

“Worth Driven Worship” **Revelation 5:1-14**

Intro: We are people of pursuit. From the overarching trajectory of our lives to the smallest decisions of each day, we are constantly pursuing one thing of the other. It doesn't matter if we are talking about the clothes we wear, the route you took to get here this morning, how you spend your leisure time, your career path, or the spouse you choose to spend the rest of your life with. This is why some companies spend millions of dollars on presenting a product by appealing to your desires. What these businesses do is promise that they will be able to deliver value to your life. If you drink a certain kind of drink you will have more friends and maybe become the world's most interesting man. If will wear a certain kind of clothes, your new sense of style will make you stand out from the crowd and elevate your importance in the sight of others. If you partner with a certain investment company, they will take you on the path toward financial freedom and seven-digit security.

There is something that drives each decision we make in life. Our life is one big pursuit of what we believe is going to ultimately bring us joy, contentment, and satisfaction. We constantly pursue what we value the most, and this is the way God made us. Dave Harvey affirms this in his book *Rescuing Ambition*, and he also provides a very helpful framework to help us understand how we operate. He says: **“We consciously pursue what we value. It's not simply a matter of being driven by biology or genetics or environmental conditioning to satisfy instinctive cravings. Rather, we *perceive* something, *prize* it at a certain value, then *pursue* it according to that assigned value because we were created that way. This [is] the essence of ambition.”**

Did you get that? We *perceive* something, *prize* it at a certain value, then *pursue* it accordingly. The Bible teaches us that God made us to know him, perceive who he is, prize him as infinitely valuable, and pursue him in worship all of our days. Sadly, because of the fall of Adam & Eve and the sin that riddles our life, our perception of true value is often skewed, leading us to prize and consequently pursue so many things as ultimate other than God. This is what we saw in our series through Ecclesiastes: power, prestige, accomplishment, pleasure, sex, relationships, work, wealth, experiences, you name it, all of these compete for and often usurp the rightful place of God in our lives. But it will not always be that way. Jesus will get his due and that is what we find in Revelation 5. Please open your Bibles to Revelation 5 this morning, pg. 1030. Revelation 5 is going to teach us that (perhaps in a way that no other text of Scripture could) is this:

MIT: The matchless worth of Christ summons our unrestrained worship.

To put it more simply, if you can remember these FIVE words: “His worth drives our worship.” That is to say: His worth should compel and motivate our worship.

One of the great things about the book of Revelation is that it gets us thinking past today. Most of the time, most of us are consumed with the here and now, but Revelation gets us looking toward the there and then. Most of us have trouble looking past today or this week or at the most, this year, but Revelation gets us looking past this life to the next and the day we will all day stand before God. If you consider yourself a Christian, this is a picture of what eternity will be like and should change your life today. If you do not consider yourself a Christian, but are exploring Jesus and Christianity, this picture should cause you to pause and question exactly what you are living for and why you are here.

Context: Revelation was written to encourage Christians in the late first century to live out their faith in the midst of great persecution from Rome. In chapter four, John, one of Jesus' closest disciples, is invited to see the throne room of heaven. Chapter four tells us that John witnessed the worship of God the Father in all of his holiness and worth. Now, what we find in chapter 5 is a continuation of this same vision in which John has been caught up. These early verse are going to encourage us to . . .

I. Recognize the Supreme Worth of Christ as the Lion and the Lamb (1-10)

- **Verse 1:** Two major questions confront us from verse 1. Who is on the throne and what's the significance of the scroll in his hand? The first question is easier to answer. All we have to do is back up to chapter 4, verse 11 and we find that the one on the throne is the Lord God, the King. Not a self-proclaimed king, but the King, the one worthy of glory, honor, and power, and the one who created all things and who calls all the shots in the universe.
- But what about the scroll? This scroll is extremely important because it holds the fullness of God's plan for the destiny of the world. It is the record of God's plan of redemption, judgment, and restoration. It is what we see unfolding throughout the rest of the book of Revelation. But not just anyone can reveal and execute God's plan. That's why we find the unique challenge of verse 2.
- “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is *worthy* to open the scroll and break its seals?’” The key to this challenge is *worth*! In fact, this is the key word of the chapter. We will see it in vv. 2, 4, 9, & 12.

- The drama builds in **verses 3-4**. It seems that no one is worthy! No one in heaven, no one on earth is worthy to bring God's redemptive plan to its fulfillment. It seems that all has been lost, and John weeps! **P**. But hope rises in **Verse 5**.
- There is one who is worthy, the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the Root of David, two Messianic titles for Jesus from Gen 49 & Isa 11. From this point on we are going to get a *heavy* dose of Christology, the study of the person and work of Christ.
- We are going to see why he is worthy in two major ways. The first comes from verse 5.

A. As the Lion, Christ's worth is seen in his triumphant reign (5).

- These two Messianic titles, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" & "the Root of David" teach us that Jesus is the conquering King who triumphs over all of his enemies. Does this picture of Jesus seem strange to you?
- The Jesus of the Bible is not the Precious Moments that some Jesus that simply sits on a rock with rosy cheeks and holds a little lamb. Don't get me wrong. Jesus is compassionate, caring, and more loving than you can imagine. At the same time, Jesus is not a wuss. He is a warrior.
- Rev. 17:14 says, "They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings..." and Rev. 19:11-16 (turn there) "Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven [picture this], arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. [And I love this: He has his name stitched] On his robe and [tattooed] on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." Just in case you didn't know, now you know!
- This conquering Christ put his foot on the neck of sin (Heb. 9:28), Satan (1 John 3:8) and death (1 Cor. 15:55). What does this mean for us?
- Illus. Playing at KWC... I didn't do a lot, but I got a ring! It is sweet. Six diamonds in the form of a one.
- The difference is this: in the gospel, we have done nothing and Christ has done everything and yet, amazingly, unbelievably, we still share in his victory. We still get the ring!
- His victory has been imputed to us. In other words, we share in the victory as if we had won the victory ourselves.
- How did he accomplish this victory? He accomplished this, surprisingly if not shockingly, through his sacrificial death. You get that? Sin, Satan, and Death meet their death in the death of Christ. **Check 6-7**.
- Trans: These verses take us to the second way we see the worth of Christ. As the Lion, we see Christ's worth in his triumphant reign...

B. As the Lamb, Christ's worth is seen in his sacrificial death (6-10).

- Jesus as the Lion reveals his exalted glory, but Jesus as the Lamb reveals his profound humility.
- John gives this symbolic picture of Christ being both the Lion and the Lamb. This is the paradox of the gospel. Jesus conquers through death. After what we saw in verse 5, we would expect verse 6 to say, "And between the throne... I saw a Lion...", but instead the symbol changes and we see a Lamb, and not just any lamb. This lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, symbols for the perfect power and knowledge of Christ, and yet this Lamb was one who had been slain, which immediately points us back to the death of Christ on the cross.
- This was always the plan for the Messiah, as foretold in the OT in passages like Ps 22 and Isa 53. It was pointed to by John the Baptist who said in John 1:29, "**Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.**"
- Christ is worthy because only he could be the perfect sacrifice. When the people of Israel sacrificed a lamb for the temporary forgiveness of their sin, they had to offer a spotless, perfect lamb. Every time they did that, they were foreshadowing the coming Savior, but what did Jesus accomplish on the cross?
- **Theology of the Cross**
 - **Christ died to ransom people for God.** There can be no doubt that God loves you. He sent his Son to die, so that you and I might be reconciled with God. That was the ultimate purpose of his death, and the beautiful thing is that he met our deepest need. You see, our relationship with God was not simply in bad shape, it was completely broken because of sin. . . .
 - **Christ died for all people.** RHC is not a white church or a black church. It is not a rich church, nor a poor church. It is not young church, nor an old church. It is a church for everyone because that is the kind of kingdom that Jesus is building. That is why we say all the time that we want to be a thumbprint of our community because the gospel is for all people. Period. This is, by the way, our impetus for mission. This is why we pray for the nations and why we go to the nations.
 - **Christ died to provide great benefits for his people.** He made them a kingdom. We have a new citizenship. MA is not my ultimate home. I'm looking toward a city that is much better than this one. He also made us priests to God. (Expound!) He calls us priests because we have immediate access to God. . . .
- All of this adds up to the glory and worth of Christ. There is no one like Jesus. There is no one who is both God and man. There is no one who is the Lion and the Lamb.

II. Respond to the Supremacy of Christ with Unrestrained Worship (5:8-14)

- **Read 8-14...** This passage reveals an intense response to the worth of Christ. What we observe in these verses is what worship is like around the throne of God, and it holds immense implications for how we worship Christ today.
- The essence of worship is our response to the revelation of God we have received. That's the framework: revelation, response. In other words, when we truly see who God is in all of his glory and perfection, which by the way, he is perfect in his character and perfect in his works. You could say he is perfectly perfect. When we see that, it demands a response of worship.
- And this is why we were made: we were created for God's glory (Is 43:6-7). We were made for him (Col. 1:16). Remember, we are always worshipping something because we are always prizing something as ultimate in our life.
- What do we learn from these verses about how the worth of Christ should drive our worship? I want to give you four principles on how the worth of Christ should radically alter the way we live our life each day.

1) His worth changes our posture.

- True Worship should be given in Humility (8)
- Check the posture of worship. Bowing shows respect and reverence in our worship.
- When we get have a proper view of Christ and his worth, we will have a proper view of ourselves.
- His worth demands humility. How do you worship Christ when you come before him in praise? Do you come in a flippant manner? As if this were a mere routine? Or do you remind yourself of you are worshipping?
- And here's a little secret: You can either bow now or bow later.
- Philippians 2:9-11 says, "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
- I'll never forget my pastor, when I was about 12 years old,... President ____ will bow.. ____ will bow.. ____ will bow__ and Snoop Doggy Dogg will bow!

2) His worth changes our priorities.

- God should be the supreme value and treasure of our life. He should be what we prize above all else.
- When God gets a hold of our life like this, everything else in life becomes secondary. They were locked in on the glory of Christ, and in many ways, nothing else mattered, nothing else stood in their way.
- That's why Paul says in Philippians 3: All of those achievements that I once thought were so special, I count them as loss, now. In fact, they are like trash compared to knowing and following Jesus.
- Listen, it's not that our relationships or our work or our hobbies and interests are unimportant. Man, God cares about all of those things, but they should not rival the place he holds in our lives.
- Similarly...

3) His worth changes our passions.

- The picture of worship in Revelation five is expressive. You have musical instruments, singing, and prayers rising to God.
- Added to that, worship here is undistracted and unrestrained. When it comes to praising God and living your life for God, there's no reason to hold back. Those gathered around the throne are going hard after God. Look at verse 12 and how it seems that they can't stack enough terms: Jesus to you belongs power and wealth, but not just power and wealth. Wisdom and might. But not just power, wealth, wisdom and might, how about power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory, blessing!
- If I were to say, "I am glorious..." You would probably laugh out loud... But this is how we live our lives as if we really don't need God, as if we were really self-sufficient and did not have any spiritual need, but we are not glorious. God is. God did not have to sleep last night. God did not have to read the paper this morning. God did not have to travel to get to Springstep.
- **Thomas Watson said this, "Glory renders us intensely zealous."** When we see the glory of Christ it should do something to us. It gives us a sense of passion and zeal where we are excited to live for God. His glory should cause us to give him unrestrained praise. It is in seeing Christ clearly that we are changed from the inside-out and then we will love him more and follow him more closely. Be a glory-seeker. Pursue the glory of Christ.
- When you see Christ for who He truly is, today, as the Reigning King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in all of his glory and worth, there is not you will not do for him. There is no request that he could make of you, that you would deny.
- Let me put it another way. In light of his supreme worth, is there anything that we should not give him in worship? How could we say, "I'm not going to strive for holiness in this area of my life. I mean he's not *that* worthy." Or "I'm not going to witness to my friend who needs Christ. He's not worthy." "I'm not going to... He may be worthy of some things, but he's not worthy of that." What?! Finally...

4) His worth changes our praise.

- We love to praise ourselves. It is our bent.
- All boasting goes to him because he created all things, sustains all things, and everything ultimately returns back to him in praise. Romans 11:36 says, "For from him and through him and to him are all things..." Memorize that! "For from him and through..."

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that God loves us. Just look to the cross. The question is: do we truly love God. **"The depth of my love is seen in the intensity of my pursuit."** – Dave Harvey