

Session 3 Introduction to the Beauty Realm of God (Rev. 4)

I. THE CHURCH AT THE END OF THE AGE: ENCOUNTERING GOD’S BEAUTY

- A. The Spirit is orchestrating a worldwide worship and prayer movement. The revelation of how God delights in us and beautifies us is one of core truths and entry points into this movement. One of the most significant foundations to restore in the Church is the doctrine of God’s beauty and desire. Why? Because it is essential to fueling the End-Time prayer movement which releases God’s glory and power.

⁴ *For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation. (Psalm 149:4)*

- B. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus’ beauty would be revealed to God’s people in the End-Times (Isa. 4:2). There is a compelling power in the revelation of beauty. It answers an ache in our soul that was put there by God. We are born with an ache for the realm of beauty. We cannot live healthy without beauty. Beauty is intrinsic to emotional health. It is a vast subject.

² *In that day the Branch of the LORD (Messiah) shall be beautiful and glorious. (Isa. 4:2)*

- C. The revelation of God’s beauty is key to living holy and interpreting God’s judgments at the end of the age. We can resist sin much better when our hearts are fascinated. Also, we interpret His judgments as destroying what hinders love and beauty. When believers live in this reality, there is no contradiction of Jesus as Bridegroom and Judge. It is a different paradigm of judgment.

- D. The study of God’s beauty takes time. It will come slowly for all of us. There is a sense in which you may get a lot in a short time, yet there is even a greater sense that this is a life long treasure hunt. God’s grace imparts a new resolve and assurance that we will have more as we start by establishing new paradigms of God’s beauty. The only way forward is long and loving meditation that includes prayer with fasting and a pursuit of 100-fold obedience.

- E. The hungry become more hungry because hunger begets hunger. A little depth in God makes us hungry for more. A beginning hunger for God beckons us and thrusts us into more depth in God, which in turn makes us hungry for deeper things in God. Hunger catapults us into more depth.

⁷ *Deep calls unto deep... (Ps. 42:7)*

- F. The knowledge of God is not neutral information. It is information with power that beckons, catapults and pulls us into greater depths. God’s river is called desire. Hunger for God is painful. The hunger may feel good in the initial stages, but later it is painful as we become so much more aware of what we do not know and how shallow we actually are. The pain of spiritual hunger is God’s gift to us. It assures that we will keep moving forward. “Blessed are those that mourn” (Mt. 5:4). God gives more based on hunger. You receive salvation based on our need. For years we can feel like we are doing good spiritually. Then, the power of the knowledge of God begins to touch our hearts. We then begin to long for and even ache *for what we do not have*. Then, the journey is not so enjoyable. We are more spiritually discontent than ever before. We have a vision and resolve in our heart to press on to the know the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:10).

II. BEAUTY REALM OF GOD (REV. 4-5)

- A. Revelation 4 and 5 gives us the highest revelation of God’s beauty in Scripture. God started with a blank canvas. He could have put anything around His throne that He wanted. What the beautiful God put around His throne expresses His beauty to creation. It is all very strategic. I call Rev. 4-5, the “beauty realm of God” and the “heavenly symphony.”
- B. In Rev. 4, there are 15 “doors” that open our understanding into the revelation of the beauty of God. There are 5 main subjects that each have 3 dimensions. In other words, there are 15 distinct hints or doorways into God’s beauty. If one of these doorways interests you, then knock on that door and the Holy Spirit will open your understanding to that dimension of God’s beauty.

III. OUTLINE OF REV. 4

- A. Rev. 4:1-7, describes the 15 “doorways” into understanding God’s beauty as seen in His governmental center. There are 5 main subjects that gives us a dynamic picture of God’s beauty.
 - 1. The ultimate reality: God’s life, Throne, and Person (Rev. 4:2)
 - 2. The beauty of God: what He looks like, feels like, and acts like (Rev. 4:3).
 - 3. The beauty of God’s partner: the Church enthroned, robed, and crowned (Rev. 4:4).
 - 4. God and His people in unity: manifestations of power (lightning, thunder, sounds; Rev. 4:5a).
 - 5. The Spirit’s fire: on the Throne, the seraphim and the saints (Rev. 4:5b-7; 15:2)
- B. Rev. 4:8-10, describes the foundational song or the ultimate song of the heavenly symphony as the seraphim cry, “Holy, holy, holy.” It is the song of which all the other songs flow out of. The word “holy” means transcendent beauty. Those nearest the throne are the seraphim who are awestruck. This is the inevitable response that is produced by gazing on God’s beauty. The revelation of God’s beauty always produces fascination which produces happy holiness.
- C. Rev. 4:11 is the first “worthy” song. The elders cry, "You are worth it God! You deserve it! This is how much you are worth to me." After the Father's beauty had been revealed and His worth declared, then His plan for His Son and created order comes into light (Rev. 5). The two main dimensions in worship are God’s beauty and worth, which will be declared continually forever. The two doors we knock on are beauty and worthy. These are two sides of one coin.
- D. The worth of Jesus becomes the main focus in Rev. 5:9 and 12. These are the only two songs specifically declaring Jesus’ “worth” in Scripture. Why? What it costs Him to be slain is revealed in knowing the beauty He possessed before He was slain. We see the transcendent beauty of the second person of the Trinity, who became man. The worthy one of Rev. 5:9 and 12 is seen as the innocent man becomes a slain lamb. He became a criminal under God’s judgment so you and I could be exalted into the glory of God. We understand that the innocent man was in such weakness compared to His former glory, in the fullness of the Godhead. He died for us, thus we cry, "You are worth it! To know where Jesus descended from and where He is exalting us to changes the way we cry out, “worthy is the Lamb.”

IV. ULTIMATE REALITY: GOD’S LIFE, THRONE AND PERSON (REV. 4:2)

¹ After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." ² Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a Throne set in heaven, and One sat on the Throne. (Rev. 4:1-2)

- A. I was in the Spirit – the realm of supernatural life and power. John shares that he was temporarily experiencing a new realm of life as he was engulfed by God’s Spirit. There will be times when we will be engulfed in the Spirit in God’s service now and will be forever in the resurrection. John is in the realm where God’s truths are powerfully felt and where they come alive in his understanding. He is in a realm where truth awakens love in his heart. He feels the power of the Spirit on his body. He experiences the anointing of the Spirit, where everything moves us to God and fills us with the exhilaration of love. Living in the Spirit is essential to unlocking this reality.
- B. A Throne set in heaven – this acknowledges the finality and certainty of the Father’s plans. A set Throne is not a temporary one. There is a Throne which guarantees that God’s plans will come to pass. There is a plan that is sure and our destiny cannot be stopped. To see this, gives us full assurance that we cannot lose. The focus of John's vision was God's Throne, which he referred to 40 times in Revelation.
- C. One sat on the Throne – John sees a real Person on the Throne with fiery emotions and a vast intellect. He has all power. A real Person is at the governmental center of the universe. He is so watchful and so thoughtful as He thinks about us, watches, and cares about us. What goes on in your heart affects His heart. He feels your pain and is planning good things for you. We are not alone; we will live together with Him. The Eternal City is a place where all are God-centered.

V. BEAUTY OF GOD: WHAT GOD LOOKS LIKE, FEELS LIKE AND ACTS LIKE (REV. 4:3)

³ 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. (Rev. 4:3)

- A. Like a jasper stone (crystal) – He has radiant translucent splendor (Rev. 21:11, 18-19). The Enthroned God dwells in transcendent beauty. The Father has purposefully veiled His beauty in obscurity. The idea is that He will unveil it to us progressively. This is what God looks like.
- B. Like a sardius stone (deep red gem) – He has fiery desire in redemption and judgment (Rev. 21:10). The sardius speaks of what God feels like in His burning passion.
- C. The appearance of an emerald rainbow focuses on God’s covenant mercies covering all the activity of His Throne. The emerald rainbow speaks of how God acts in tender mercy. The rainbow is first seen in Gen. 9:13-16. We cry, “the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever.”

¹³ I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth...¹⁶ I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant... (Gen. 9:13-16)

VI. BEAUTY OF GOD’S PARTNER: ENTHRONED, ROBED AND CROWNED (REV. 4:4)

⁴ *Around the Throne were 24 thrones, and on the thrones I saw 24 elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. (Rev. 4:4)*

- A. God’s Throne is adorned by the honor and dignity of the saints around Him. John saw God’s desire for full partnership with His people. The saints will sit on thrones (Rev.2:28; 3:21; Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30). In this, we see the dignity and honor of His people.
- B. The elders are enthroned with God’s authority.
- C. The elders are clothed in white robes – undefiled priestly garments of worship (Rev. 3:4-5, 18)
- D. The elders are wearing gold crowns (Rev. 2:10; 3:11).

VII. GOD AND HIS PEOPLE IN UNITY: MANIFESTATION OF POWER (REV. 4:5A).

⁵ *From the Throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. (Rev. 4:5a)*

- A. God’s Throne is adorned by the atmosphere around Him. Out of the Father’s being and Throne proceeds much glorious and terrifying activity.
- B. Lightning – release of Divine energy and splendor (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16: 18)
- C. Thunderings – Divine messages with power (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18)
- D. Voices (sounds, noises) – Divine music with mystery (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16: 18)
- E. Other facets of the activity of God’s Throne that touch the earth in the Book of Revelation are earthquakes (Rev. 8:5; 11:19; 16:18) and hail (Rev. 11:19; 16:18).
- F. At Mt. Sinai, the Israelites saw and heard thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, a loud trumpet and an earthquake (Ex. 19:16-18). These appear in each of the Theophanies in Scripture, including Acts 2.

¹⁶ *Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. (Ex. 19:16-18)*

VIII. THE SPIRIT’S FIRE: ON THE THRONE, THE SERAPHIM AND THE SAINTS (4:5B-7; 15:2)

⁵ *Seven lamps (torches) 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 (seraphim) full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calves, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. (Rev. 4:5b-7)*

² *I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast (Antichrist)...standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (Rev. 15:2)*

- A. God’s Throne adorned by the manifestation of His fire before His Throne showing us the highest expression of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 5:6). Seven lamps of fire were burning torches of Holy Spirit fire (hovering over the sea?).
- B. Sea of glass like crystal (Rev. 22:1) that is covered with flaming fire and shows forth God’s splendor. The saints will be gathered in heaven just before the Rapture. They will stand on sea of glass mingled with fire (Rev. 15:2). I believe this to be the gathering place in the Eternal City to appear before God.
- C. Ezekiel saw Jesus’ Throne with a rainbow as it sat on a sapphire crystal surface.
²² *The likeness of the firmament above the...living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal...²⁶ above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a Throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the Throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man (Jesus) high above it...²⁸ Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. (Ezek. 1:22-28)*
- D. Seraphim or the “fiery ones” are the attendants around God’s Throne. The word seraphim means the “burning ones.” They show forth four faces of God’s beauty in redemption. They are a picture of those fully alive in the life of God or of life in the Spirit. God’s Throne is adorned by the seraphim around Him.

IX. THE FOUNDATIONAL SONG IN THE HEAVENLY SYMPHONY

⁸ *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!" (Rev. 4:8)*

- A. To be Holy means “to be totally separate from” something.
- B. To be pure is to be totally separated from everything sinful.
- C. To be transcendent is to be totally separated from everything common. In other words, God is infinitely superior to everything created. He is “wholly other than” or transcendent in His beauty.