



FAITH 5 WITH FLAT JESUS!

Week of Sunday, August 13

SHARE – Share at least One High and One Low from the day or the week.

READ – Revelations 4: 1-11

TALK – **Context** - The book of Revelation is really a letter written to seven churches, each with their own problems and challenges. The first three chapters focus on encouraging, correcting, and challenging the various churches. Chapter 4 opens with a vision of the throne of God, and the concentric circles of the heavenly host, all praising and worshipping the Lord. It is a reminder to the seven churches that when they gather to worship the Lord, they are joining in on what is already going on in heaven. The vision also reminds them that it is God who is at the center of all creation, and not any earthly being or power (political, economic, or social).

Discussion Questions

How does this Scripture relate or connect to your life and faith, your Highs and Lows?

What are some ways we fail or forget to put God at the center of our lives and world?

What is your favorite part of worship?

What has been your most memorable, or powerful worship experience, and why was it so memorable?

How is it both comforting and challenging to be reminded that God is at the center of all things, and our attitude and response is to be one of worship and praise?

PRAY – You can hold hands or fold your hands when you pray together...

Thank God for the Highs you shared with each other.

Ask God for whatever kind of help and support you need for the Lows you shared with each other.

Close by praying the Lord's Prayer together.

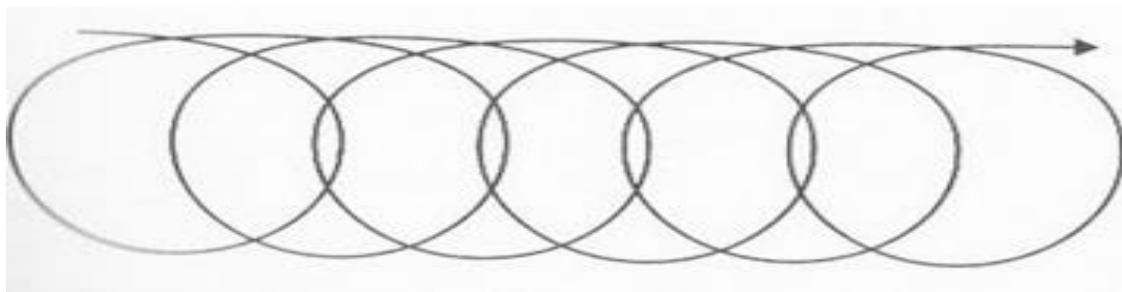
BLESS – Mark each other with the sign of the Cross on the forehead and say this, or some other blessing you may think of:

Remember that Jesus loves you and the Holy Spirit is within you!

A Cyclical Outline of the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation has been both the source of comfort and inspiration for Christians across the centuries, as it has been a source of misunderstanding, sensationalistic interpretations, and fear. One major misunderstanding is that the Book of Revelation is not a book filled with predictions of the future, but instead filled with timeless truths written for a particular people in a specific time, that transcend history and speak into the challenges and struggles of Christians in every time and place. It is a letter to seven churches; that alternates between threatening warnings and comforting hope, constantly looping back to the central vision and promise of God's salvation purpose for all of Creation.

Prof. Craig Koester, in his book, Revelation and the End of All Things, shows how Revelation is written in a non-linear, cyclical, looping pattern, and should be read as a whole, without trying to insert other portions of Scripture like a jigsaw puzzle. When seen as an outline, it looks like a spiral with loops consisting of a series of visions.



Loop 1 – Seven messages to the seven churches in Asia (chapters 1-3)

Loop 2 – Seven seals (chapters 4-7)

Loop 3 – Seven trumps (chapters 8-11)

Loop 4 – The Beast and the Lamb (chapters 12-15)

Loop 5 – The Harlot and the Bride/Seven Plagues (chapters 15-19)

Loop 6 – The Great Battle and the New Jerusalem (chapters 19-22)

At the top of each loop, readers are given a revelation/vision of God's Holy Presence with the Lamb of God and all of Creation worshipping the Lord. Even in the midst of threats of violence, destruction, and trials on earth, Christians are reminded to put their trust and hope in God alone, who has conquered Sin, Death, and the Devil through the death and resurrection of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, and encouraged to join the heavenly host in the worship of God, even in the midst of adversity.