his water and his property and one day we'll answer for it but when you worship the Creator and you realize that all these things come from his hand it makes you a better steward another wonderful benefit that comes when you worship the Creator it gives you strength I don't know how many times in my days I've

had to turn back to Isaiah chapter 40 maybe you want to look with me just now Isaiah

chapter 40 here are the Jewish people going back to the promised land after their sojourn in captivity and they are beat and they're discouraged and they're defeated at all they just don't know if they can make it or not you know what the does in Isaiah chapter 40 he says now folks I want you to realize I'm the Creator verse 12 who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and measured out heaven with the span and measured the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance did you ever do that no God says I did who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord or being his counselor hath taught him verse 18 to whom then will you liken God or what likeness will you compare unto him verse 21 have ye not known have ye not heard hath it not been

told you from the beginning have you not understood from the foundations of the earth it is he who sit upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are like grasshoppers he who stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain and spreadeth them out like a tent to dwell in verse 25 to whom then will you liken me or shall I be equal saith the Lord lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things who bringeth out their host by number he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might for he is strong in power not one faileth verse 28 hast thou not known hast thou not heard that the everlasting God the Lord the creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not neither is weary he giveth power to the faint and to those who have no might he increases strength even the

youth shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint I tell you my friend when you worship the Creator and see how great he is and how strong he is his strength comes to you where do you get your strength when you're facing the burdens and the battles of life where do you get your strength I suggest that you just bow before him and say oh God you're great and I'm small here I am as I wait before you renew my strength when you realize the greatness of God everything that bothers you starts to get smaller when you're going through suffering the Creator is the one who helps you Peter writes in first Peter 4:19 that we

should commit ourselves unto the faithful creator when they're suffering and persecution and Jesus said that worshipping the Creator is the best cure for worry oh we like to worry we don't admit it we don't call it worry we're burdened but it's worry keeps us awake at night it's not what we're eating it's what's eating us you know how Jesus tells us to keep from worrying he said if you watch the birds lately the birds you can have an autopsy on a bird when he dies and you'll discover he didn't die from ulcers now my friends not everyone who has ulcers worries there's many many things that can cause ulcers I'm sure and headaches and backaches and all the problems that come with worry but nature doesn't worry when you see the sparrows fluttering around they aren't worrying they're praising

the Creator they know that their father is right there with them even when they fall the flowers aren't worrying behold the lilies of the field they toil not neither do they spin sounds like some Christians but they don't worry their father in heaven takes care of them and so Jesus says in Matthew chapter 6 what are you worrying about God is the Creator and the Creator is your father that's the message he tried to get across not a faraway God who made the machinery and wound it up and oiled it went on a vacation but a heavenly father who watches over us and Jesus says why should you worry why should you be anxious and trouble Jesus didn't worry about food his father supplied his food he didn't worry about storms his father took care of the storms he didn't even worry about death his

father took care of that and so we don't have to worry oh if we just take time to worship the Creator how great he is but you see you really can't worship the Creator unless the Creator is your father and when the Creator is your father then all of creation is yours not only is all that is happening working together for your good but all that is here is there for you Paul says all things are yours whether life or death whatever it is it's yours and you're God's and so we don't have to worry and be weak we can get strength and power and the supply of every need if we just remember we're creatures he's the Creator we're the clay he's the potter we are low before the throne giving him our crowns he is seated on the throne exercising his goodwill oh worship the Creator heaven is a place of

worship so should earth be heaven worships the Creator and the church should worship the Creator because that Creator is Jesus Christ all things were made by him and for him and through him all things hold together and he is before all things and we can say before him today worthy art thou to receive honor and glory and power for thou didst create all things including us and by thy will and for thy pleasure they are and they were created and oh God I want that my life shall be in your will and my life shall bring you pleasure even as Jesus said I do always those things that please him if you don't know this Creator as your father you can when you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior then the Creator becomes your father and then you can sing this is my father's world and no matter what comes

to me or what happens my father's in control I don't have to worry he's on the throne and I know him worship the Creator and the Creator will work in your life to do things you never dreamed of for his glory thank you gracious father that we can call you father that we worship not a distant creator who is unconcerned we worship a loving father who is concerned about us I pray for those here who have never been saved who have never trusted you that today they might come and trust I pray for the Saints who are struggling that they might get a new burst of strength and power today I pray for those who are playing with sin abusing your creation Oh God call them to a life of worship and holiness and help us as a church to live as those who love and serve the great Creator for truly you are

great receive our praise and thanksgiving in Jesus name amen

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