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Sermon Notes

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Peter Denies Jesus

Matthew 26:69-75

Here we have one of the saddest and yet most hopeful stories in the Bible... the story of the devastating fall of one of the greatest leaders the church has ever known

It is devastating because it shows how far sin can take us... the shameful details makes the story exceedingly poignant

How can such a mighty follower of Christ fall so far as to call down curses on himself if he knows Jesus? How can sin be so powerful? How can temptation be so effective? It is surpassingly sad that one of Jesus' best friends in the world could not summon the smallest amount of courage to stand with his friend during His trial and speak a word in His defense.

Jesus had called on His followers to be willing to die just as He would. After Peter had rebuked Jesus for predicting His own death on the cross... Jesus warned His disciples in this way...

Matthew 16:24-25 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

Later it would be said of the followers of Jesus in defeating Satan:

Revelation 12:11 They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

But Peter loved his life in the world more than he loved Jesus that night... a devastating denial from one who had been given so much by the Lord

BUT YET... This account is hopeful as well... we see the incredible grace of God in rescuing Peter from so great a sin. The TRUE PETER was not the one who denied Jesus, but the one who boldly proclaimed Jesus on Pentecost and in front of the Jewish council... the Peter who denied Jesus was merely MASQUERADING as an unbeliever, a stranger to Jesus. The incredible grace of God rescued Peter and restored him to His service!

I. The Downward Journey of Sin: Three Steps to Cursed Misery

A. Remember the Context

1. Peter, the Leader of the Twelve

- a. In every list of the Twelve, Peter is always named first... he seems to have been the leader of the Apostles
- b. In many encounters throughout Jesus' life with the Apostles, it was Peter who would speak for all of them
- c. Most prominently in Caesarea Philippi:

Matthew 16:15-18 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

- d. This was perhaps the key leader among all of Jesus' followers

2. Peter's prideful boast

Matthew 26:31-33 Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."³² But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."³³ Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

3. Jesus' plain prediction

Matthew 26:34 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

4. Peter's prideful answer

Matthew 26:35 But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you."

5. Peter's prayerlessness

Matthew 26:40-41 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter.⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Matthew 26:45-46 Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

6. John 18: Jesus weaves a safety net... but Peter won't stay in it

a. Jesus confidently went out to face Judas and the soldiers with him

John 18:4-5 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" ⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

b. Jesus twice forces them to state their orders... the first time, they fall down when He says His name

c. Then masterfully, Jesus crafts a safety net for His disciples to escape temptation and apostasy

John 18:7-9 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁸ "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

d. Peter refused to stay in that safety net

i) Drew his sword

ii) Ran away

iii) Came back and followed at a distance

iv) Entered the courtyard

B. Peter and Jesus Clearly Contrasted

1. One simple word in Matthew's account

Vs. 69 Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard

Could be translated...

BUT Peter was sitting out in the courtyard

2. Careful weaving in John's account

a. Jesus' trial, Peter's denial; meanwhile, back at the trial; meanwhile back at the denial

- b. Clear purpose: to contrast the serenity and power and courage of Jesus with the sinful cowardice and falsity of Peter... the glory of Christ and the sinfulness of man

C. Harmonizing the Denial Accounts

1. Matthew and Mark in very close agreement and list three denials
 - a. First, before a servant girl in a courtyard
 - b. Second, before another girl but out by the gateway
 - c. Third, before bystanders, possibly in the court
2. Luke also lists three denials
 - a. First, before a servant girl, apparently near a fire
 - b. Second, before another person in a place not specified
 - c. Third, before yet another person, still in the courtyard
3. John records three denials
 - a. First, before a servant girl at the doorway... then, after a break in the narrative
 - b. Second, before some people
 - c. Third, before one of the high priest's servants, a relative of Malchus, the man whose ear Peter had cut off
4. ALL FOUR GOSPELS make it clear... it all begins with a simple question from a slave girl in the courtyard

Matthew 26:69 Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said.

5. Isn't it incredible how temptation works! Peter was drawing his sword and ready to fight the Roman guards... but he wasn't ready for a simple question from the slave girl
 - a. In Matthew, two of the denials come in the presence of girls
 - b. It heightens the cowardice of Peter
 - c. He wasn't directly threatened with arrest, torture and death
 - d. A servant girl would be seen as hardly a threat at all

6. BTW: notice the possible sense of disdain from the slave girl... JESUS OF GALILEE... and later, the other girl will say JESUS OF NAZARETH

D. Denial #1: "I don't know what you're talking about!"

Matthew 26:70 But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

1. A simple denial... it doesn't directly connect to Jesus personally... he just denies even knowing what they're talking about
2. Matthew emphasizes the public nature of the denial... denying BEFORE THEM ALL
3. This is the devastating first step down the slippery slope
4. From now on, it just gets worse and worse

E. Denial #2: "I don't know the man!"

Matthew 26:71-72 Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!"

1. Amazing that it's another young girl... the Greek implies this
2. Peter is moving around, surrounded by the enemies of Jesus
3. John says he is warming his hands by a fire... standing with those who hate Jesus, little by little being influenced by them
4. The second servant girl spreads her accusation around to the watching crowd... THIS MAN WAS WITH JESUS OF NAZARETH...
5. Peter's denial moves to the next level...he denies it WITH AN OATH!!
6. He swears... maybe by something sacred like the temple that he DOESN'T KNOW THE MAN!!! He distances himself as much as possible from Jesus
7. Jesus commanded His followers:

Matthew 5:34-37 But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. ³⁷ Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

8. Do you see now how completely alone Jesus was at the human level... the very thing He had predicted would happen

John 16:32 But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

F. Denial #3: Calling down curses on himself and swearing... "I don't know the man!"

Matthew 26:73-74 After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away." ⁷⁴ Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!"

1. The final act of this tragedy brings it to new levels of disgrace
2. Peter's accent was that of a Galilean and he couldn't escape it
3. Now it seems the entire group is on him like a pack of wolves sniffing the scent of blood
4. Peter feels he has to come up with something even stronger... he even CALLS DOWN CURSES ON HIMSELF... stronger than the OATH he just swore before than
5. Peter is perhaps said something like this: "May Almighty God strike me dead and curse my family if I know this man!"
6. Think of the curses in the Old Covenant:

Deuteronomy 28:20-24 The LORD will send on you curses, confusion and rebuke in everything you put your hand to, until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin because of the evil you have done in forsaking him. ²¹ The LORD will plague you with diseases until he has destroyed you from the land you are entering to possess. ²² The LORD will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew, which will plague you until you perish. ²³ The sky over your head will be bronze, the ground beneath you iron. ²⁴ The LORD will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder; it will come down from the skies until you are destroyed.

7. See how far Peter has fallen at this point!!

II. The Significance of Peter's Denials

A. Peter's Position

1. Peter called by the Lord to be one of the Twelve, eyewitnesses of His life

2. Peter was specially selected from the Twelve to be one of the Three closest Apostles... Peter, John, and James... the closest friends Jesus had on earth
3. Peter was the leader of the Three!

Matthew 16:15-19 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven."¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

4. Peter had been privileged to see the transfiguration of Jesus... His glorious radiance on the Mountain... to hear the voice of Almighty God saying, "This is my Son, whom I love"
5. Peter had been selected along with James and John to stay with Jesus in Gethsemane and pray with him
6. His denials are DEVASTATING!!!

B. Peter's Promises

Matthew 26: 33 Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

- C. Peter's Fears... clearly terrified of death! That's why after Peter urged Jesus not to die, Jesus taught them all this

Matthew 16:24-27 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.²⁶ What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done."

D. Peter's Sinfulness

1. It is a very serious thing to deny Jesus Christ... it was Peter's confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" that had brought Jesus' highest encouragement to him:

Matthew 16:17-18 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven."¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

2. Now he unsays with his lips this awesome confession!
3. He does it out of love for his life in this world

John 12:25-26 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

4. Peter's fear of death caused him to turn away from his faith in the Lord
5. The terrifying sentence on this came from Jesus himself:

Mark 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

E. Clear Contrast with Jesus

1. By contrast, Jesus is boldly proclaiming before the Jewish authorities His identity as the Son of God
2. By contrast, Jesus is actively laying down his life for His sheep
3. By contrast, Jesus is saying to the Father

Not my will but yours be done!

Peter has hit the bottom of his life... this is the lowest Peter will ever go. PRAISE BE TO JESUS, HE DOESN'T LOSE US!!

Matthew 18:12-13 What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³ And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off.

III. The Journey Back Begins with Pain

A. The Rooster Crows and Jesus Looks

1. Jesus had programmed Peter's mind to remember by His clear prophecy

Matthew 26:74-75 Immediately a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

2. To make it even more painful, just at the moment, Luke tells us that Jesus looked at him

Luke 22:61 The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times."

How was this possible? I don't know... remember Jesus had three different phases of his trial before Annas and Caiphas, so He was probably being moved from one of those places to the next

This look must have been among the most painful things in Peter's life

But the pain was necessary to shock him into repentance!!

"The Look":

**I saw one hanging on a tree
In agony and blood
Who fixed His loving eyes on me
As near His cross I stood
And never till my dying breath
Will I forget that look
It seemed to charge me with His death
Though not a word He spoke**

**Forever etched upon my mind
Is the look of Him who died
The Lamb I crucified
And now my life will sing the praise
Of pure atoning grace
That looked on me and gladly took my place**

3. But these two things were instrumental in recovering this wandering sinner

B. Peter Remembers

Matthew 26:75 Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

C. Peter Leaves

1. GET OUT OF THERE!!
2. Peter was in over his head!
3. The rooster's crowing and the Lord's look moved him out of danger

D. Peter Weeps

1. The tears flow for the sin of that night

2. The tears are a display of the wounds of his soul
3. Matthew says he wept BITTERLY

E. John 21: Jesus Hurts to Heal... and Restore

IV. Lessons from Peter's Denials

A. The Greatness of Christ's Perfect Character

1. The direct contrast with Jesus is stunning
2. Where Peter, the leader of the Apostles was weak and sinful, Jesus was strong and sinless; where Peter was faithless, Jesus was faithful; where Peter called down curses on himself, Jesus became a curse for Peter and for us; where Peter sought to save his life, Jesus laid down his life

B. The Universality and Depth of Sin

1. It's amazing that we even have this account at all
2. Peter was in the midst of his ministry as the Apostle to the Jews... one of the central leaders of the church
3. But the honesty of the Bible concerning the sins and failures of its greatest leaders is one of the clearest evidences of the divine origin of the Bible
4. Peter was a great leader who committed a great sin... and God showed him great grace
5. From this we learn again the lesson of the universality of human sinfulness

Ecclesiastes 7:20 There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.

Romans 7:15-18 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

6. How do YOU see yourself in this story of Peter?
 - a. Do you see yourself in him... someone who could easily deny Christ if the pressure got to be great enough?
 - b. Do you understand how weak you are?

- c. Do you have actual sins to confess to the Lord? Times you have refused to stand firm and testify to the Lord in the face of some non-Christians? Times you may have caved into peer pressure... failed to speak up because of what people would think?
- d. Do you see how serious this is?

Mark 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

2 Timothy 2:11-12 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; ¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us

Romans 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs-- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Peter shrank back from paying the price of testifying to Christ... and he ended up weeping bitterly

Do you have any such cause to repent and to weep bitterly for times you've sinned against Him?

C. The Sufficiency of the Cross for Our Sins

1. The central message of the Bible... Christ died for sin
2. The atonement of the blood of Christ is sufficient to cover Peter's sin and ours
3. TRUST IN CHRIST!! See in the cross the only remedy to our sinfulness

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

4. Do you have a strong confidence in the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to cover such grievous sins?

D. The Need for Constant Vigilance

1. Peter was self-sufficient and over-confident
2. Clear evidence of this: his repeated boasts and his prayerlessness
3. Prayerlessness: while Jesus was squeezing every last moment out of His intense prayer time in Gethsemane, Peter was sleeping

4. Peter was “ready to lay down his life” for Jesus... but he wasn’t ready for a single question from a slave girl at the door
5. Temptation does not come in a clearly recognizable costume... it doesn’t come as we expect it to; Peter was perhaps ready to fight the Roman soldiers, but temptation came quietly in from the side in the weak little voice of a slave girl at the door
6. Clear lesson from scripture... the need for CONSTANT VIGILANCE!!

CSB 1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore, whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall!

7. Walk moment by moment in total dependence on Christ and constant awareness of your own weakness... and the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil

E. The Painfulness of Repentance

1. The disease of sin has a very painful cure... genuine heartfelt repentance and transformation never comes easily
2. The shock of the rooster crowing coupled with Jesus’ penetrating look must have been incredibly PAINFUL to Peter
3. The memories of his confident boasting and Jesus’ perfect prediction combined both to save him from further sin AND to begin the healing work of repentance... and that journey started with BITTER PAIN
4. Peter remembers with pain, leaves the vicinity with pain, gets alone in pain, and then reflects carefully on all that had happened... it starts with MEMORY, with going over the facts... then it comes by CAREFUL REFLECTION on those facts...

CSB Mark 14:72 Immediately a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered when Jesus had spoken the word to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." When he thought about it, he began to weep.

The Greek word there implies a careful reflection, casting over it again and again... “What did I say? What happened? Why O why did I do that? How could I have denied Him? It was the exact thing He said I would do? How could He know me better than I know myself? Can He ever forgive me? What kind of man am I, that I would abandon Him when He needed me the most? I should have been a courageous witness for Him during His trial, but instead, I was a faithless coward.”

5. soon, deep sadness and bitterness comes... and with it, WEEPING
6. the bitterness would be deep and profound... and lasting

7. and the pain of restoration wasn't over quickly... even after the resurrection, Peter may have wondered whether he could ever share in the feast of joy... was he now excluded?
8. Jesus began a painful three-step inquisition

John 21:15-17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

The PAIN that Jesus caused by this three-fold opportunity for Peter to reaffirm his love for Jesus was necessary... without the pain after sin there can be no genuine repentance

9. The Ingredients of True Repentance (Thomas Watson)

- a. Sight of Sin: seeing the sin as it really is, a heinous turning away from loyalty and love and friendship and especially... the "Christ, the Son of the living God"... to see it as it really is, as God sees it
- b. Sorrow for Sin: Peter wept bitterly, feeling acutely the depth of what he'd just done...

Watson: This sorrow for sin is not superficial: it is a holy agony. It is called in scripture a breaking of the heart: 'The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart' (Ps. 51.17); and a rending of the heart: 'Rend your heart' (Joel 2.13). The expressions of smiting on the thigh (Jer. 31.19), beating on the breast (Luke 18.13), putting on of sackcloth (Isa. 22.12), plucking off the hair (Ezra 9.3), all these are but outward signs of inward sorrow

- c. Confession of Sin: we have no record of this in Peter's case... but perhaps this entire account came in detail from his lips... he was willing to tell the story on himself

Watson: Sorrow is such a vehement passion that it will have vent. It vents itself at the eyes by weeping and at the tongue by confession

- d. Shame for Sin: what must Peter have felt in reference to the rest of the disciples concerning what he did here? How must his heart have burned with shame over his cowardly act?
- e. Hatred of Sin: we cannot imagine the self-loathing that Peter must have felt, the hatred of the entire course of events; how much he must have burned to make it right, to testify boldly

f. Turning from Sin: On the day of Pentecost, Peter would boldly testify to his faith in Christ; in Acts 4, he would boldly testify again before the very people that had crucified Jesus... clearly, Peter turned from his sin

10. For the rest of his life, Peter would walk in humility over this sin

1 Peter 5:5 "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

F. The Possibility of Restoration

1. In some ways, it could be argued that Peter's role as a great leader in the church should have ended that very night
2. Some could argue that he disqualified himself from leadership by his faithlessness and cowardice and lying here
3. But how marvelous is the grace of God to restore sinners and still use them for His service!!

Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory.

4. Peter was terrified of arrest and death here... so much so that even a slave girl's question threw him
5. But after the beauty of Jesus' gracious restoration of Peter in John 21, and after the day of Pentecost brought the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Peter lost his fear of death and boldly proclaimed the gospel:

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Acts 4:8-12 "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ He is "'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.' ¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

G. Peter's Glorious End

1. John 21 makes it clear that Peter would bring glory to God by dying with courage and faith

John 21:18-19 I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

2. Church tradition tells us the Apostle Peter was crucified in Rome in 64 AD, crucified upsidedown

H. The Amazing Grace of God toward Sinners

1. The bottom line of this story is the astonishing grace of God to sinners like Pete and like us!
2. We are weak people... not might warriors...
3. Whatever we accomplish for the glory of God, we do by the power of God
4. Only by the graciousness of God the Father can we not be cast aside and disqualified from serving Him
5. Only by the blood of Jesus Christ can our sins be covered
6. Only by the power of the Spirit can our weakness and our fears be overcome so we can testify boldly to Christ
7. In the heaven, we will be celebrating the grace of God in raising up sinners and using them for eternal glory

John 3:20-21 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.

Revelation 4:9-11 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."