



river west church

Worthy is the Lamb Who Was Slain

Revelation 5:1-10

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From the Throne to a Scroll

Revelation 5 reads like a fast-paced dramatic thriller. The plot unfolds so quickly and with such powerful imagery, that we have to focus to keep up. Verse one begins where Chapter 4 left off, with the Almighty Creator on the throne. But, now our attention is drawn from the throne to a small, yet highly significant detail: a scroll. The Lord is on His throne, but He holds in His right hand a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. The scroll is a familiar Old Testament image (Eze. 2:9-10; Dan. 12:4) that refers to God's purpose for history. The scroll explains how the story will end. It's like the final chapter in a riveting novel, and all of creation longs to know what's inside.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and carry out its contents? That is the question of Chapter 5, and when the angel asks it (vs. 2) all of creation answers back with a deafening silence. John weeps because his anticipation has turned to hopelessness. How will the human story end? Is there no meaningful resolution to all the drama, heartache, suffering, even joy? Without Jesus, the answer is no! Without Jesus there is no hope. Without Jesus nothing will be made right. Without Jesus nothing will be resolved. You may feel hope in your life, but if you don't have Jesus, what is that hope based on? Someone must step forward to open the scroll.

From the Scroll to a Lamb

Finally, in verse 5 an answer comes. It is an elder who speaks, and he reassures John that there is one who can open the scroll. "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll." But when John looks, what he sees is not a Lion but a Lamb!

We must not miss the significance of this, for it is perhaps the most meaningful picture of Jesus in the Bible. John hears of a Lion, but he sees a Lamb. John hears of strength; what he sees is weakness. The Lion has conquered, not by killing, as lions normally do, but by dying as a lamb. He wins by losing. He overcomes by becoming a victim. This is the heart of the Gospel, and if we don't understand this, we can't understand how our story ends. Your only hope for life is if you put your trust in this Lamb. He is worthy to open the scroll because He was slain, and by His blood He ransomed a people for God (vs 9).

From the Lamb to Your Knees

Revelation 5 ends the same way that Revelation 4 ends; with worship. The four living creatures and the elders fall on their knees before the Lamb. It's the only appropriate response. They have seen enough. Have you? This morning, we are going to behold this Lamb. We are going to gaze upon His glory. We are going to grow in our understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus and how it has opened the way for a meaningful end to the story. How will your story end? I pray that it ends with you on your knees before Jesus, submitted to Him in worship and faith.