



I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords."

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

It was early in the Civil War – that Company "K" of the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry was in Washington, DC. These young men from Wisconsin were marching in review – when as often happened – Sergeant John Ticknor started singing a song – in rhythm to their marching. The original words were about a pudgy Scotsman named John Brown – and then were changed to talk about John Brown the fierce abolitionist. The Reverend James Clarke told his friend Julia Ward Howe that she should write new words for the fighting men's song. Staying in the Willard Hotel in Washington on the night of November 18, 1861 – Julia woke up the next morning – the sky still gray – her mind racing with the words of the song in her head. She jumped out of bed – and with a stump of a pen wrote them down so quickly – lest she forget them – she said she almost didn't look at the paper. You know the words she wrote – inspired by Revelation chapter 19 – the white horse and it's Rider:

My Eyes Have Seen The Glory Of The Coming Of The Lord!

1. He treads the winepress of judgment
2. He is my King and my Lord!

If you are very familiar with the Revelation to St. John – chances are you have heard about *the four horses of the Apocalypse!* The four horsemen are from chapter 6 – near the very beginning of the Revelation to St. John. Again it's important to remember some of the principles we have to understand Scripture like the Revelation to St. John. Revelation is not linear. It's not first chapter one happens, then chapter two, then chapter three followed by chapter four – and finally chapter 22. Professor Becker liked to say Revelation is like a kaleidoscope. Did you have one of them when you were little – a kaleidoscope? You turn it – and the same pieces of colored glass form pattern after pattern. There are simple powerful essential truths in Revelation – that repeat again and again. There is good and there is evil. As judgment day draws closer and closer the battle will grow ever more intense – the struggle ever more painful. The ultimate outcome is secure. The King of kings and Lord of lords will keep his lambs and sheep safe. He will bring them safely home to heaven. The devil – his horrible hosts of demons and those who remain in their sins – in stubborn godless unbelief will be cast into the forever flaming lake of fire in hell! Chapter 6 – the four horsemen of the Apocalypse – **Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "come!" I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest. When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword. When the Lamb had opened the third seal I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then he heard what sounded like the voice among the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages, and do not**

damage the oil and wine!" When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature say, "Come!" I looked and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth. *Revelation 6:1b-8* These four horses – white and red and black and pale – are not to be confused with the white horse we are concentrating on – the white horse near the end of Revelation. *The four horses of the Apocalypse* – are horses of fierce and painful judgment! The white horse and her rider in chapter 19 is our Savior.

Listen again to chapter 19. **I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. Faithful, True, Justice?** Who can this be? It must be Jesus himself! Jesus is faithful – keeping all his promises. People don't! I had my oil changed the other day. They used to vacuum your car. They don't do that anymore. They wash your windows. Well, sort of. Last time they washed half of the windshield – the driver side – not the passenger side. This time they skipped the rear view mirrors. And they didn't do the little buttons to reset the oil usage read out! I don't mention these things to find fault. Everyone makes mistakes. I do all the time. But the point is faithfulness! That's God's bench-mark – faithfulness. We need to be faithful whatever our God-given roles and responsibilities! Faithful! Jesus forgives us all the times we are unfaithful – doing the things we need to do every day. Be faithful – changing oil. Be faithful – cutting the grass or whatever you do! Clean bathrooms well! That was my job at the Seminary – 3 ½ hours a day – cleaning bathrooms. Clean the mirrors – all the little white dots of toothpaste. Clean the sinks – wash all the little whiskers down the drain. Clean the toilets – on your knees – wash behind them! Clean the showers – clean the drains – clean the floor – in the corners! No matter how lowly the job – washing feet is important – between the toes – if you are doing it for the ultimate one who is Faithful and true and just!

He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. His name is the Word of God? Doesn't this remind you of the opening verses of *the Gospel of John* – the same John – the Revelation to St. John? Remember? **In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God! He was with God in the beginning.** And again it says, **"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth!"** *John 1:1 & 14.* Jesus is God's Word made real – come to life. Jesus is the physical fulfillment of everything God's Word promises! If we want to be closer to God – one of the very best ways is to be in God's Word. That's very simple to do. All you need to do is read your Bible and the Holy Spirit will help you understand! It doesn't matter what Bible you read – the King James – **"The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall now want."** It's classic. The NIV is wonderful – the Lutheran Study Bible – published by Concordia – the English Standard Version with lots of study notes and explanations. Come to Bible Class – on Sunday morning – on Thursday at Perkins – and you can have pancakes or muffins or hot coffee. Come to Good Shepherd Bible Class and you can read devotions and talk about them – and if we get a little off the track because something happened to you or your friend – we can talk about that. Or you can come to the home Bible Class and talk about God's Word there – ask any question – discuss law and gospel!

"He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty." Earthly authority tries – but it isn't easy enforcing laws. On my way to Church there are a whole bunch of those signs that say **ROAD CLOSED!** That's really pretty simple. **ROAD CLOSED!** Sometimes there are three or even four of those signs very closely mashed together. The only way to get around them would be to drive up on the sidewalk. I haven't seen that yet. But sometimes there's a space between them or a way around them. And you see people all the time – stop and look – then drive real quick – to the end of the block – and turn again. It's the same with those big

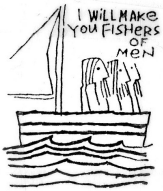


on the highway.

I understand – if you realize you made a mistake – you end up going miles out of your way. I did that the other day in Oconomowoc. And I ended up half way back to Ixonia – but how would I explain to you that I turned around – right beside one of those signs that says *don't!* It doesn't matter that I was trying to visit a newborn baby and her mommy with God's Word! If anything – that would have only made it worse – to break

the law – to do Gospel ministry! You can hear it every once in a while – someone racing down highway 16! You can see it on Provimi Road and on Welsch Road – about 15 yards of tread marks on the asphalt. Someone went very fast – after looking every which way to make sure they wouldn't get caught! It's tempting to think – if my teacher isn't watching – if my parents don't know how to check my e-mails and my phone text messages – then I got away with it! You didn't! If the police don't catch me. If the IRS man didn't catch me – then I got away with it! You didn't! God's Word reminds us – our Heavenly Father knows! He is stomping on the grapes of his judgment against sin. And there will be no escape. There is not a one of us who is quick enough or clever enough or sneaky enough to fool God! The childhood trick of deny, deny, deny might exasperate and frustrate our parents until they give up in disgust. But it will never work with God. Our only hope is to admit our sins – repent of them all – and cling to Jesus' mercy and grace!

On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords." In plain sight for all to see – is Jesus' power and authority – his name King of kings and Lord of lords. This is more than just Jesus' authority over earthly kings and rulers. Jesus is in Heaven – King and Lord over all the saints in heavenly glory. We read about this every Lenten Season – when we read the *Passion History* – compiled from the four Gospels. Remember – on the night he was betrayed God's Word says, Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, **"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them...But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer one you a kingdom, just as my father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom..."** *Luke 22:24f* What matters is not earthly power and authority over people. What matters is not earthly authority to control Wall Street or to control Main Street. What matters is not earthly power to appoint justices to an earthly Supreme Court. The ultimate Supreme Court – the only court that really matters is in Heaven. We will sit with Jesus in Heaven where ultimate justice will reign – as we feast with Jesus in the perfect peace and wondrous glory of Heaven! *Even so come quickly, Lord Jesus.* Amen!



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