

*9After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."*

*13Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" 14I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. 16They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; 17for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

I remember a Sunday morning. St John's Lutheran Church at Union Corners is where I was, sitting on the center aisle on the left side about half way back I had on black shoes, new shoes. Back in those days, shoes needed breaking in. They needed some walking, some stretching, that morning my shoes were too tight. I fidgeted – squirmed - waiting for the end of a service that I thought would never come. Nothing I did made the discomfort go away.

Do you remember a church service like that – that went on and on, seeming like it would never end? Worship is supposed to be a preview of heaven – sometimes it can seem more like the other place - an eternity of suffering - especially for children ready to run and jump and play – or for their parents. But when John was given the vision of how things are and how things shall be that we know as the book of Revelation this is what he saw:

"I looked and there was a great multitude that no one could count from every tribe and every nation standing before the throne and before the lamb. They are before the throne of God and worship him day and night within his temple."

Worship, ceaseless worship.

Sometimes I watch a movie and it is only the popcorn and the candy that keep me going. But once in a while as a movie is drawing to its close I find myself wishing that it would never end. That is how it will be for you and me

– we will never tire of praising and adoring God – day and night before the throne, crying out in a loud voice and saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb.”

And the angels will be singing, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

Those movies that I wish would go on and on – if they did? Before long the magic would be gone and I would be bored. Endlessly praising God? How could an eternity of worshipping God, praising God not turn into drudgery, grim duty?

When love is new there is never enough. A mother holding her newborn, lovers walking hand-in-hand through a meadow on a sunny summer’s day, friends staying up half the night talking. Our love for God will be like that – new – in every moment new. For we shall know then just how new in every moment God’s love for us has been and is and shall be.

“The one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them nor any scorching heat; for the lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd and he will guide them to the springs of the water of life and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

That first cool splash of water on a dry parched tongue – like that it shall be for us. The love of Jesus refreshing ones who long for love – you and me – loving us as only God can love and we shall worship him.

Ceaseless love – ceaseless worship.

“And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

Already it has been happening. Jesus is alive. Those who die in Christ shall live - words that turn tears into hope, into joy.

Some of you cannot get enough of worship. You want us to read every word of every lesson, to sing every verse of every hymn. You cannot get enough of worshipping God – hearing about the love of God, speaking with

your beloved God in prayer. Some of you would want to linger at the altar every Sunday thanking God for the wondrous gift of Jesus given to you in bread and cup.

Some of us would settle for less. Some of us are willing to do our duty and worship God for an hour each week – and for us it is a duty.

I swim three days a week. Once in a while I enjoy swimming but not often. But I get up early and head for the pool because I know it is for my good. I am glad when swimming is over.

For many of us worship is like that. Should we stop coming because we do not have the same joy in worship that some others do? No, taking time to worship God is good for us.

But always remember that one day we shall all be before God's throne and worship day and night and never get enough. One day each of us will love God so much that there will be nothing that we would rather do.

Forever. Amen.