

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

November 26, 2023

From the Heart

Thanksgiving is a form of worship that can truly bring joy to the heart of the worshipper when it comes from the heart (Psalm 34:1-3) and not just because of the season (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). What do I mean by this?

I am always amazed at the picture of Lazarus sitting near Jesus with Mary on the floor, pouring her heart out to Christ in John 12:1-8. The disciples also shared a seat near the honored guest, Jesus, while Judas complained about Mary's lavish worship. How can anyone be this composed when most people died at the age of 45 during the time of Jesus on earth. Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave after four days? How could a resurrection occur in these conditions, and Christ only gains one true worshipper? The same with Paul, who, once he realized what Christ meant to him, counted all things lost (Philippians 3:1-6). When this occurs, it has to do with the pure meaning of worship.

Worship occurs when we highlight the worth or value of the person being magnified. Before Christ came to Mary, she wept over her brother's death. After her brother Lazarus's resurrection, she worshipped Christ. She was mad that Jesus took a long time to come because she believed that He loved them and would do anything to help them, including healing their brother from his sickness. Christ did not come until after her brother had died. After her brother is resurrected, Mary understands that there is nothing Christ cannot do. No one, even Elijah, had ever done this. To everyone, He is the Messiah who will reestablish the Davidic Kingdom (This is why the disciples wanted to know who would sit on the right or left; Mark 10:35-40). Mary saw her Savior who would provide in her life forever, whether on earth or in heaven, so she could use all the pure nard because there was no need to save it for another burial. Christ's true worth became fully exposed before her, and her heart, fully thankful, which led her to worship Him at all costs.

When we see Christ for who He is, what we have gained in this life becomes a mechanism for highlighting His worth because we recognize it all comes from who He is. We also then recognize, compared to Him, our frailty, especially with a predator like satan prowling around every moment of the day, constantly seeking to devour us (Revelation 12:10). We, therefore, focus more on all that He does for us (Philippians 4:8-9). We focus on what goes wrong as trials that mature us (James 1:2-4) because we know His lovingkindness is new every morning. Great is His faithfulness (Lamentations 3:23). Our hearts become more and more thankful each day leading us to sincerely magnify Christ for all that He is, all He has done and is doing; we worship (Psalm 34).



UPCOMING Events



ANGEL TREE 2023
Please sign up for Angel Tree in the foyer. Each year Living Word serves over 80 Angel Tree children and teens with a gift for the holidays. We appreciate your support and for more information contact **Janice Brown** at jrbrown-10@att.net or **Linda Harrison** at harrison2383@sbcbglobal.net



SILVER STARS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON
Join the Silver Stars for their annual Christmas Luncheon on December 8th from 11am-2pm at Fratelli's Ristorante. The cost is \$25 per Living Word Silver Star member and \$40 per person for all guests. For more information contact **Ms. Jacquelyn Jordan** or **Ms. Birdie Williams** at jacqjordan@att.net



TOY DRIVE FOR LWFC KIDZ
Living Word Family, we need you! LWFC Kidz is accepting unwrapped toy donations for the Annual Kids Community Christmas Party on Saturday, December 16, 2023 from 10 am - 12 pm. Bins will be placed in the foyer and the Children's Wing so please donate toys for the kids in the community and join us on December 16th! For more information contact **Mrs. Sylvia Edwards** at sedwards@lwfellowshipchurch.org



URBAN MISSIONS TEAM PACKS OF LOVE
The Urban Missions Team is now accepting Packs Of Love donations to serve and be distributed to the unhoused population in downtown Houston on Christmas Day. Donations will be collected at the end of Life Application on Sundays and Tuesday Nights. Donation bins will be available for collections. For more information contact **Natividad Smith** at nds_smith@yahoo.com



WOMEN OF GRACE BRIDGING THE GAP EVENT ON SUN. DEC. 10TH AT 1 PM
Ladies and Teen Girls, please join us for a special event to Bridge the Gap on Sunday, December 10, 2023 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. in Legacy Sanctuary, after Contemporary Service. Refreshments & Childcare will be provided. Register below and submit your questions for a panel discussion. Register here at <https://bit.ly/LWFCBridgingGap>

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music


"He Reigns"
Revelation 11:15-17

Click "Sermon Notes" on the Website

Call to Discipleship
Please remain seated at this time

Benediction





Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

Infants—6th grade



He Reigns
Revelation 11:15-17

A. Now and Forever (v. 15):

- 1. The very loud confident voices, who are in heaven, and can see all that the Lord plans to do, no matter how much evil satan is about to unleash on the world, they continually proclaim what the Lord is going to do.
- 2. Satan is stated in scripture as the evil, wicked one who powerfully rules the world so that it in a very organized manner opposes everything the Lord wants to accomplish.
- 3. The Lord can establish His kingdom because He has all authority, dominates all that takes place on earth, reigns as a divine king sitting on His throne at the right hand of God. Even as King He desires to have a relationship with us and this is why John is inspired to say Lord.
- 4. He is also the anointed One who reigns on earth and in Heaven. The same person who lived on earth has risen and remains the anointed One.
- 5. Satan in chapter 12 verse 10-11 will go to heaven to fight against God but will be cast down forever. This is because the supernatural power of the Lord, the anointed One, reigns mighty above all forces.
- 6. Satan is active and aggressively doing all that he desires but nothing he does can ever erase what the Lord plans to accomplish. What satan does works for our good (Romans 8:28).

B. Every Knee/From the Top (v. 16):

- 1. Although the twenty-four elders achieved a place of honor and authority in heaven with respect to Christ’s supernatural kingdom that He powerfully established over all the earth, they immediately responded with honor for Christ.
- 2. The twenty-four elders’ full exposure to the supreme sovereign and devastating judgments, when made aware, they immediately revered God in respect to His justice.
- 3. The twenty-four elders did not just honor God with words, despite their authority and power they threw themselves, in front of everyone, to the lowest place of complete respect for God.

C. Let Us Celebrate (vs. 16c-17):

- 1. The twenty-four elders, by falling on their faces, publicly demonstrated reverent devotion and honor for the power and might of God while openly having an attitude of joy and thanksgiving for His timely justice upon evil.
- 2. The twenty-four elders were continuously praising God, gratefully expressing how glorious He is and how indebted they are to Him for all He has done.
- 3. The twenty four elders describe Him as the one who has all authority and does not violate His covenant with His people while he reigns supreme over the universe. He reigns not just as Lord, He makes decisions not just as the one who is sovereign but He is also Almighty because He is the ‘all powerful One’ (Rev. 19:6).
- 4. When the elders said, “who are and were” they are seeking to communicate that the Lord God, Almighty is “the One who is, the One who had been, and the One who is coming.” Nothing satan has done or will do and change what God has and will do.
- 5. The Lord God Almighty has the supernatural ability to overcome all obstacles no matter, including satan.
- 6. The Lord’s power, status and powerful justice should make us all be at peace when trouble comes because no matter, we may encounter we can give Him thanks in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19).



PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Eleanor Wilson & family, Pamela Farris & family, Terri Kuvach & family, Donnie Emerson & family, Deidra McKoy & family, Rudy Mazin & family, Ruth Cranford & family, Michelle Lee & family, the family of Joseph Guillory, and the family of Wanda Turk.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Betty Goode, Latifah Brown, Tanisha Collins, Eric Prichett, Rufus Hadnot, Pat James, Kevin Carey, Lori Lee, Jessie Austin, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clark, Clara Williams, Betty Cunningham, Dorothy Price, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter, Elizabeth Bean, Patsy Gatterson, Joyce Newsome, Arleatha Housley, and Patrina Johnson.

