

# God's Greater Work

## Revelation 5

Where do we place our hope? Really? Will it disappoint us?

Prayer: Ephesians 1:18-19

### Revelation 4

God on the throne in heaven giving off brilliant light

Surrounded by 4 living creatures. And surrounded by 24 elders seated on 24 thrones

→ representing all the greatness of all creation

They never stop praising God for...

His being: holy, omnipotent, and eternal

His act of creating everything that is

**"The one holy, creator God alone will receive all the worship of all creation"**

### Revelation 5

#### 1-4: The cosmic crisis: no one worthy to bring God's good

The sealed scroll:

Perhaps the will of God to make right and good everything that is broken among all people and all creation

Can only be opened and implemented by a being who is as worthy as Almighty God on the throne

Nothing and no one is found who is worthy to enact the will of God and turn the world for good

Crisis: no created being can fix the human problem!

Every human solution extends the human problem

No spiritual power can solve the human problem

John weeps because He knows the crisis!

#### 5-7: The Lion/Lamb of God is the one and only solution

Lion of Judah/Root of David: the one God promised to bring His good

to His people

to all peoples

He was also the Lamb who was slaughtered(!)

He became the powerful ram

7 horns: Perfection of power

7 eyes: Perfection of wisdom

Perhaps: the seven-fold (abounding) Spirit of God

He took the scroll from God's right hand

He accomplished God's plan to bring peace by dying

#### 8-10: Worshiped by the 4 creatures and 24 elders

As God the Father was worshiped in chapter 4 now the Lamb is worshiped in chapter 5

Answer to the question: "Who is worthy?"

The Lamb is worthy, and He is the only one

Because He was a perfect and powerful sacrifice

Ransomed/purchased people for God

From every people group on earth!

To be one kingdom, and all are priests and rulers

Our church's vision is God's vision!

We get the amazing privilege of experiencing a taste of this beautiful diversity today!

#### 11-12: Worshiped by countless angels

Like a "bajillion" angels!

The biggest number words in Greek

Doubled

Their loud voices (which John heard) proclaimed the worthiness of the slaughtered and risen Lamb of God

He is worthy to be given every valuable thing in creation

### 13: Worshiped by every created being

Multiple ways to emphasize the inclusion of every created being in praise to the Lamb!

Heaven / earth / under the earth / sea

Plus everything in them!

Worshiping God the Father and the Lamb together

That will go on forever

What about those who rebel against God?

Including both people and evil spirits

They will submit to Christ ("every knee shall bow")

They will not willingly worship or enjoy blessings, for rebellion and judgment continue

### 14: Affirmed by the 4 creatures and 24 elders

All this praise is right and good

And it prompts the creatures and elders to worship anew

Proves the deity of the Son of God, as one with the Father

## The Big Idea

**The ONLY solution to the human condition  
is the perfect sacrifice  
of the perfect Son of God,  
who will be praised by every created being in all creation**

### Let God be Praised!

God's first great action: Creation

"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth." Psalm 33:6

Demonstrates the power, wisdom, and creativity of God

Prompts the praise of God

God's second great action: Salvation

"You were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation." Revelation 5:9

Demonstrates the humility, love, grace, and sacrifice of God

Prompts even greater praise of God

### The ONLY solution is the Son of God sacrificed

There is no human solution to the human condition

There is no human government or political party that can solve our trouble

There is no reform effort, no human leader, no new tax plan or spending plan, no company, no organization, ...

There is no educational system, prison reform, societal change, philosophy, attitude, moral teaching, ...

There is no technology, technique, philosophy, ...

Neither positive thinking, nor love, mercy, justice, tolerance, ...

There is no other supernatural solution apart from Christ

Apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, no other religion or god or force or power can solve the problem

Not "being spiritual", meditating, finding peace, pleasing spirits, ...

Not "being at one with the universe" or any other spiritual practice

Even Christianity is powerless without the death & resurrection of Jesus

"And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins." 1 Corinthians 15:17

Not worshiping Jesus, loving your neighbor as yourself, having great faith, having a pure doctrine, being a good person, ...

Not giving your all to Jesus, being filled with the Spirit, having all knowledge, doing miracles, having a transformed life, joy, ...

Not finding a great church, being in a great Christian community, having deep relationships in Christ, ...

## Application

**Make the death & resurrection of Jesus be the foundation of every hope**

We can so easily place our hope in so many other things

A person: friend, spouse, pastor, teacher, politician, leader, ...

Whom do you most fear losing or not having?

A community or organization or family or relationship

Where do you most fear being abandoned?

Ourselves: hard work, identity, gifts, abilities, wisdom, knowledge, sense of identity and worth, ...

What kind of failure do you most fear?

Another spiritual power or spiritual practice

What steals our joy and peace?

Poor health, conflict, oppression, injustice, disabilities, weaknesses, loss of resources or control, being robbed, unfairness, nonsense, ...

“Problem” people or communities

Our past: regrets, griefs, pains, ...

Our present: pains, sorrows, unfulfilled dreams, long to-do lists, ...

Our future: fears, worries, ...

This reveals where our hope is actually placed

There can be much good, but none of these can be the foundation

1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Philippians 3:7-11

No matter what comes or what the future holds...

The death and resurrection of Jesus has guaranteed the work of God to give eternal and abounding life to us in Him  
Other things may have great value (hard work, faith, prayer, justice, mercy, ...), but they are nothing compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing our crucified and risen Savior

“With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all” Acts 4:33

**Join the cosmic worship of Jesus and God the Father**

Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 5:13; Psalm 150:6; 1 John 1:3-4

**Point others to the only true hope and the only true joy**

Our message is not a generic hope,  
or a call to love and forgiveness,  
or to better thinking or behavior,  
or ...

It is the victory of the Son of God’s sacrifice and resurrection

Sin and death, selfishness, corruption, racism, injustice, oppression, sickness, conflict, guilt, shame, vulnerability, ... have been defeated by Jesus on the cross forever!

John says, “I wept and wept because I saw no solution to this crisis. Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See, Jesus, the Son of God has triumphed through His death and resurrection. He is able to bring the perfect blessing of God!’ ”

Who is weeping because there is no solution to the crisis?

Who is trusting in something that cannot save?

Say to them: “See, Jesus, the Son of God, has triumphed! He alone is able to bring the perfect blessing of God!”

## Reflection Questions

1. Where might you be putting your hope in other people or things, rather than in the death of the Son of God?
2. Where might you be ‘dressing up skeletons’ by trying to do things to bring good in a way that is not rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?
3. Who in your life needs to hear the good news that Jesus has triumphed over all that is wrong, bringing the gift of abounding and unending life in Him?