

JESUS IS WORTHY

Revelation 5:11-14

May 1, 2022

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Easter 3 Sermon

¹¹Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹²In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" ¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" ¹⁴The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Dear friends in our worthy Lamb,

"Is the juice worth the squeeze?" Is the outcome worth the effort? Is it a good use of my time? Is it worth the money I would spend? Does a certain relationship enrich my life? All of these questions consider value or worth. The better we are at making these judgments, the better we succeed at life.

People see Jesus this way, too. Is Jesus more or less important than the Sunday morning soccer league? Is Jesus worth more or less than weekends in the mountains? If we see Jesus as a guy who said some really cool things or as a helpful commodity on holidays, we will see one value for Jesus. St. John saw him very differently.

1. Because he is a lamb who was slain. (verses 11-12)

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If you were here for Maundy Thursday, you were reminded of the 10th plague that God sent on the Egyptians to make Pharaoh let the Israelites go. The Israelites were given specific instructions to slaughter and drain the blood from a one-year-old lamb without blemish. The blood was then painted on the top of their doorframes. Because that lamb lost its life, its blood saved the inhabitants of that house from a God full of wrath over disobedience. God required them to celebrate this event every single year. He never wanted them to forget their deliverance because the Lamb was slain.

If you were here on Good Friday you heard and saw the fulfillment of this Passover command. A God full of wrath over disobedience means every word he says about the punishment for disobedience. If you aren't sure that your life and words and thoughts are a stench in the nostrils of a holy God, you only had to see the cross. You only had to see the scorn of a sinful world against a sinless man to know how serious God is about sin. You also saw that God will no longer count those sins against you, because Jesus, the Lamb of God, took away your sins by paying for every single one.

We are here because we know Jesus has done this for us. With Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus who tenderly took his lifeless body down from the cross, we come here in appreciation and love. With the women who hurried to the tomb early on that first Easter morning we hurry here because Jesus died for us. We come here because the Lamb was slain for you and me. Jesus is worthy of such activity.

2. Because he is a lamb who was slain that is alive. (verses 13-14)

If this is the only reason we would come here, we have reason enough to come here every Sunday for the rest of our lives. But there is more...much, much more. You and I also come because the lamb who was slain is alive.

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If this is nothing more than the fulfillment of Passover, if the blood of that lamb painted on the doorframes is all we come here for, then we have missed the most important point. The difference between that lamb and our Lamb is enormous. All of those lambs for all of those years, gave their lives, and the next year another lamb did the same thing. Every family, every year, another lamb.

But not our Lamb. Joseph and Nicodemus, the women, and even some of his disciples went to that tomb expecting to find a slain lamb. But this Lamb was different. This Lamb, having given his life, came back to life so that no lamb would ever have to die again, so that you and I would never have to die, so that you and I will not have to pay with our lives. Jesus died, once for all, to bring us to God. Our Lamb, who was slain for us, is now alive.

That's why we are here. Every single decision we make in life is an evaluation of value or worth. Consider how much time you spend on the telephone with a telemarketer as opposed to a beloved family member. The greater the value, the more likely we are to do it. When something has great worth, it is worthy of our attention. Interestingly enough, the word "worth" is at the root of the word "worship." In Old English when they wanted to show how much they valued Jesus, they called it, "worth-ship." And that's really the point, isn't it? The lamb who was slain for us is now alive. Because he is alive, we believe that we will also live. And that is everything. In fact it is so much, that it leads us here to "worth-ship." Jesus is worthy. Amen.