

Four Portraits, One *Savior*



That you may
have *life*

A Glimpse of Heaven – Part 3

Rev 4:1-4, 9-11; 5:1-10

“Is there a purpose for life beyond the here and now or is this all there is?”



1. Scripture *invites us deeper* in our understanding of Christ, the end of the age, and the afterlife.
- “Thanks for honoring the invitation.”
 - Rev 1:3 “*Blessed* is he who *reads* ... *hears* ... and *heeds* the things written in it – the time is near.”
 - Rev. 4:1 “... I looked and behold a door *standing open*... ‘*Come up here*’...”
- Isaiah 6:1-4 “...sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted...”
 - Ezek 1, Dan 7:9-14, 1 Kings 22:19
 - 2 Cor 12:2-4 “caught up to the 3rd heaven...”
 - Acts 7:55-56 Steven sees “the glory of God” in heaven.



- *John's vision invites us deeper. In 4:1-10;*
 - A. *The majesty of “One.” v3; v8.*
 - *Formless*
 - *Like – Jasper; Sardius*
 - *Rainbow – emerald.*
 - B. *24 elders around. V4*
 - *24 thrones. 14:2*
 - *Lead in worship. 4:9-11; 5:8-10; 11-14; 19:1-4*
 - *Grateful for having lived. V 11.*
 - C. *7 lamps before. V5.*
 - D. *4 “creatures” around it. V6. Not angels.*
 - *Misconception: souls of believers are angels.*



- *John is in prison – yet, still going deeper.*
- *Rev. 1:9-10 “I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, **was on the island called Patmos** because of the word of God and the **testimony of Jesus**.¹⁰ **I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, (NAU)*

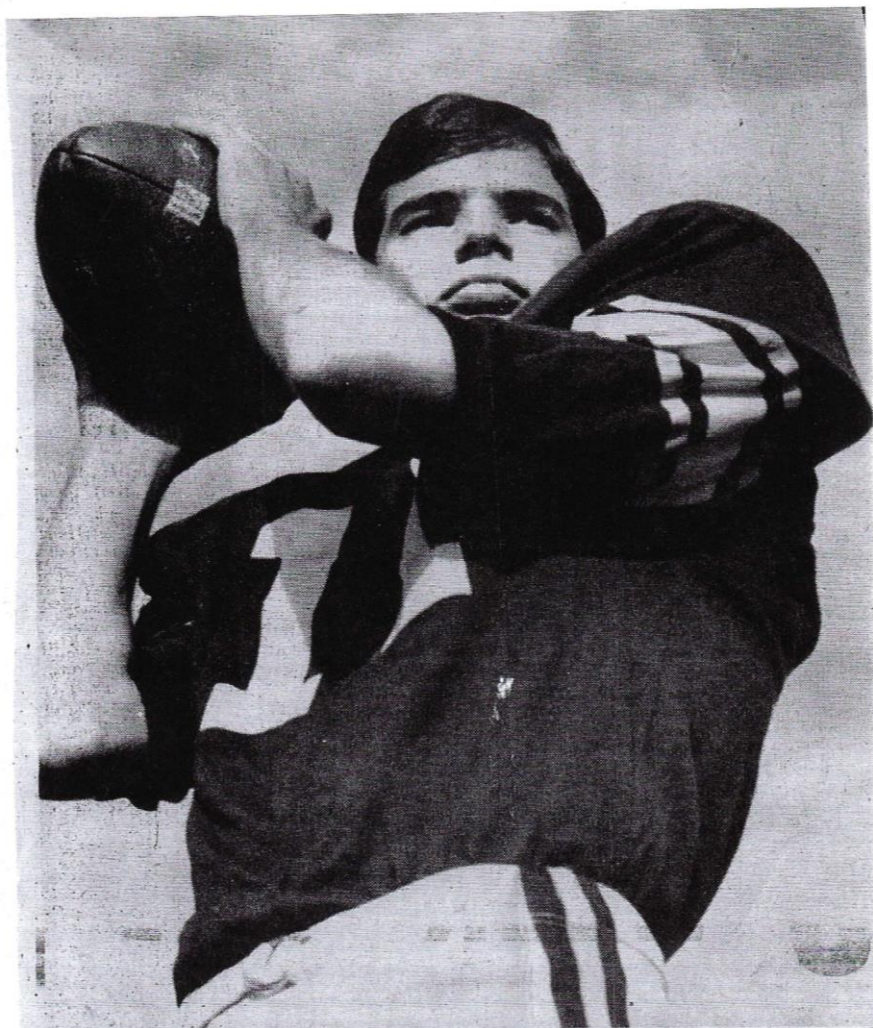
A. Losses?

B. No distractions.

C. Focus on God.

- *God does not need anything from us.*
- *We need God.*
- ***What do you do when you are on your “Isle of Patmos”?***





INDIAN QUARTERBACK—Kip Smith, 145-pound Orangeburg High signal caller, took over the starting duties for the Tribe in their opener with St. Matthews and turned in a fine performance. Smith and the Indians will get their first taste of AAA competition tonight in Columbia when Orangeburg faces the A.C. Flora Falcons at City Stadium.

“INDIAN QUARTERBACK
– Kip Smith, 145 lb,
Orangeburg High School
signal caller, took over
starting duties for the
Tribe...”



2. God is *not unjust* so as to forget our story. He invites us *deeper* and *gifts us spiritually* to enable our story while living.

A. 24 in number:

- “Elders.”
- Golden crowns. 3:12
- White robes. 7:14
- Worship – bc they lived! V10.
- Heb. 6:10 For God is *not unjust* so *as to forget* your work ..., in *having ministered* and in *still ministering* to the saints.
- 2 Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;⁸ in the future *there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness*, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will *award* to me on that day; *and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.*



- *God will recognize and reward faithfulness on earth.*
- *Golden crown – “stephanos”:*
 - *Reward/wreath. Rev 3:11*
 - *Nonmaterial.*
 - *God’s recognition of earthly faithfulness/service.*
- *Parable of 2 servants and their talents. Matt 25:*
 - *Matt. 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' (NAU)*
 - *v28 'Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.' NAU)*



A misconception: “Every believer receives the same ‘reward.’”

- *1 Cor. 3:12-15 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw-- ¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. (ESV)*



Does personal identity continue to my resurrection body?

- *“When I came to Christ, I became a new person. But I still had the same body, DNA, overall personality. I was the old person, made new. I will undergo yet **another change at death**. And I will undergo **another change at the resurrection**. But through all these changes, **I will remain who I was and who I am**. There will be continuity from this life to the next. I can say with Job, “I myself will see Him with **my own eyes**, and not another.” Job 19:27”*
 - *Randy Alcorn, “If God is Good,” p 305*



3. God invites me *deeper*, that I might comprehend the “glory” given Jesus and the *eternal* power of the *blood of Jesus*. Rev 5:1-10

A. See my glory. John 17:24; Rev 5:4-5

B. Paradox – alive and dead.

- *Standing as if slain* v5:6
- *Lion of Judah. David.*
- *Lamb.*

C. Death does not take away *the power of the blood*. Rev 5:9-10; Heb 7:25

- *Amazing Grace* how sweet the sound. *Still sings.*
- *Forgiveness is settled. Heb 9:12*
- *Purpose/history continues. Heb 12*
- *Prayers continue. Rev 5:8, Heb 7:25*
- *New Jerusalem is coming. Rev 5:10*



Death does not end our story. It continues in heaven.

- *Heb. 12:1-2 Therefore, since we have so great a **cloud of witnesses surrounding us**, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and **let us run with endurance the race that is set before us**,² **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and **has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God**. (NAU)*



*The saints gone before us are a “cloud of witnesses” surrounding believers on earth, encouraging us to “fix our eyes on Jesus.”
Their story continues as we endure the race.*



Heaven will be absent of tears, fears, or griefs.

- *Heaven (present)*
 - *Rev. 7:17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will **guide them to springs of the water of life**; and **God will wipe every tear from their eyes.**" (NAU)*
- *New Jerusalem (future).*
 - *Death does not end until after judgment:*
 - *Rev. 21:4 and **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes**; and **there will no longer be any death**; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."* (NAU)
 - *Before New Jerusalem, we will yearn for justice on earth. Heb 12. Rev 7*



- *Death does not end our story. Best is yet to come.*
- *1 Cor 2:9 “Things which no eye has seen and ear heard... all that **God has prepared** for those who love him....”*
- *Ps. 31:19 How great is Your goodness, **Which You have stored up for those who fear You, ...!** (NAU)*
- *Ps 23:6” ... **goodness and mercy will follow me...** and I will dwell in the **house of the Lord** forever.”*
- *Matt 25:34 Then the King will say to those on His right, Come, you who are blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom prepared for you** from the foundation of the world.*
...



Call to Action.

- 1. Are the struggles of this life misdirecting your attention away from Christ and His kingdom work? Will you hear his invitation today to “come,” to go “deeper,” and to “heed” His words?*

