
Sermon Notes

October 9, 2016

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

There is a Throne Revelation 4

¹ After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

² At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.

The Church Jesus Builds

- ❖ The church Jesus builds has a special calling, a special identity, a special protection and a special destiny
 - there are identifying marks that set Jesus' church apart from the world (united, pure, universal, Bible-centered)
 - there are attitudes and behaviors that characterize those who have this special calling and special identity (one anothers)
- ❖ God protects us as we travel toward the special destiny we share together in Christ

After This...

- ❖ After what?

- the apostle John on the island of Patmos
 - an exiled prisoner and an old man who is sentenced to die at hard labor
 - the result of a sustained period of persecution against the church that began in 64-68 AD under Nero and renewed in 81-96 AD under Domitian)
 - the only apostle still living
- John would not have expected things to end like this when he "signed up" with Jesus
- ❖ There is a reason John has survived
 - one more book of the NT needs to be written (Rev 1:19)
 - starting in chapter 4, *Revelation* is a book about the future
 - but, in chapters 1-3, *Revelation* is a book about the church in John's day
- ❖ Before *Revelation* reveals the return of Jesus, the church needs reminders and instruction about what it is to do and how it is to live until He comes
 - letters to 7 small churches in Asia Minor with which John is familiar
 - 5 of the 7 churches are in serious stages of decline, careening out of control, heading down the wrong path
- ❖ John's special relationship with the church at Ephesus
 - wrote his gospel and *1, 2, 3, John* in Ephesus
 - worked with Timothy in Ephesus and had a flourishing ministry there
 - now, John learns that the church in Ephesus has abandoned its love for Jesus

Come Up Here....

- ❖ *I will show you what MUST take place after this*
 - by and large, this is NOT a pretty picture
 - death, devastation, pestilence and plague
- ❖ **BUT**, what is the first thing John is given a vision of?
 - there is a throne in heaven
 - John, no matter what has happened, no matter what will happen, there is a throne in heaven
- ❖ No matter what your circumstance or situation may be, God is on His throne
 - God sees, knows and cares
 - God rules the world with power and authority
 - nothing takes place in God's universe outside of His sovereign decree and His permissive will

At the Throne

- ❖ *Around the throne*
 - a rainbow that looks like emerald
 - 24 lesser thrones
 - 4 living creatures engaged in perpetual worship
- ❖ *From the throne*
 - flashes of lightning
 - peals of thunder

- ❖ *Before the throne*
 - 7 torches of fire which are the seven spirits of God
 - a sea of glass, like crystal
- ❖ *The One who is seated on the throne*
 - central to it all
 - most important of all
- ❖ This is a consistent vision throughout Scripture (Isaiah 6:1-3, 1 Kings 22:19, Psalms 103:19, 47:8, 22:28, 11:4, Isaiah 66:1)
- ❖ The assurances God repeats to us over and over again about His rule and His reign sustain us in the midst of any and everything we go through

Personal Reflection

1. How do you think living through all John lived through physically, emotionally and spiritually might affect your spirit? Do you think John might have felt discouraged or depressed?
 2. In light of all John lived through and all that he is about to see and experience as God reveals the future to him, how do you think the scene in Revelation 4 would sustain and encourage him?
 3. How does this same scene or the ones like it in other parts of Scripture work to sustain and encourage you in the midst of whatever you may be going through right now?
1. Does knowing there is *a throne in heaven and one seated on the throne* make you feel protected? Why or why not?