



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 4:1-11 Revelation

“The Throne of God”

TRANSCRIPT

Chapter 4, the book of Revelation begins the third division of the book and so it's an important text. They're all important, but this is important in terms of the progress of the book. So we are in Revelation chapter 4. This morning we are going to look at the entire chapter, verses 1 through 11.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.’ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.

“Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne *there was something* like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. The first creature *was* like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, ‘HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *is* THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.’ And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the

throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.' ” May the Lord bless this reading of His Word. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, we do thank You for this time together. We thank You for this opportunity to come together as the body of Christ to sing hymns of praise to You, to read the Scriptures as we have, to worship You. That's what heaven does. That's what glorious creatures above do day and night, constantly. They sing your praises. They can't help but sing Your praises, and they enjoy singing Your praises. May that be true of each one of us. May this time of worship, of singing, of reading the Scriptures, of considering the meaning of them together, may that be a time of joyful worship, and may it be a time of great edification for each of us. May we be built up in the faith through our time of study together.

This is an important time of the week. You know that, Father, and You had set it aside for us. It's the Lord's day. It's the day when Your people are to gather together and to worship You and to learn about You. And it's a time when our minds are to focus upon Your Word, that they may be nourished. And we're certainly to do that every day of the week. We're to open our Bibles. We're to read them, and think about the truths that we have read, and we're to enter into prayer, and come into Your throne room, and come boldly to the throne of grace. We're to do that every day, but this is a day You've set aside and call us to meet, and to learn, and to gain perspective on life at the beginning of the week, the first day of the week. And so we pray for that. We pray that our time together this morning would be one in which our minds are set straight. We pray that our time together would result in advancing our knowledge of You, of deepening our communion with You, and through all of that, causing us to serve you faithfully in all that You've called us to do, whether it's in the home, at work, at school, in the neighborhood, here at the church, wherever it is, Father, enable us to serve You faithfully and well. Build us up in the faith.

Thank You for all those who serve at the chapel. We thank You for the secretaries and the maintenance personnel, and all of those who work in the tape ministry and radio ministry, and each aspect, the nursery, the mercy ministry, all of the various ministries we have, the teachers during the week, the women's ministries, we thank You for them and pray that You'd bless each in the

service that they render. Bless all of us in the work that we seek to do for You. And we do it with joy. May our time together in study be to that end, and give us a sense of joy and privilege in the position we have in Your church, in Your body, and we pray that it would be something that certainly does give us reason to rejoice and glorify You.

So we pray You'd bless us spiritually, Lord, but we pray also for the material needs of life, and we have them. We are dependent upon You for everything that we have physically, materially. We pray for those who are sick. Some are seriously ill. The list is long. You know the needs. We pray for them and pray You'd bless them. We pray that You'd bless us now and prepare our hearts for time of study. Pray these things in Christ's name, Amen.

In London, deep under its streets near parliament, there are some bunkers that are known as the cabinet war rooms. Today, they are the Churchill Museum. When Winston Churchill first entered them shortly after becoming prime minister, he said, "This is the room from which I will direct the war." And from there, he worked to defeat an evil enemy. Some of you, I know, have been there and have gone down into that subterranean place and been able to see where some of the most important decisions of the 20th century were made.

Centuries earlier, the apostle John had a similar experience, and yet one that was really very different. He went up into heaven, into the throne room of God, where the Almighty directs the world. And in Revelation 4, we are given a glimpse of it. Following the general outline of the book of Revelation that's given back in 1:19, John has written "the things which *he has seen*" when he recorded the vision of Christ that he had in chapter 1. He has recounted "the things which are," with the state of the seven churches of Asia, which show the Lord's deep concern and care for His church in all ages. Now the third portion of the book is about to begin, "the things which will take place after these things." Future events that will precede the coming of Christ and His kingdom on the earth. They will be events of war, and plagues, and great tribulations such as the world has never known, a period of conflict in which Satan and antichrist will seek to destroy the people of God. God will pour out His judgments on the unbelieving world and the forces of evil will attempt to frustrate God's plan and purpose.

These are the things which will take place. But before John is given a vision of that, he is given a vision of heaven and the throne of God. Before the tribulation is revealed, he is encouraged with a revelation of God's sovereign glory. Chapters 4 and 5 are really somewhat

pivotal in the book of Revelation. They relate as much to chapters 2 and 3 as they do to chapters 6 through 22. They were as important to the church in John's day and are as important to us as they will be to God's people in the future. In John's time, the church faced persecution from the Roman empire. In fact, we read about that in other places in the New Testament. Peter wrote of the fiery ordeal among you. And he said, "Don't be surprised by it."

Well, we shouldn't be surprised by it, either. The church will always be opposed and oppressed in this world if we're living by faith and if we're serving the Lord. But what we must always remember is that God is on His throne. He has not let go of the reins of history. He is ruling the world. And we need to remember that in the trials of life because they will come. If they don't come from men, if they don't come because of our faith and the expression of it, they will come because we're simply living for Him and we live in a fallen world and the evil one will make life difficult for us. He has his ways of doing that. But we should never forget the great message of this text, which is a message we find throughout the Word of God, and that is God is on His throne. He is ruling in the midst of it all.

That's the vision John is given in chapter 4. He has finished writing the letters to the seven churches, maybe some time has passed since he laid down his pen. John is sitting on the lonely island of Patmos when he looks up and he sees a door standing open in heaven. And then he hears a voice. He calls it the first voice. It's the voice that he heard back in chapter 1 that told him to write this book. It's the voice of Christ, which spoke with majestic authority. In fact, if we go back to 1:10, we're told that the voice had "*the sound of a trumpet.*" And here it's "*the sound of a trumpet*" that he hears again, and the Lord said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." So again, as in chapter 1, John finds himself in the Spirit, under the Holy Spirit's control and His illumination as he is given revelation in this glorious vision.

He's taken up into heaven. Some of the older dispensationalists have interpreted this as the rapture of the church. It's not that. In fact, it appears from 10:1 that John comes back to the earth because he sees things coming down. And we find that throughout the book of Revelation John will see an angel coming down. So he's up in heaven here, but there are times when he's down on the earth. So if John represents the church in this place, then it would seem the church returns to earth during the tribulation. But that's not the case. And that's not what this is about. The

language here is addressed exclusively to John for revelation that he is given. He is given a vision of heaven and at the center of it is a throne.

The throne of God is a major subject of the book of Revelation. In fact, the word “throne” occurs over 40 times in the book. And that’s the first thing that John sees. Now we need to remember that the things that John sees are not to be taken literally. They are of real places and real events and real persons and things, but they are described figuratively, symbolically. The truth is represented in symbols. And we know that from the very first statement that is made in this book because in verse 1 of the book, John wrote that the things of this book were communicated to him in signs. And that’s what the word “communicated” means. It literally has the idea of “signify.” So this book was signified to him, communicated in symbols. And I think that’s a key statement to understanding the book. That’s the key to the interpretation of this book. It’s a book of symbols. This is not what he writes here to be understood in the literal sense. There is a literal door into heaven. He had a vision of that.

And there’s not a literal throne in heaven. God is a Spirit. He doesn’t need a chair to sit on. He doesn’t need to rest. But thrones symbolize authority. They symbolize power. They represent government. And that is the essence of this vision that he is given. What is communicated here is God’s government, God’s sovereignty, God’s rule over the affairs of the world. His throne stands, meaning His government is standing. And John sees that first because the only way to get an understanding of the things that he will see in this book and unfold for us is to see things from the perspective of the throne of God. In fact, we only have insight into history and to the unfolding events of the world, we only have real insight into today’s newspaper as we see it all from the vantage point of heaven. Because heaven is where the events of earth originate.

So John is brought into the throne room of God, the room from which God directs the world, to paraphrase the statement of Churchill. And from there, John will be shown what must take place, what necessarily will happen. That’s the idea. These events that will unfold in the last days will not occur by chance. They must take place, John is told, and they must take place because God has planned them and will execute them. All of that that I’ve just said is meant in that one word “must.”

In the Greek text, it’s a short word. It’s a word of three letters. Dei is the word, delta epsilon iota, or D-E-I. That’s the word, simple word, small word, short word. But in that word is a

world of theology. God can reveal the future because He has planned it all. It must take place. It must take place for what reason? Is there some second force in the universe that's going to compel these things to happen? Is there something like fate that rules the world as well as God? Is there a second god out there? Why must these things take place? What is the reason for the "must"?

Well, the reason can only be that God has planned them all and they must take place. And we'll see this as the book unfolds. Later, in 17:17, he speaks of the events that take place in the fall of Babylon and speaks of all of it as being the fulfillment of God's Word. His Word is His plan and His decree, and so that's what is referred to here. Must take place because God's planned it all. It will take place. I lay some stress on that because that is not believed by many people today. There's a popular view in evangelical circles called "openness theology." You may remember a few months ago when we spent a couple of weeks on Psalm 139, we talked about this doctrine called openness theology. It is the belief that the future is not settled from all eternity, but open to many possibilities and as open to God as it is to man. He doesn't know everything. He doesn't know how things are going to turn out. Now, God knows all of the possibilities, but He doesn't know the outcome and He doesn't know how the possibilities are going to fit together. Man, in his free will, determines that.

Well, what a frightening world that would be if that were the case. It would be a world of complete uncertainty. Actually, it would not be uncertain at all. It would be quite certain and the certainty would be that the future would be a failure. Failure is the only certainty. Think about it. If it's dependent upon man in his fallen condition to bring about a good and glorious end, if it's our free will that's going to determine these things, not God, not His decree, not His supervision of history, well then it would fail because if Adam in the garden when perfect could not carry out God's will, will fallen sinful man carry it out? Of course not. If that were the case, if openness theology were true, then all would be lost.

Fortunately, the Bible does not support such an idea of a limited view of God. Psalm 139 extols His omniscience and His omnipotence. He is all-knowing and all-powerful. All of Scripture teaches that. Logic dictates that. In Ephesians 1:11, Paul says that God "works all things after the counsel of His will." All of God's knowledge is based on God's counsel, on His plans. God cannot know what He has not ordained. He cannot know what isn't. He knows only what He has ordained. He knows all of the possibilities, of course, the endless possibilities, He knows

them. But He only knows what will happen, what will certainly happen by what He has decreed to happen. Now since He works all things after the counsel of His will, since everything occurs according to His plan and will, He knows everything. He's omniscient and omnipotent.

And He's full of glory, full of glory. In verse 3, He is described as surrounded in splendor and worship. "And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance." That's a description of God without really being a description. No form is given. No form can be given because, as Paul says, God dwells in unapproachable light. No man can see Him and live. But His glory can be seen. At least it can be seen in some way to some degree, to some extent. And I say that because this is an infinite God whose glory must be infinite, and we can't understand or comprehend the infinite. But we can get a glimpse of it, and that's what John is given here, and it is the glory of His light that John sees and describes as being like the brilliance of precious stones.

It's difficult to say what the meaning of these colors is. Leon Morris in his commentary explains the emerald color of the rainbow around the throne as pointing to the mercy of God, but he doesn't really explain why green or emerald color represents mercy. Now, I think the rainbow would certainly represent that. It's a symbol of God's covenant with Noah back in Genesis 9:16, in which God promises not to destroy mankind. That's mercy. So that would certainly be the idea here. But the meaning of the colors, that is uncertain. Probably a precise meaning for all of the details is not intended.

The descriptions here combine to give the impression of ineffable majesty, of glory that is beyond words. It gives us a glimpse of heaven, and we have a sense of what heaven is like here. First of all, it's full of light and full of color. It's a glorious place. It's a beautiful place. Can you imagine the world being in black and white, shades of gray, no color at all? A professor of mine made that point one time, that one of the great blessings that God has given us is color. I had never thought about that, never thought about the world without color. But that's true. Color is a blessing of God, and heaven is full of it, bright, brilliant, beautiful colors. It's a glorious place, and there's singing there, there's joy. We see that as the chapter unfolds. But this is glory. This is a beautiful place. And it radiates from God. It comes from Him. John saw God clothed in unapproachable light. Around the throne seated on 24 thrones were 24 elders. They were clothed in white robes and wore golden crowns on their heads.

Different interpretations have been given of these elders. One of the oldest is that the 24 symbolize the one people of God, represented by the 12 patriarchs of the Old Testament and the 12 apostles of the New. That's a possibility, but from their song that they sing in the next chapter, in 5:9-10, they seem to distinguish themselves from those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. So I would suggest that these are not the people of God, but rather this is an angelic host that worships God. And we read other places, for example in Colossians 1:16, of different orders of angels. The thrones and dominions and rulers and authorities and so this is probably an higher order of angels who give worship to God.

The glory of God's throne is described in verse 5. From it came "flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder," which is a symbolic way of describing God's power and majesty. The "seven Spirits of God" before the throne are a description of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the completeness of His power and authority and knowledge. That's what goes forth from God's throne. The everywhere presence and all-powerful Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Around the throne, John tells us in verse 6, was "a sea of glass, like crystal."

And here, this too may be a rather picturesque element as someone has put it, a detail that adds to the majesty of God. This sea of glass is sort of a glorious vision of glorious appearance. So it may simply be a picturesque element, as some suggest, and that would be the simplest way to interpret it, I suppose. But there may be more to it than that. The purity of the glass around the throne suggests the holiness of God, the original idea of holiness. We've said this on a number of occasions, but the original idea of holiness is separateness. Moral purity comes out of that, but the basic idea, the essential idea of holiness is separateness. And because God is holy, we are separated from Him. None of us can approach God as we are. We are separated from Him as by a great shining sea. If that's the meaning here, then John is emphasizing the majesty and the holiness of God.

And that majesty and holiness is heightened by the four living creatures around the throne, who are each described as "full of eyes in front and behind," but having different appearances. Verse 7. "The first creature *was* like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature *was* like a flying eagle." These four are related to the four cherubim of Ezekiel chapter 1. There are differences here between those two visions, and if you've studied Ezekiel and you've read through the book and pondered that

vision, you'll know the differences. Because in Ezekiel, each angel has four faces and four wings, and here they have six wings and each creature has just one face. So there are differences. But these are clearly associated with the cherubim of Ezekiel's vision and also, as we'll see from the song that they sing in a moment that they are associated with the seraphim in Isaiah's vision in Isaiah 6. And there the seraphim are singing, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts."

The picture we're given, though, is a strange one. We talked about this some weeks ago in our Ezekiel studies, but this vision of being "full of eyes in front and behind" is strange. This is a glorious vision, but that doesn't seem glorious as you think about it. It seems rather bizarre. But then, we need to remember again that this is a book of symbols. It's in symbolic language and it's not meant to be taken literally. It's not the picture we are given that we're to hold onto. It's the meaning of it. And the meaning of the eyes is that they are full of knowledge. They look both toward God and toward creation, and they are always seeing and seeing clearly so that their worship is intelligent worship.

And our worship of God should always be intelligent. It should be grounded in God's Word. And this is that, that kind of worship. They represent in their worship the praise and adoration that is given to the creator by the entire creation. That's what's signified in each face of these creatures. Their form suggests the noblest, the strongest, the wisest, the swiftest in nature. The noblest would be the lion. The strongest would be the calf or the ox. The wisest is man. And the swiftest is the eagle. Each aspect of creation in the sky, the birds, on the earth, man, and all of these different aspects represent the creation. And, of course, the wisest aspect of that creation is man. And all of this gives worship to God. They're continually giving praise to God, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, *is* the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." And they'll talk about Him being forever and ever, the eternal one. And so before the conflict that will engulf the world is described beginning in chapter 6, we're told that this God is the one who is to come. He will triumph in that conflict to come. He will have the victory. That's signaled right here. "Who was and who is –" presently "– and who is to come."

Well, that's a modified form of the song of the seraphs in Isaiah 6. And John's vision is similar to those given to Isaiah and Ezekiel and his experience was similar. In fact, it's the same as theirs. The book of Ezekiel and the ministry of Isaiah both begin with a glorious vision of God. And what both of them see, both Isaiah and Ezekiel, is the throne of God. And Ezekiel begins his

book by saying, “I saw visions of God,” and then he goes on to describe a storm coming from the north with wind, and fire, and bright light all around. Isaiah describes God on His throne, lofty and exalted. Both men prophesied during times of national crisis. Isaiah after the godly king Uzziah died and the future seemed very uncertain for the nation. And Ezekiel when Judah was defeated and captured, taken captive to Babylon. They were prisoners in a foreign land. Well, in both cases, these men’s ministries began with the assurance that even though the world looks dangerous and life seems very uncertain, God is still on His throne.

That’s the message here. As the book of Revelation proper begins, as the apocalypse unfolds, as the prophetic part of the book takes shape, God is represented on His throne. His is first of all holy. As I said earlier, the basic idea of holiness is separation. God is different from us, separate from us. We are separated by, as it were, a great sea. This is a very important fact and doctrine to understand. God is holy. He’s separate from us. He is not like us. He is self-existent. We are not. We are totally dependent upon Him. He is self-sufficient. We are not. We depend upon Him. We like to think of ourselves as being self-sufficient. In fact, Americans are known particularly for that, known as being a people with an independent spirit and a sense of self-reliance and rugged individualism.

Now that’s not all bad. In fact, there’s something of a virtue to that. Perhaps the greatness that has been achieved humanly speaking and historically by America can be attributed to that great spirit, that pioneer spirit, that independent spirit. And so it’s good as far as it goes, but it’s good only in the sense or with the understanding that ultimately, fundamentally, we are all completely dependent upon the Lord God in whom, as Paul told the Athenian philosophers, we live and move and exist. We need to understand that and we need to understand that holiness of God, that only He is truly self-reliant, and we must be constantly looking to Him for everything that we have.

And so the angels worship Him as “holy, holy, holy.” Then they worship Him as the Almighty, the One who has His hands on everything. That’s how Dr. Johnson defined the word “almighty,” and that’s literally what the Greek word *pantokrator* means. It means His hands are on, and that means they control everything that is. That’s the God that we serve. That’s the God we worship. That’s the God in whom we can have complete confidence. Now what a comfort that must have been to the seven churches of Asia as they read through this book, because they lived in

hard times, when it seemed that evil was everywhere and all-powerful, as it does in our own day, as it does in every day.

And some of those churches, you remember, were facing an immediate threat of persecution. Some had already experienced it. Some were living near Satan's throne. And all were living under the shadow of Caesar's throne. But the throne above, God's throne, is greater. He, not Caesar, not Satan, is the almighty. His strength and power are unlimited and even though we live in an age when good seems weak and ineffective and as it did in the first century for these early Christians in these churches still, it is not so. Good is what God is. And He is holy, and His will for us is perfect. That never changes. The almighty is the one "who was and who is and who is to come." His power, His wisdom and His love are the same in every age. They are the same every day. They are the same from eternity to eternity.

So the four living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him. And as they do, John sees the 24 elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne. Falling down before a person was an act of respect in the ancient east. There's an obelisk, a small stone pillar, in the British museum. It's called the black obelisk, and it's interesting because it depicts Jehu, king of Israel, bowing down in submission before the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III. This is an obelisk, a pillar, to the honor of Shalmaneser, in which he tells about all the different kings who he conquered and fell down before him. And there's Jehu, Israel's king, pictured on this obelisk. It's a small picture, but it's there carved in stone, Jehu on his knees, his face to the ground, bowing before a man, a powerful man in his day, but just a man. In fact, he's about the size of my thumb on the obelisk.

But, see, that was the danger for these churches, that they would fall down before a man, that they would fall before Caesar and under duress offer a pinch of incense to the emperor in worship and compromise their faith. That's always the temptation we've faced, to bow down to the authorities around us. We cannot do that. There is only One who is worthy of our worship, only One before whom we can bow in our hearts and honor as God, and that is the Lord God. That's the triune God. The 4 living creatures and the 24 elders give us the example of what we are to do and what we are to say. They bow before Him. They praise Him. They cast their crowns before Him.

That's an expression of the truth that only He rules. There are kings, and princes, presidents, and prime ministers all over the earth. But the ultimate ruler is the Lord God. And

Daniel says that in his prayer in Daniel chapter 2, where he says He “changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings.” In other words, He creates time. He’s Lord over it. He governs history and everything in it. He’s the kingmaker. So all the honor goes to Him and He is to be honored as King, who is presently on His throne directing all the affairs of life. That’s the significance of casting the crowns before the throne. And the 24 elders confirm that in verse 11 when they give their praise to God.

“Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” Those words, “worthy are You,” were used in Rome to greet the emperor as he entered on a triumphal parade, and later the words “our Lord and God” were introduced by Domitian in the cult of emperor worship. It’s as though John or these heavenly beings were making the point to the early church that there is only one Lord and only one God, only one who is worthy. Never forget that. All things were created by Him. All things exist by His will. Now can a God like that not know everything? Well, only in the small philosophies of men can that be true, not in the Bible.

All things exist by His will. All things or ever will be, everything existed first in the eternal will, the eternal decree of God. That is the reason for their existence, and God’s will is His knowledge and His purpose put in action. He knows everything because He planned everything. Life is not ruled by some second god. Life is not ruled by chance, or fate, or anything else. The entire universe and all of its details is ruled by God. He rules it for His glory and for our greater good. And so He is worthy “to receive glory and honor and power.”

Caesars and tyrants may occupy thrones, and evil may appear to be in control, and confusion and chaos may seem to reign, but that’s only so in appearance, not in reality. God rules and He knows what he’s doing. He’s not abandoned His creation. He has a plan for it. He’s working it out. Put that in the macrocosm, as we are in those statements, or we can put it in the microcosm, in your own life personally. He is working it out. Then just follow His will. Just trust Him. You’ll be blessed. I think that’s the message here from the throne room of God, HQ, supreme headquarters, where God is directing the world and where, as this book unfolds, we will see Him directing the war on evil, and from where He will defeat it. That’s the message of this chapter as the book begins to unfold the tribulation to come, and the judgments God will pour out on mankind and the persecutions that Satan will bring on God’s people.

The seven churches of John's day were facing great trials. Christians today face them. So this is a message for us now, presently. God is sovereign, absolutely sovereign. So trust Him and approach Him. We can do that. John was called up into heaven into the throne room of God, and we think, "What an amazing experience that must have been." And certainly it was, and if you and I were invited to go there today, we'd go and we would be astounded at what we'd see. But the reality is we can go into the throne room at any time, and we're invited to come boldly into the throne room and find grace to help in time of need. And as we do that, He will make us strong to stand in a day of trouble. He's able. He's willing. And He alone is worthy of our complete trust and worship.

Is your confidence in Him? Do you know Him? You can only know Him through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the redeemer who died for sinners. We're all sinners. We're separated from God. We're shut out of heaven, but God sent His Son to die in our place. And through faith alone in Him, we're joined to Him, put right with God, and are made citizens of heaven. There is a door into heaven, and it is Jesus Christ. May God help you to believe in Him. Help all of us who have trusted in Him to trust more deeply in Him, and walk more closely with Him, and have greater fellowship with Him. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, we do thank You for Your Son. From your throne, You sent Him into this world to become a man and die for us, and that by grace and through faith alone, we're hid in Him, and You look upon Him, and You pardon us. We have access to You every moment of the day. In the midst of the trials and difficulties of life, we can go to the throne of grace and receive help. Give You the praise for that, that You would care for us, so small and insignificant. And yet You do. We thank You for that. We thank You in Christ's name, Amen.