

## REVIEW

**READ** Revelation 4:1-11 and 5:9-13

**A few key quotes and ideas to reflect on:**

- *These passages come right after John delivers a message from Christ to the 7 churches that he's writing this letter to. Each church gets a personalized message approving of certain things, disapproving of other things, and encouraging each church to be faithful to God in their culture and cities. Which gives us an initial clue of **the purpose of Revelation: to strengthen our faith.***
- *How funny is it that we often treat worship like it's an option, and whether or not we do it depends on how we're feeling, as if that has anything to do with it. Do any of the elders, an angels and creation see if they're in the mood before they bow down before the throne in this image? No. You don't worship based on how you're doing, you worship based on who God is. Responding to Him is neither optional nor mandatory, **God doesn't have to mandate worship, it's just what you do when you stand in His presence.***
- *We often feel like the only difference between God's power and ours is a difference of degree. That God's power displayed in heaven is the same as our power displayed on earth but there's just more of it, but it's not, it's fundamentally different than anything we have experienced on earth. Revelation peels back an image of God in heaven, and that image is too much for us to understand, it's too much for us to handle. **It is Christ who will bring an end to evil on the second coming at the end of the book, his robes will have blood on them, but isn't the blood of the enemy, it's His own.***

**The rest of Revelation needs to be read with this in mind.** That it isn't just an angry, powerful, vengeful God bringing judgement and destruction on earth, it's the God who has already laid down His own life for this earth that has now rejected Him. There will be mercy as well as justice, love as well as anger, wrath that consumes the darkness and all who worship it, but tender care and gentle holding of all who belong to Him.

**ASK:**

- **Now ask just a few simple questions:**
  - What comes to mind when you usually think about heaven? How does this passage alter how you think about heaven?
  - Think through Revelation 4:1-11 and 5:9-13. **What do these passages tell us about what it means to be in God's presence?**
  - Heaven is not about your needs and your desires, how terrible a place that would be if it was! Heaven is simply where God is, where His glory and majesty are completely seen, unhindered and unveiled, you won't be wondering about "what there is to do here" when you see Him face to face. **How does this shape (or re-shape) the way you think about heaven?**

**PREVIEW** Next week we are in 1 Kings 22. Spend some time together reading the chapter and picturing the scene.

**Read** your selected passage out loud (if studying in a group, all but one person should keep their Bibles closed for now). **Read slowly.** Line by line if you can. **Read as if for the first time.**

**ASK (a guide for this is on the next page)**

- **What does it say?** ("Don't be showy....don't be wordy")
- **What do you see?** (picture the scene, the people. What stands out?)

- **What happens next?** Guess! (say, "I wonder...")
- **What do you hear?** (What word comes to mind after reading? Spend some time in silent prayer before answering. *Why do you think God included this here in the Story?*).
- **What do you want to do?** (as a result of what Jesus has done)

## PRAY TOGETHER

**Worship** God for who He is (His attributes revealed in these passages)

**Confess** the sinful emotions, attitudes, and behaviors that result when we forget who He is

**Thank** God for what He has done in Christ and your life

**Ask** God to transform you and to help you apply His word today.

## LECTIO VISIO

Christians believe in God's Word and take him at his Word. Yet 21st century Christians have a difficult time seeing God's Word the same way God's people have for centuries: **visually**. That's what this method of Scripture reading is designed to do: help you see the text.

### 3 INGREDIENTS

3 candles, or a 3 wick candle

1 Passage (preferably narrative, 5-10 verses)

12 or fewer people (Christians or non-Christians)

### 10 COMMANDMENTS OF LECTIO VISIO

1. No prep! (Lead by asking)
2. Pray simple prayers (tsp prayers: Thank you, Sorry, Please)
3. Shut your Bibles (yup, you read that correctly. Don't worry.)
4. Open your eyes (senses) and picture the scene. Try to get down in the dust of the story.
5. Direct the Film (you as the leader help the biblical scene come alive for those you're studying with)
6. No peeking ahead (1 verse at a time)
7. No rabbit trails (stick to what the text says, not "I feels")
8. Keep telling the story (instead of explaining, WONDER)
9. Keep silence
10. Lead by asking the 5Qs
11. Repeat #2 TSP.

### THE 5 QUESTIONS

1. What did it say?
2. What do you see?
3. What happens next? (Guess)
4. What do you hear? (Then/Now)
5. What do you want to do?

### A COUPLE EXTRA TIPS FOR LEADERS

**Mirror the group.** Repeat back what is said and direct them back to the story if things get off track.

**Lead Strong.** God is actually the one leading the discussion by his Word. Take courage. Have fun. Encourage a bit of playfulness.