

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Acts 5:27-32

Psalm 118:14-29

You are my God, & I will exalt you. (v28)

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, & strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Revelation 1:4-8

⁴John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you & peace from him who is & who was & who is to come, & from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, & the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us & freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God & Father, to him be glory & dominion forever & ever. Amen. ⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; & on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen. ⁸"I am the Alpha & the Omega," says the Lord God, who is & who was & who is to come, the Almighty.

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. In the Bible, seven often symbolizes completeness (cf. *Genesis 2:1-3, 7:2; Leviticus 4:6, 17; Revelation 2:1, 6:1, 8:2, 15:7*). What could the "7" (v4) symbolize for the "one, holy, catholic, & apostolic" church? Does what is written concern mainly those communities addressed in the letter, the rest of us, all us, or something else? *Note: it does not symbolize ages/eras/dispensations of the church.*
2. Compare v8 with 21:6 & 22:13; who is described in each instance? What does this tell us about those thusly described? *See Deuteronomy 6:4; John 1:1; Hebrews 13:8*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. How has the Sunday worship service changed in your lifetime? Think about the sacraments, the preaching, the Bible stories, the elements of the service, the congregation's dress, the ministers' vestments, the paraments, the music, the singing & chanting, etc. List at least 12 things. Which of those changes have become most meaningful to you?
4. In this week's Study & Share blog entry, you can download a sheet with worship service Bible citations. Take that & highlight all of those passages in your Bible this week. Is our orthodox, traditional, liturgical worship Bible-based or not? How many of these passages do you recognize or know by heart already?

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NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. TV ownership moved from 9% of homes in 1950, to 55% in 1954 to 98% by 1978. This correlates with a powerful constraint on our attention spans: 1 hour for an event & 11 minutes for a continuous action & 1.5 seconds for a static image. How does this impact the average American's appetite for worship? How does this impact the average church's doing of worship? How is worship something that must be "shown & told" (taught & caught) rather than a "natural" skill or ability?
6. In our culture the promise, & fact, that Jesus will come again to judge the living & the dead of all times & places (vv5-7) is deeply upsetting. How can you change the conversation about this day of doom into a day of rejoicing, even though you too will be judged for all your public & secret, known & unknown sins? *See Matthew 19:6; Luke 22:19; Mark 16:16; John 1:29; Romans 3:23, 28; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 1:8-10; Revelation 2:27, 3:2, 19:7-9; just to name a few. What verses can you add to this list?*

Second Sunday of Easter

04.24.22

Series: Worship- Heaven on Earth

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

The Timeless Hour

The Living Word is the beginning, present, & end of all time

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: “I am the Alpha & the Omega,” says the Lord God,
who is & who was & who is to come, the Almighty. (v8)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Blessed are those who have not seen
& yet have come to believe. (*John 20:29*)

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