

He is Worthy

Revelation 5

- I. Moses.
 - A. Summary of his life—Hebrews 11:24-26
 - B. His request for God—Exodus 33:18 **“I pray You, show me Your glory!”**
- II. The throne room.
 - A. Chapter 4—the throne room of God.
 - B. Chapter 5—Jesus in the throne room standing next to God.
- III. Worship—What is it?
 - A. A 10:30 “worship” meeting for an hour and a half?
 - B. *Orthodoxy* and *Orthopraxy*
 - 1. Orthodoxy = what we believe, orthopraxy what we do.
 - 2. Doxology = our response—praise of God’s glory.
 - C. *“Worship is a response to the truth”*—D. Pentecost.
 - D. *“Worship is our affirmation TO GOD what He has revealed about Himself to be true”*—J. MacArthur
- IV. Chapter five is pure worship.
 - A. What is the scroll?
 - 1. All kinds of ideas:
 - a. A title deed to the earth
 - b. A last will and testament
 - c. Ezekiel’s book of lamentation (Ezekiel 2:9-10)
 - d. A sealed book of the end times per Daniel 12:4
 - e. The remainder of Revelation (chapters 6-22)
 - B. Who is worthy to open the scroll?

1. If no one is worthy to open the scroll, we have no hope.
- C. Why is John so torn up?
1. *John's tears represent the tears of all God's people through all the centuries – W.A. Criswell.*
- V. The glory of Jesus Christ (5-10).
- A. The Lion from the tribe of Judah.
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 - C. The Lamb that was slain.
 - E. Physical features:
 1. Seven horns—power and mighty
 2. Seven eyes—All knowing, all seeing
 3. Seven Spirits—Full of the Holy Spirit
 - F. Jesus takes the scroll from God—He is worthy!
 1. Jesus Christ is the ONLY One who is worthy.
 - G. The need for new “superlatives”
 1. ***“In the world of over used superlatives and excessive affirmation, we must declare the unique worthiness of Jesus Christ...We have to hunt for some vocabulary we reserve for Jesus Christ.” – Kevin Smith.***
- VI. The worship service (11-14).
- A. *Myriads and myriads of angels*—10,000X10,000 = 100 Million!
 - B. In a loud voice—WORTHY IS THE LAMB!!!
 - C. What will heaven be like?
 1. We will behold His glory and worship Him... and be completely satisfied!

He is Worthy

Revelation 5

A little baby is found floating in a basket in the river Nile...a woman of royalty finds him and takes him in...and cares for him... eventually she adopts him into the royal family...into the most powerful family in the world...

This baby grows up in unimaginable wealth and affluence... the finest foods, clothing... prestige...greatest of all privileges... he lacked nothing... he was set.

He would have had all the perks and privileges of a prince of Egypt. He was given the finest education... He was instructed **“in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds”** (Acts 7:22).

But as a young man... he chose to leave it all... something much more valuable than all those riches called him away...something that would make enjoying all these riches a waste of his life... *do you know this man?*

We get a great little summery of his life in the New Testament book of Hebrews 11:24-26:

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, *choosing* rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, regarding the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

Isn’t that interesting?... some 1400 years before Christ... Moses basically gave up his earthly comfort for the reward of serving Christ...by placing His faith in God....

Suddenly Moses was fleeing Egypt for his life...he finds his way to the home of a shepherd and actually becomes a shepherd himself!...God sends Moses back to Egypt where he saw God do awesome deeds that crushed Egypt and brought mighty Pharaoh to his knees...

God pried Pharaohs hands open to let captive Israel go... over many years... Moses saw God miraculously provide food and water while wandering in the wilderness... When Israel rebelled against God and God began to judge them... Moses interceded with God on behalf of Israel...

Eventually Moses made a huge request of God... if you were Moses... what would your request be to God?... You have had a privileged early life... you had everything... then for forty years you were a shepherd... and now you had these incorrigible freed slaves to lead... what would your request be?

Would you ask God to make you Pharoah so that you could immediately put these difficult people... Israel... into the promised land so they would shut up?..... would you ask God to send you back to a life of luxury and wealth?... all this was a mistake?... what would you ask of God?

Do you know what Moses wanted from God?... Moses wanted what we all need... we are told the answer in Exodus 33:18... **Then Moses said, “I pray You, show me Your glory!”**

Moses would say that only if he had pried himself free from the world...freedom from all the idolatries... the luxuries... the lust, the lies...*there is no god... there is no revealed truth because there is no absolute truth*... the false perspectives.... The fleshly offerings that chase us... how did he do it?... how do we do it?...what does it take?

It takes seeing God as He is...His glory... Beholding God breaks the chains of idolatry because when you see God for who He truly is... the world is exposed... the lies are revealed...”THIS IS NOT IT!... you see the emptiness and worthlessness of this world’s offerings!

Beholding God gives you new eyes...a new view of the world...*God defines reality!...God IS truth!....* **We need to behold His glory... and what then is the response?....WORSHIP**

The apostle John was given a huge dose of this reality when he was invited up to heaven... into the very throne room of God... Revelation chapters 4 and 5....He was given the amazing special honor of beholding the glory of God... and witnessed the greatest display of true worship in the entire Bible...He takes his stylus and his papyrus... and he writes down what he sees... what is chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation.

Last time we concentrated on God in His throne room being worshipped in chapter 4...John was so affected by what he saw... the vision was so inexpressible he couldn’t describe what God was like...he could only describe him in metaphors... the angelic creatures who day and night declared:

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come....
The twenty-four elders fell down before God casting their crowns saying **Worthy are You our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created.**

No human had ever witnessed worship like this!... now... in chapter 5 John is still showing us the throne room... but now we concentrate on Jesus Christ standing to the right of God... Two parts to this passage... the first seven verses reveal the glory of Jesus and verses 8-14 reveals the response...worship

Let’s read the passage:

Read chapter five

Worship... what is it?...we call this a worship service... we do this once a week at 10:30... I would guess for many, most Christians...a service like this is about the extent of their “weekly” worship...

Which is unfortunate... for we have compressed what was meant to be “lives of worship” into an hour and a half service per week.... The truth is... a church “worship service” may or may not even be worship.... You can attend and even participate in a “worship service” and not even come close to “worshipping” God.

To help out in this unfortunate reality we try to initiate various “forms” that will help us to get into a state of worship...aids that will help us to get into it.

We carefully chose music...everybody has theories on that
Some churches create environments that evoke the senses (my church had stained glass windows, but a new style of worship came and they painted them black)
some churches plan liturgies
Prayers in King James English

We really do want to worship...but I don’t know if we actually know what it is.

I read an article titled “*The Truncation of the Christian Faith*” about how Christianity in our culture has lost its meaning...people are leaving the church because of its “orthodoxy” orthodoxy is the accepted doctrines or teachings of the Christian faith...the doctrines of our Holy Bible is our orthodoxy.

And of course Biblical doctrines are offensive to our culture.

The outside world says we have **orthodoxy** without **orthopraxy**...orthopraxy is the practice of our orthodoxy... in other words... orthodoxy is what we believe and orthopraxy is what we do...orthopraxy is God’s word working out in our lives in what we do...often there is a disconnect between our orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

We try hard to get our orthodoxy right... we preach the Word!.... and we of course encourage and try hard to orthopraxy.... But unfortunately...something is often missing...our **orthodoxy** and our **orthopraxy** does not lead to **doxology**.

Doxology... **praise of God’s glory. Splendor and majesty.... His grandeur**...I’m sure doxology is what happened after God showed Moses His glory...doxology is worship.

Dwight D. Pentecost defined worship as “*a response to the truth*”... doxology... MacArthur says worship is *our affirmation TO GOD what He has revealed about Himself to be true....doxology....*

Worship is a response... when we worship in song... for it to be worship... we are saying...singing **to God**...is what He has revealed as being true about Him...we affirm that truth.... we give back to Him in praise... His revelation about Himself.

Chapter five is pure worship... God is revealing to John... then to us... what is ready to take place...it is the culmination of history...all the promises of the Bible will be finally completed in its entirety... and it all begins after this heavenly worship service...

Verse 1

God is seated on His throne... and He is holding in His right hand a scroll with a lot of writing on it... front and back... it's sealed up with seven seals...My **first question** is... *What's this scroll?*

A sealed up scroll was nothing unusual...many ancient scrolls have been found throughout the Mideast that would fit this description... when a scroll was sealed it was an important document... only an authorized person could break the seals and open the scroll.... The seals were like passwords and only the person with the password can open the document...

Dr Robert Thomas, expert on ancient middle-east writings says that the Romans would put into scrolls wills, title deeds to property, rental agreements, marriage covenants, all sorts of contracts and legal documents... and seal them with seven wax seals...

Each section of the document would be folded and sealed.... The next section would be written then folded and sealed... seven times... when it was time to open the scroll... that authorized person along with eyewitnesses would break the seals and read the document out loud.

All kinds of ideas on what this particular scroll was:

- A title deed to the earth
- A last will and testament
- Ezekiel's book of lamentation (Ezekiel 2:9-10)
- A sealed book of the end times per Daniel 12:4
- The remainder of Revelation (chapters 6-22)

Nobody knows for sure but they tell you they do... I think the title deed to the earth makes sense...When we studied through Genesis we saw that God had given Adam and Eve the dominion over the earth... of course through sin they lost that deed...and the world has been hijacked by Satan ever since...

The apostle Paul in Romans 8 tells us the **whole creation is groaning, waiting for its redemption...**

In places like Psalm 24:1 we see that **the earth is the Lord's and all it contains...** we have a promise that Jesus will return...chapter 19... and has the title deed to the earth...so what God is holding in His right hand could be that title deed

We do know what is inside the scroll.... Seven judgements that are about to be released on the earth... right around the corner...

Read verse 2a

Notice the angel has a loud voice... heaven is going to be loud!...37 times in Revelation do we find the word “loud”!...this loud angel asks the **Second question**... and it’s a big one... **Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?**

Surely there is one worthy.... there were a lot of godly men who were hanging out in heaven...Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Peter James and John...how about Paul?

Heaven’s got a problem... if they can’t find anyone *worthy* to open the seals...knowing the rest of Revelation...knowing what happens BECAUSE the scroll gets opened... we can see what wouldn’t happen if it were not opened.

- Jesus would not be worshipped as worthy
- Jesus would not be worshipped as the world’s redeemer
- The martyrs of the faith would not be avenged
- The prayers of the saints would not be answered... “Thy kingdom come”
- God’s appointed plan would never come to pass
- The wicked would not be judged
- Jesus would not come back
- God would not reign in glory in the new heavens and the new earth.
- The story stops!

Bottom line?... **if the scroll is not opened... there is no future hope.**

This problem... of no one WORTHY to open the scrolls really affected John...**I was crying greatly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it (4).**

Third question...why was John so torn up!.... Sobbing!...I think in that he lived his entire adult life in the light of these eternal promises... if no one is worthy enough to take the deed of the earth... all was for naught.

W.A. Criswell when he preached this passage in 1969 said *John’s tears represent the tears of all God’s people through all the centuries*...he lists many of the saints of the Bible who died in vain... closes: *and I wept audibly, for the failure to find a redeemer meant that this earth in its curse is consigned forever to death...It meant that death, sin, damnation and hell should reign forever and ever and the sovereignty of God’s earth should remain forever in the hands of Satan.*

When you realize the impact of NOT finding one worthy... the impact should be even greater when you find one who is worthy!.....

Read verse 5

This is when we begin to see the glory of Jesus Christ... this is when it begins to really come together...when we begin to see that all those things that wouldn't happen WILL happen...and we begin to behold His glory.

Stop crying! BEHOLD!....LOOK!... **The lion that is from the tribe of Judah**...right from Genesis 49:9...read it sometime... it's a messianic title... it pictures the future Messiah as one that is strong and mighty, powerful like a lion...

That's the picture the Jews had of the coming Messiah... Mighty and powerful... part of the reason the Jews rejected Jesus when He came because Jesus didn't come like a lion... He came as the suffering servant... But Jesus was indeed the lion from Judah... He was **The root of David**...

Right from Isaiah 11...read that one also... Jesus the Messiah would come from the line of David... *this Lion of Judah*... "*son*" of David can open the scroll!... the vision gets more intense for John.

Read verse 6

The four living creatures we met in chapter 4... cherubim angels... and the 24 elders are there...**a lamb standing as if slain**... Jesus is a lion... royal, dignified, powerful.... But also a lamb...quiet, humble, submissive....slain....get this... the word for lamb is *arnion*... a domesticated lamb... a pet lamb...

On Passover the *arnion*...pet lamb had to live with the family IN THE HOUSE four days before it was slain... as one commentator puts it... *it was cuddled then it was slaughtered*... They were looking for a lion... He was their lion... but He showed up a lamb!

Chapter 5 lamb was quite a lamb... (6) **Having seven horns** horns are a symbol of power... seven is what?... completion, perfection.... **Seven eyes**... sees everything... perfect knowledge... seven is what?

The seven Spirits... refers to the Holy Spirit... seven means what?... the Holy Spirit in all His power... this One who can open the scroll is Mighty as a lion, humble as a lamb... has the fullness of the Spirit... all powerful... all knowing.

Read verse 7

Do you realize just how big this is?...this is our hope!... I hope from now on when you read this... it doesn't just fly by as another event in the Bible... this is a monumental event!...there are many events where redemptive history rests on...The birth of the Savior... Jesus dying on a cross... Jesus resurrected...we still get a day off from work commemorating those days...

But the handoff of the scroll from God the Father to God the Son... this is Christ in His glory....He is the ONLY ONE WORTHY to open the scroll... remember Genesis 3:15?... if you've been here longer than a year you had better!

God speaking to the serpent after the fall...

**15 And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel.”**

That fatal bruise on the head is now on the calendar!

Jesus takes the scroll...the mere fact that He was the only one worthy... reveals His glory...the ONLY ONE in all the universe that can meet the need... . And what happens?

Read verses 8-9a

Worthy!... that's the theme of this passage isn't it?...four times it pops up...

I was challenged about **superlatives** recently...this sentence captured me for awhile this last week...Pastor Kevin Smith of ERLC... *in the world of over used superlatives and excessive affirmation, we must declare the unique worthiness of Jesus Christ...*

We have to hunt for some vocabulary we reserve for Jesus Christ... Everything today is “awesome”... I had some brownies that were awesome... one of you told me your dog was awesome... *I had an awesome vacation...* the “ultimate” the “greatest”... the most awesome car...

If my wife's banana nut bread is great...and my sisters pond is the most beautiful...and my recipe for mac and cheese is awesome...then I have to find another word for Jesus!...we have used all our superlatives up in mundane little things...

Why is our worship so puny!?... because Jesus Christ and my wife's banana bread are both awesome!

We live in an excessive affirmation culture... we congratulate people for doing what they ought to be doing... so and so is awesome... he goes to work every day to provide for his family... he comes home every night and takes care of the house.... He helps put the kids to bed... he's AWESOME!..... really?... that's regular life!

In a culture where everything is the most awesome and the greatest... what do we ascribe to the living God!...awesome like the One who went to the cross and died on our behalf?.... awesome like brownies are awesome?... the One who was placed in a tomb for three days and rose again to life defeating death....

He's great like Frizzaris , fuzzaris, fuzzaris whatever pizza is great?... somebody told me it was the best, most awesome pizza IN THE WORLD!... Is He great like that?... NO ONE WAS

WORTHY TO OPEN THE SCROLL BUT JESUS CHRIST... **HAD HE NOT BEEN ABLE TO OPEN THE SCROLL... NOTHING WOULD BE AWESOME.**

(9) **Worthy** are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain and purchased for God with Your blood people from every tribe and tongue and nation. And You made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God...and they will reign upon the earth.

Only Jesus Christ was able to do that... Only Jesus was “WORTHY”... maybe “WORTHY” is the superlative we should reserve for Jesus.

The scene intensifies... this is a worship service!...

Read verse 11

“**Many angels**” is not an exaggeration... you’ve got the elders and the other “living creatures”...a handful... but then you have myriads and myriads of angels...a myriad is *murios*... which is ten thousand... so there are ten thousand TIMES ten thousand angels... how many is that?... try a hundred million!.... that’s awesome!

The idea is that it is countless.... Innumerable... they **were all saying with a LOUD VOICE**... there it is again... heaven is loud...sometimes Baptist are pretty “conservative” in worship... not as bad as Presbyterians or Anglicans...

When I went to Israel I was with about 22 Assembly of God pastors... one Baptist pastor one methodist and the rest Pentecostal... I was invited to join with them in prayer and worship our first morning in Israel in the basement of the hotel.... All I can say is “my, my!”

They were all saying with a loud voice... (12) **Worthy** is the lamb that was slain...Calvary is in heaven!!!... the sacrificial lamb of God... Jesus Christ who was nailed to the cross to pay the price of our sins... Calvary is in heaven! **Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.**

A regular conversation I get into begins with the question “*what do I think heaven will be like*”...We all want to know that...we all have our unique ideas... Most think heaven will be a place where all the things that satisfy us here on earth will multiplied by myriads and myriads...

“There’s going to be golf in heaven right?”

“Ice cream”

“My dog’s going to be there right?”

“My cat is going to be there right?”

A dear lady who used to attend here... who now knows what heaven will be like... before she died she asked me if I thought her cat would be in heaven... I said "*I don't think so*"... she said "*Then I don't want to go to heaven*"...we picture heaven being everything we desire...everything that satisfies us....

To help pay for college, I started a janitorial business, I specialized in maintaining floors... I cleaned them, polished them, buffed them out to a beautiful shine... One Sunday my pastor preached on what heaven will be like... he said *there will be streets of gold!*...I thought *Oh great... I'll be spending my eternity polishing gold streets!*

I think we get a picture here of what heaven will be like...

13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them... all creatures EVERYWHERE...I heard saying:

"To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be the blessing and honor and the glory and the might forever and ever"

And the four living creatures kept saying, "AMEN"...and the elders fell down and worshipped.

I think we will be worshipping... Revelation 22:3 says **3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.**

If you've been in church long, you've heard somewhere that when we get to heaven... we will spend our eternity worshipping God...we will be like the elders and fall down and worship the Almighty...

Let's be honest... even the most Christian, Christian on the edge of their minds are thinking... that's great, I want to worship God... I want to acknowledge Jesus Christ as worthy... but won't there be a little golf?

The reason is... while in our flesh... we cannot comprehend being so overwhelmingly satisfied in the presence of the glory of God... the glory of Jesus Christ.... We can't comprehend that His glory will replace all our earthly desires to a satisfaction incomprehensible!

I think Moses was on it...

I have one thing to ask of You God...

Not... can I have just a little of that comfort I left 40-50 years ago?... things are pretty tough here with Your people... can I enjoy a little life for a change?....No...

Not can you do something about these Israelites... they are driving me crazy!...no

NO... HE said "show me Your glory!"

Moses understood... he had a glimpse of the deep, deep satisfaction of beholding the glory of God... how there is nothing this world that offers the satisfaction the realization of God's glory...when that truth is realized... there is no other response but to fall at the feet of Jesus... doxology.

The Lords table

We are participating in the glory of Jesus Christ... an acknowledgement of the truth... the truth of the cross.... [expound]