

# The Reigning Christ and the Disciple

By Richard Ross

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

John saw Jesus thousands of times during His three years of earthly ministry. Jesus' appearance did not cause John to pass out. John saw Jesus scores of times during His forty days after the resurrection. Jesus' appearance did not cause John to pass out. Study Revelation 1:10–17. Prepare to share with your group why seeing the glorified Jesus in heaven caused such a different reaction in John.

### Assignment Two

In brief outline form, write the prayer you prayed at the beginning of today. Then study Revelation 5:11–13. Notice what all creation shouts to Jesus (Himself God) on the throne of heaven. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: Would you say your morning prayer contained similar declarations of praise and adoration or the absence of such? Report to your group what similarities and differences you discover.

### Assignment Three

Read aloud to your group the following statement from David Booth: "Surrender to Christ's authority means He will define, drive, dominate and dictate our priorities, schedules, finances and relationships. He will have veto-power over decisions and commitments to the world's kingdom we have made. His Word is the final authority—so we need to know and obey it. Jesus becomes our Commander-in-Chief." Then, share with your group how Hebrews 1:8 provides support for this quotation.

## Scripture to Memorize

*And I heard every creature in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever. Revelation 5:13*

## Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will have a greater heart desire to be a disciple of Christ because of new insight into His power and glory as He rules and reigns from the throne of heaven.

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Richard has written or compiled twenty-four books for youth leaders and parents. His most recent book is *The Senior Pastor and the Reformation of Youth Ministry* (lifeway.com). You can connect with Richard through RichardARoss.com, Facebook.com/rossrichard, and Twitter @richardaross.

## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

You are in a small group with Sam. He says, "I'm probably going to break up with Sarah. I get the feeling she does not really care about me as a person, she just cares about things I can do for her and ways I can make her happy." When called on to pray, Sam begins with, "Dear Jesus, You know I love You and all that. Now let's get to the list of things I need You to do to make my life easier." Do you see an inconsistency here? If you were guessing, what percentage of most prayers is filled with praise and adoration, and what percentage is filled with requests for Jesus to do things?

**Read** Revelation 1:10–17 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 10. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.** Because John had been banished to the Isle of Patmos, he probably was worshiping alone on Sunday. **loud voice.** Bible scholars tend to believe this was God the Father speaking, about to draw attention to His Son.

**Verse 13. son of man.** The glory of Christ as the Son of God is tied to His humiliation as the "Son of man" at Calvary. **a long robe . . . golden sash around His chest.** These garments were symbolic of the priesthood of Christ. The girdle worn by the high priest Aaron had threads of gold. The one worn by Christ was pure gold.

**Verse 14. The hairs of His head were white.** This identifies Christ as God. The description is the same as the one given to the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:9. **eyes like a flame of fire.** This may refer to the fact that the eyes of Christ see all and know all.

**Verse 15. voice was like the roar of many waters.** Christ's voice carries the gospel, which is heard all over the earth.

**Verse 17. fell at His feet as though dead.** Mortal men are overwhelmed with the glory of a divine person. That is why believers need resurrected bodies in order to gaze on Jesus for eternity.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now explain why John's seeing the glorified Jesus in heaven was so different from seeing Him during His days on earth.

### On Your Own

John has given us an accurate picture of the glorified Jesus in heaven. How does that compare with the way you see Jesus (in your mind's eye) as you pray? Do you tend to see "sweet Jesus, meek and mild" (as He was on earth) rather than as the sovereign King He is today? How would you like to "see" Him when you pray next? Would changing how you "see" Him impact how you approach Him and speak to Him?

**Read** Revelation 5:11–13 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 11. around the throne.** Many Bible scholars believe angels form an outer circle around the throne while the redeemed from earth form the inner circle. Both groups lift their voices together to praise triune God. **myriads of myriads.** This simply means a number impossible to count.

**Verse 12. power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.** Seven terms, the number of completion, are used to describe the Lamb.

**Verse 13. every creature.** This refers to all the creative works of Christ in all places of His dominion. **Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.** Worship and adoration are declared to Christ precisely as to God on the throne. **blessing and honor and glory and might.** All created beings, all angels and all the saints in heaven declare glory to the King upon His throne.

### **Assignment Two Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now compare expressions of praise in his or her prayer, compared with those in Revelation 5:11–13.

### **Discussion Question**

How might this lesson change the prayers that typically come at the end of your group session? Is your group typically allowing enough time for praise and adoration during your prayer?

### **On Your Own**

When you stand before the actual throne after your arrival in heaven, will intense praise toward Christ be something new for you, or will it be a continuation of what you have done on earth? In the space below, write a few phrases you would like to make part of your prayers tomorrow morning.

**Read** Hebrews 1:8 out loud.

### **Studying the Passage**

**Verse 8. of the Son He says.** Here the author of Hebrews is quoting Psalm 45:6–7. During the Old Testament period, almost all Jewish scholars recognized this psalm as one having been written about the Messiah. In Hebrews 1:8–13, God the Father clearly is speaking to God the Son. **Your throne, O God.** The Son is declared to be God (Elohim). His throne is everlasting because He is God. His scepter is righteous for the same reason. He should be worshipped, served and obeyed because He is God. **forever.** His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and He will have no successor on the throne.

### **On Your Own**

The Son of God spoke creation into existence. He came to earth and made an unimaginable sacrifice to redeem mankind. He rose from the dead and ascended to the right-hand throne. Today, He rules and reigns over the entire universe. If He is not the center of your life, what is? List below something you are tempted to worship, even though it pales in comparison to the King of the universe.

### **Assignment Three Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week now can explain how Hebrews 1:8 provides support for a quotation from a Christian leader.

### **Discussion Question**

How does this lesson help prepare you for a year of discipleship study?

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## At Home: Nail It Down

Do you believe Christ has just called you to be a nice church member, or do you believe He has called you to be His disciple? Has He called you to be religious? Or has He called you to go all in with Him—live or die? Read carefully how Christ defines the call to be a disciple:

- “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it” (Mark 8:34–35).
- “Whoever loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:37).
- “Whoever finds life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39).

Why would anyone go all in for Jesus? Why would anyone choose to be His disciple? The short answer is, He is worthy of that. The Lamb on the throne of heaven is, absolutely, worthy. Fourth-century theologian Augustine said: “The one who has Christ has everything. The one who has everything except for Christ really has nothing. And the one who has Christ plus everything else does not have any more than the one who has Christ alone.”

A multitude of people from every tongue, tribe, and nation will encircle the throne of the Lamb of God in everlasting adoration and praise. A few minutes after your body dies on earth, you will join that multitude. Here is the question: At that moment, will you form new phrases to shout and sing to Christ for the first time? Or will you shout and sing phrases you have declared to Him thousands of times on earth in your private and public worship? In your prayers this morning, did the words coming out of your heart in any way resemble the adoration you will declare to Christ when you stand before Him in heaven?

Today, make part of your prayer to Christ these words from David Bryant: “You are ordained and anointed as supreme—absolute and universal in every way. You are supreme in the appeal You make to sinners. Supreme in the scope of Your activities on our behalf. Supreme in the depth of Your transforming power for all the redeemed. Supreme in Your reign extended throughout the entire universe. Supreme in the magnificently indescribable future into which You are taking all who are Yours.”

### Follow up Question

*In what ways do you have a greater heart desire to be a disciple of Christ because of new insight into His power and glory as He rules and reigns from the throne of heaven?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.