

*December 20, 2015*

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**TIME OF REFLECTION**

“The madman is not the one who has lost his reason, but the one who has lost everything but his reason.”

~G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936), English writer

“That God is rich in his heaven is something known also by other religions. That he wanted to be poor together with his creatures, that...he wanted to and did indeed suffer for his world, and that through his Incarnation he enabled himself to prove the suffering of his love to his creatures: this is the hitherto unheard-of thing.”

~Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988), Swiss Theologian

“Christ, indeed, could not divest himself of Godhead; but he kept it concealed for a time, that it might not be seen, under the weakness of the flesh. Hence he laid aside his glory in the view of men, not by lessening it, but by concealing it.”

~John Calvin (1509-1564), Swiss theologian

“Despite our efforts to keep him out, God intrudes. The life of Jesus is bracketed by two impossibilities: a virgin’s womb and an empty tomb. Jesus entered our world through a door marked, ‘No Entrance’ and left through a door marked ‘No Exit.’”

~Peter Larson

“If you stumble at mere believability, what are you living for? Isn’t love hard to believe?”

~Yan Martel in *Life of Pi*

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## *Worship through the Word*

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**SERMON** – “The Excellence of Jesus Christ” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *Revelation 5 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup> I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. <sup>2</sup> And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?” <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. <sup>4</sup> Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; <sup>5</sup> and one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”

<sup>6</sup> And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. <sup>7</sup> And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. <sup>8</sup> When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

<sup>10</sup> “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

<sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

<sup>13</sup> And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying,

“To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

<sup>14</sup> And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped.