

## Introduction

Good morning. It's great to see you today. If you have a Bible with you, I want to invite you at this time to go ahead and take that out and open it up with me to the Book of Revelation. We're going to be in Revelation chapter 5. If you don't have a Bible with you, don't panic; it's going to be okay. Right there in the seat tray in front of you, there ought to be a Bible. If you don't own one, that's our gift to you today. Feel free to use your phone or your tablet as well, if you have the Bible app on there. We want you to be able to follow along as we study God's Word this morning, as we continue on in our series entitled "Kumbaya."

Before we jump into Scripture, I want to make you aware of just a couple of things. We are going to be wrapping up an initiative that our church began three years ago, in just a couple of weeks. On Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup>, we will be concluding our "Next" initiative. A little less than three years ago, our church decided to address different needs within our congregation.

1. We wanted to reduce our church's debt by at least half. At the time, our debt was \$6 million dollars.
2. We wanted to aggressively pursue some mission efforts here and around the world.
3. We wanted to upgrade some of our facilities. I'm excited to let you know that we've got some of those facility upgrades because of your generosity. Maybe you've noticed the new HD screens to the side. That's because of your generosity. I'm grateful for that.
4. Also, we were able to plant churches, as Pastor Dwight just talked about... in Kenya, Bangladesh, and here in Houston. All of that has happened because of your generosity.

The thing that seems to have excited our church the most was this pursuit of reducing our church's debt. Our debt, I'm excited to let you know... we had hoped to get it down to \$3 million. As of today, we sit at \$1.66 million dollars. (Clapping) You guys have done that through your generosity. Yeah... that's awesome. Thank the Lord for that. On Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup> we are going to have a time in our worship service where we simply thank the Lord for His faithfulness. We will have an opportunity to give one last gift to that initiative. So if you are someone who has become part of Houston Northwest in the last three years and you have not been part of the "Next" initiative, we would invite you to join us on that day. We think it would be really neat if every person had given to that... even if it is just a dollar... to be able to say, "Lord, we've done this together as a church." We are excited to see what God will do on that day and looking forward to it.

Also, I want to let you know that Easter and Good Friday are obviously right around the corner. April 16<sup>th</sup> is Easter and April 14<sup>th</sup> is Good Friday. We are going to have three services on Easter Sunday: 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00. We would love it if you would help us out on that day in this way. We need, first of all, folks to be willing to slide one hour earlier. If you are a 10:45 worshiper, on Easter Sunday that would mean that you would typically be an 11:00 a.m. worshiper. If you are able to, we would love it if you would move into that middle hour... that 9:30 hour... if you would worship there and then serve at the 11:00 service. To do that all you have to do is head over to [HNW.org/serve](http://HNW.org/serve). We need 280 volunteers for Easter Sunday to go off without a hitch. We would love it if you would be willing to serve our neighbors, as many people will join us on that day to hear the Gospel for the very first time. So please consider helping out in that way in

signing up. So, great things are coming down the pipe, and we are excited about that. Let me pray for us and then we are going to jump into Scripture.

"Father, we want to hear from You today. And Lord, we know that You are ready... God, You are excited to give us Your Truth. Lord, You have spoken to us through Scripture. Father, we have sensed Your Spirit in this place as we have sung, and there is something that is supernatural about singing to You. I don't even fully comprehend how it happens, but Lord, You pull down barriers through music. God, I thank You for that. Lord, right now, I pray that as our hearts are open, as our minds are open, Lord, that we would hear from You today. God, I pray that we would submit and surrender in all of the places that You tell us to do so. And God, I pray that we would not hesitate to give ourselves to you, whatever area that is. Lord, if there is one person... just one here today who has yet to say 'Yes' to Jesus Christ, I pray that today would be that day. And I ask this in the Name of Your Son Jesus Christ. Amen."

Revelation chapter 5 is where we are going to be today. If you are new to the Bible, the Bible is divided into two parts... the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the story of God's people Israel and a record of their needing a Rescuer. We read all about that through the stories of the Old Testament. The New Testament is the story of that Rescuer. His name is Jesus. So we read His story in the Gospels... Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then in the rest of the New Testament, we read about the people who choose to follow Him. They are known as the Disciples. They come to be known as the Church. Those of us who gather on Sundays these days are known as the Church. We are the inheritors of the same faith that the Apostles, the Disciples, the followers of Jesus had two thousand years ago. Many of those followers of Jesus wrote letters and wrote various things to let churches know how they ought to operate. One of those things that was written is the very last Book of the Bible. It's called the Book of Revelation. It is because John received a revelation, a vision, from the Lord Himself, and he recorded it and told us about it. Now, there are a lot of theories about the best way to interpret the Book of Revelation. We're not going to really get into the interpretation of Revelation as a whole today. We are going to focus in on one chapter, chapter 5, where we get a glimpse into the heavenlies, and we see what transpires within the heavenly throne room. So, join with me in reading, and let's look at Revelation chapter 5. It says this:

*"Then I saw in the right hand of Him Who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, 'Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that He can open the scroll and its seven seals.'*

*"And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And He went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne. And when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying,*

*'Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.'*

*Then I looked and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads and myriads and thousands and thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!' And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, 'To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!' And the four living creatures said, 'Amen!' and the elders fell down and worshiped."*

## 1. Worthy Of The World (vv. 1-3)

Several years ago, I became exposed to a show I'm sure you've seen called "Antiques Roadshow." Have you seen this show? People are walking around in their garage and they go, "Oh, wow... I just found this painting. It looks like maybe Vincent Van Gogh did this. I'm going to take it over to our handy dandy show." They show up and they go, "Well, you know, Bob... this actually does look like maybe it was done by Vincent Van Gogh, but we just happen to have a Van Gogh expert in the house. Let's go over here and grab Mary... Hey, Mary. Right over here we've got Bob..." So they bring her over and she looks, and she either says, "Wow, this is a terrible forgery." Then Bob cries because he spent \$32 on it, and he wishes he hadn't. Or... Mary says, "My goodness... this actually is the original of 'Starry Night.' You've just won \$48 million by finding this in your garage." (Laughter)

Worthiness. Everybody has that dream that they are going to find something in the garage or whatever that's worthy. I know that I inherited that quality. My parents... the show "American Pickers," I believe was based on my parent's lives. (Laughter) I actually believe that. They have never met a yard sale they didn't like. They will break four yard sales. That happens; they're always looking for stuff. They could buy things, fix it up, and sell it, etcetera... that sort of stuff. I actually did inherit that quality from them. I'm excited to let you know I've put my money, whenever I was a young child, into very meaningful investments like this "GI Joe; Special Missions, No. 1." (Laughter) I actually have it in a sealed plastic bag and on protective, acid-free cardboard so that way, whenever this sucker rockets up the charts, I'm going to be ready to deal it out and get top dollar for it. One day my ship is going to come in. I checked the other day. This is now up to six dollars, guys... (Laughter) So I just want you to know that this is going to happen; I'm pretty certain about that.

I share that with you because all of us have those sorts of things... those things that we hope will actually turn out to be worth something. But then there are things, we universally agree, that actually are worthy... If I found a bunch of diamonds, I would not wonder, "Are these worth anything?" I might wonder if they're real or fake, but if they were real, there would be no question that those diamonds would be worth something. If I found gold, I would know this is actually worth something.

Today we are looking in Revelation 5, and we are gazing into the throne room of heaven. We are seeing that Jesus is actually the most worthy Being to have ever existed. We are actually going to declare with the angels, with the elders, with the living creatures that Jesus is worthy Himself. So whenever we look into this, what we are seeing is we are seeing a testament to the worthiness of Jesus Christ. So I want us to look and to understand why it is that Jesus is worthy. We're talking about worship... why is it that we worship? It begins because Jesus Christ Himself is worthy. What is He worthy of? Verse 1... *"Then I saw in the right hand of Him Who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals."*

What is this scroll? Many scholars have debated and wondered what this scroll is, but I think the most compelling argument out there is actually the argument that this scroll is a will and testament to the inheritance of the earth. There's a pretty strong strain of scholarship that would say that within the Roman culture, if you had a will, you would write it out and then would seal it with seven seals, and the only who was able to break those seals was the one who was to receive the inheritance. So this scroll is presented, and then we see once it's been presented, that John begins to weep. You notice there in verse 4... *"I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it."* In other words, there is an individual who, for whatever reason, is not found to be worthy... or a host of individuals not found to be worthy. They are not the one to inherit the earth. But then suddenly in verse 5, we see there is One who is worthy. *"And one of the elders said to me, 'Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that He can open the scroll and its seven seals.'"* In other words, the One who is to inherit the earth... the One who has done the things necessary to declare reign over the earth... this individual is now here, and He is the Lion of Judah, so let's allow Him to open the scroll. So we see that the only One who is worthy is the Lion of Judah. We know who the Lion of Judah is... it is Jesus Christ Himself. So Jesus, we read in Revelation chapter 5, is the only One worthy to rule over the world... the only One worthy to inherit the world that has been given by God the Father. So the One who created the world, the One who sustains the world now says, "Who will I hand ruler-ship of the world over to, into eternity?" And after searching all of the universe, there is only One being that is found worthy of ruling over, and that is Jesus Christ. So now... John looks. He has been told... "Look... The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, He is the One who is available... So look... there He is." And the Scripture tells us that John looks; verse 6... *"And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lion..."* No... *"...a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain..."*

## **2. Because Of His Character (vv. 9-10)**

The Lion of Judah... the One who is able to inherit the earth... the One who has the power to rule is the One who gave His life. When you look on the throne in the throne room of heaven, you see Jesus who is glorious and victorious, yet simultaneously is also slain. Now, I want to be clear about this. Scripture testifies to the fact that all people who are in Christ one day will spend all of eternity glorified. Our bodies will be perfected. I know I'm really looking forward to that day when my body will be perfected. Your body will be perfected, but here's the thing. Even though we will have glorified bodies that will be perfected, we read in Scripture over and over, that even though Jesus' body is glorified, His wounds never disappear. On into eternity, the reason that He is considered worthy is because the wounds in His hands do not go away. The wounds in His feet do not vanish. The wound in His side never disappears. It is a consistent and constant reminder that the reason that Jesus Christ was able to open the seals of the scroll... the reason that He was able to receive the earth as His inheritance is because of the fact that He gave His life for the world. The reason that Jesus is able is because He did something. He is worthy because of His sacrifice. In fact, all of the creatures burst into song, starting in verse 9... *"And they sang a new song, saying..."* And the first word is "Worthy..."

The Greek word "worthy" is the word "axios." "Axios" is the same word for "scale"... not the bathroom scale that you stand on and want to break. "Axios" is the word for scale on which things are balanced on one side and the other. You would go into the market and you would purchase a pound of a particular spice, and they would have a weight that would weigh one pound. They would place that on one side of the scale, and then they would weigh out until the scale balanced. Those things were worthy of one another. They were "axios." What we see in this passage is that there is only One who is worthy of the world that has been created and sustained by God the Father... only One who is worthy of what He hopes

will happen, and the only One who is worthy of that is Jesus. Why is He worthy? Why is it when His life is placed on this side of the scale, it is worthy of the world? What has He done that is significant? He has allowed Himself to be slain. *"Worthy are You..."* verse 9 says, *"...to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God..."*

You see, the truth of the matter is that Jesus is worthy because of His character, and His character begins with a redeeming rescue of His people. The thing that we know about Jesus Christ is that He is worthy of receiving the world because He willingly laid down His life for us. The Lion of the tribe of Judah could have destroyed all of His enemies with a word, but instead He willingly lay down. The enemy pretends to be a lion. Right? You know that verse, right? *"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion."* He is not a lion. Who is a lion? Jesus. You see, only Jesus is the One who is worthy, but the way that He demonstrates His power to conquer His enemies is not by wiping them out but instead by willingly laying down His life so that He might be able to redeem them. This is where He begins... that He has this ransoming rescue where He lays Himself down. In other words, the fount from Emmanuel's veins which we often sing about... that is the fount from which our worship flows and the fount from which Jesus' worthiness begins... because His worthiness stems from His willingness to die for you and for me. Jesus has willingly given His life, and He has done so because He wants you. The Lion is found to be the Lamb, wounded and slain. But not only did Jesus Christ give His life... not only did He say, *"You were supposed to receive destruction, but I am going to give you life."* Not only did He say, *"You ought to be wiped out forever, but I am going to sustain you and keep you."* Not only did He say those things, but then we go on into the song: *"...by Your blood You ransomed people for God..."* In other words, You took them from the grasp of the enemy *"...from every tribe and language and people and nation..."*

The next thing we see is that Jesus is worthy, not only because of His ransoming rescue but also because of His reach. He reaches further than any of the false gods of the Old Testament. The false gods of the Old Testament were tribal gods, designed for one person... one group of people. But we read here that Jesus Christ is a God who is so big that He reaches beyond the tribal nature of the Old Testament. He reaches beyond the idea that there is only one group of people, and He says, *"Now, every nation, every tribe, every tongue... I'm coming for them."* It doesn't matter, according to this passage, what language you speak. It doesn't matter what your culture is. It doesn't matter what color your skin is. Jesus Christ has reached into your culture and said, *"I want all of these people, from every nation, every tribe, and every tongue... to worship Me. I am worthy to take all of them."*

But then, not only that, verse 10: *"...and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."* Most days, I feel as if I could not manage my way out of a paper bag. But Jesus Christ declares that in His power and by His blood, I will be one day, not only glorified but I will be set to rule and to reign at His right hand with Him... to rule over the universe. This is not my word. This is the Word of God... that He has declared that those who have been redeemed and rescued and reached from every nation, tribe, and tongue... will also gather together as His people and will one day reign.

Does this get anyone excited? (scattered response) I don't think we are awake right now. (Laughter) We are going to start again. So here's the deal... What I just said was... (Laughter) in case in the back you couldn't hear me... was that you should have been destroyed but instead Jesus gave His life for you, and you have been redeemed and one day will reign at His right hand. (cheering and clapping) That's what I'm talking about.

### 3. Demanding A Response

Now, because of that, because that is the truth, the question now comes... how should we respond? (continued clapping) That is how we are to respond but also in another way. You may or may not have noticed. Verse 14: After His worthiness is declared and they sing stanzas of this song in verse 14, "...the four living creatures said, 'Amen!' and the elders..." ...who, by the way, up to this point, had been standing fact-to-face with the Lamb, now fall down and worship. That's what this series is about... is worship... and this is what I want to talk about. God is worthy of a response from us today because of His worthiness of giving Himself for us. He is worth it. He has given Himself for us, and He demands a response.

There are two words in Scripture that talk about the way that people responded primarily. Number one is the word "shachah." The Hebrew word means, literally, to bow with your forehead touching the ground. In Genesis chapter 22, Abraham says, "I'm going to take my son Isaac over to the mountain. We will worship and then we will come back to you." The word there, "We will 'shachah.' We will get on our faces; our foreheads will touch the ground." Why? ...Because we are showing, through our body language, that God is high and I am not. "Proskuneo"... sometimes taught as a word that teaches about how a dog licks the hand of his master. True, but also in another sense, "proskuneo" was used as a greeting. So dignitaries that were of equal stature would kiss one another on the cheek, but whenever one met a dignitary who was of higher stature, specifically one of the highest stature, those individuals would "proskuneo." They would bow at their feet, and they would throw kisses upward instead of kissing cheek-to-cheek. "Proskuneo" and "shachah" are two primary words given to us about worship in Scripture. Why? The word "worship" comes from the Old English phrase "worth-ship" which means "to ascribe worth to." In other words, whenever Scripture says, "How do I ascribe worth unto God?" The answer is this: I get flat on my face and I declare "I am nothing and He is everything." This is the way that we do this. And why would we do this? ...Because He, according to Scripture, is worthy of that because He has rescued, redeemed, and saved me.

Now here's the news flash I want us to hear today... because many of us here were like, "Yeah... that's good stuff. Come on Pastor, I like that." You're feeling good. Now the thing is this: Our problem is that we sometimes forget that the Kingdom of God is not a democracy. The Kingdom of God is a monarchy, and the King is Jesus. If you have a king, you don't get to tell him what you are going to do. You do what He says. So if there is a King ruling over the Kingdom, we need to think about the way that we worship.

Here's the problem. Many of us think that worship is a choice. Worship is not a choice. Worship is a command... straight from the King. This is our problem. Not only are we Americans... we are Texans. We have a slogan: "Don't mess with Texas." Right? We love our independence. Texas Independence Day comes around once a year. I always post something about it because it annoys people from every other state... (Laughter) I love it. "That's right; we're our own country... deal with it." I don't even know why. People are like, "You have an irrational pride in Texas." "You're right; I do. Get over it. I'm sorry." (Laughter) Here's the thing that's funny about that. Texans: we have a flag with a cannon on it that says, "Come and take it." I mean... guys. Every time I am walking into a restaurant, I'm looking around trying to figure out how many guns do I think are in this room right now. (Laughter) You know that right now in this room there are more guns than in most of the westerns that we watched growing up as kids. (Laughter) That's what it's like whenever you grow up in Texas. We're the kind of people who say, "You don't tell me what to do. I'll do what I want to do." Listen, guys. Jesus Christ is not impressed with Texans. (Laughter) He

says this: "I am the King; I don't care if you are your own country. Get on your face... "shachah"... "proskuneo"... I'm the King... not you, right now." (Clapping)

Now the funny thing about this is that we think we have preferences that also matter. Right? You know that some of you are going to get in the car today and go, "Man... I liked that music today. That was different. I enjoyed that." Or others of you are going to say, "You know, I wish they hadn't done that. Why didn't they sing this song? I wish they would have done that. What is that about?" Can I give you news flash number two? "We are not doing it for you." (Laughter) This is the thing that I want you to hear right now. When we come in here and you walk out and you say, "I didn't get anything out of worship today"...you missed the point... because we weren't here to give you anything. We are here to ascribe worth to Jesus Christ. (Clapping) Right? So, if you come in here with a purpose other than ascribing worth to Jesus Christ, your values are already out of whack... and you're not going to get anything unless what you get is socked upside the face by the Holy Spirit... because He is going to say, "You need to see the worth and the glory of God and how high He truly is."

#### **4. That He Desires.**

Now here's the funny thing about this. It's that if we are going to submit ourselves to the King, that means that He gets to tell us how we are going to worship. It's fixin' to get personal now. Exodus chapter 20: *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt..."* Translation: "I am the One who redeemed you." *"...out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord Your God am a jealous God..."* That passage is the beginning of a passage of Scripture you may have heard of called "The Ten Commandments." No one in this room would say that the Ten Commandments are null and void. "Don't kill." "Oh yeah... you've got to keep that one." "Don't Steal." "Yep... yep. You need to keep that." "No adultery." "Yep, you've got to keep that one." "Don't bear false witness." "Well, we've got to tell the truth." "Honor your mother and your father." I mean, every mommy and daddy in the history of the world say "Amen" to that one. Everyone says that the Ten Commandments have got to say. Then we get to "Honor the Sabbath and keep it holy." "Well, you know... I don't know about that one." Why is that? ...Because we like to choose things. We think that we get to pick how we are going to use the Lord's Day. This is not the Ten Suggestions... not the Ten Recommendations... not the Ten Steps to Happiness... not the Ten Ways to Have Peace. This is the Ten Commandments from God. And He says, "Every seven days, you come and you worship." Why? ...Because we are a forgetful people, and we need to worship.

So here is the question I want to ask you. In your house, if you say, "Are we going to go to church today?"...you are in a bad place. ...Because the question is not "Are we going to go to church today." The question is, "Are we going to the 9:00 or the 10:45 today?" ...Because what you are trying to decide is, what time should we go and ascribe worth to God because He commanded it, and He has been commanding it for thousands of years. And since He commands that, then we live by that. When you are a parent and you are saying, "Should we go to church today?" ...what are you implicitly teaching your children? Obedience to God is optional. When you say, "Every week... get up, we're going to church." What are you teaching your kids? "I obey God no matter what, because He is the King. This ain't a democracy." This is the thing that many of us need to learn. We have to come to grips with the fact that

Jesus is not, first and foremost, our friend or our buddy. Jesus is, first and foremost, King and Lord, and He gets what He wants. Will we give it to Him?

But it's not just about showing up. You see, some of us, we're good at showing up, but that's about all we do. Oh, it's about to get real personal now ...because some of us, we can be here. "Ohhh... they're going to do that thing where we shake the hands... and oh..." (Laughter). "Come on! This song again? Man!" "Oh, I don't really want to listen to that sermon." "Wow; he is kind of boring. I'm done with that." "At Luby's, the line is going to be long." (Laughter) Here is the funny thing. Many of us will have higher participation rates in our car, deciding where we're going to eat lunch, than we will when we come to ascribe worth to God on Sunday mornings. Here's the thing. When you come in here... Jesus has told us in His Word, things that He wants. He has said, "Clap to the Lord." He has said, "Shout to the Lord." He has said, "Sing to the Lord." He has said, "Bow and pray and dance..." He said all of these things, and yet many of us are convinced that what God wants is for us to just come in here and kind of ball up as tightly as possible and stay as quiet as possible... when He says, "Ascribe Me worth." Many of us are so concerned with what the people to our left and our right are thinking that we cannot ascribe Him worth. Because we are thinking, "Well, what are they going to think?" Well, guess what? It's not for them. It's for Jesus.

If you went on a date and all you did was look at your phone and not interact with the person across from you... I know, some of you did that last night. You're like, "Whoa!" Let's not do that." Well, if that's all you did... was look at your phone... you would probably receive the assumption from the person across the table from you that you were not into them. And they would not want to be with you. Why is it that many of us would choose to not participate and give the worth due to the one who bled out on our behalf? He gave everything. Why would we not give unto Him?

You see, the future tells us... Philippians chapter 2 says, "One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess..." Some of us will "shachah"... some of us will "proskuneo." We will willingly get on our faces. We will willingly bow down because we will be ready to ascribe the worth due to God. Others of us, however, will actually be forced by the King... taken by the back of the neck... and say, "You will bow in My presence now..." because we rebelled our entire lives and we weren't ready to have a life of worship. But every knee will bow... and every tongue will confess. The question is, "Will we do so willingly, or will we be forced to do so?"

So the question now is this: "Will we participate?" This Wednesday night at 6:45 in this room, we are going to have a Night of Worship. Why are we having a Night of Worship? ...Because we felt that in the middle of this series we needed to say, "Let's gather and let's ascribe worth to God." You know, I would love it if we ran out of seats on Wednesday night... because so many people were here to gather to ascribe worth. We are going to sing, we're going to pray, we're going to clap, and we are going to say, "God, You are worthy." Why are we going to do that? ...Because actually He wants it.

At the end of Revelation 22, verses 8 and 9, we read this: *"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me..."* "In other words, John fell down to worship the preacher... the one who showed him these things. *"...and the angel said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you, and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this Book. Worship God.'*" Every scene that individuals are worshipping the Lamb in the Book of Revelation... Jesus never stops them from worshipping Him. He always

allows them to worship. Did you ever wonder about that? Is Jesus an egomaniac? "Yeah... come on... worship Me." If we knew people who said, "Worship me..." we would say, "You're messed up. That's not cool." Why is it okay for Jesus to actually desire our worship? ...Because He is ultimate. There is nothing higher. There is no one higher. He is the ultimately worthy Being. He has drained His veins so that you might be rescued, ransomed, and redeemed. That is what He has done. He has done that on your behalf. God the Father raised Him from the dead three days later to demonstrate that God the Father has power over death. So if you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, if you have surrendered your life to Him, one day, according to this Book, you too will be raised with all of the saints. You will spend eternity with God, worshipping Jesus Christ, ascribing Him worth in a variety of different ways. This will be the way that we will spend eternity. Not only in song. We've talked about this in other places. But this is what we will do. Our lives will orient and point correctly toward the One who is the fount of all of our existence... Jesus Christ. This is what will happen, for all of eternity, if we place our faith in Him... Because God desires it.

Let me ask you a question. How many of us are still rebelling against the idea that Jesus Christ gets to call the shots in our lives? How many of us right now have refused, for whatever reason, to say, "God, You are worthy and I will surrender my life to You." Some of you are in this room and you have yet to surrender to Jesus Christ. You actually think there may be something to it, but the reason that you won't do it is because it would mean you don't get your way anymore. You're still looking for that Kingdom of God that's a democracy. Today I have this truth for you. Jesus Christ is worthy, Jesus Christ is Lord, Jesus Christ is King. He says, "Get on your face; bow before Me, worship Me, submit to Me, surrender to Me, and live like I say." That's His message... and you can either do it willingly, or you can do it kicking and screaming. The choice is yours. He is worthy. He is King, He is ultimate. He is the One. May we bow.

"Father, thank you... thank you that You teach in us through Your Word. Lord, I pray today that You would show us how to respond. Lord, I want to pray right now first for this: Lord, for those who are in this room who would say, 'Pastor Steve, I need to truly rethink the way that I worship. I have not been worshipping the King.'" I want to just pray for you right now. If you would say, "I need to rethink my worship." Would you raise your hand? I want to pray for you right now. Raise up your hand; I want to pray for you. Lots of hands going up. Who else? Raise them up. "Lord, I thank you for these that are here who have said, 'Hey... I've not been truly coming to give. I maybe have been coming to get.' I don't know what is happening in their heart, Lord, but God I pray that right now You call them to repentance and that they would come ready to worship... ready to encounter You... God, that they would confess whatever sin it is that's inhibiting them from surrendering. God, if it's pride, I pray that they would lay that aside." Put your hands down.

Another question is this: How many of us are in this room who would say, "Steve, do you know what I need? I need right now to give my life to Jesus Christ. I have not surrendered my life to Him, but today is that day and I'm ready to place my faith in Him." If there's anyone here who is ready to do that, I would like to pray for you. Would you please raise your hand right now? We want to pray for you. Who's ready to give their life to Jesus Christ? Raise that hand up. Okay. I see you. Who else? Okay. "Lord, for this one right over here to my right who just raised their hand and said, 'Today is the day that I'm ready to surrender to give my heart to Jesus Christ.' God, I pray that they would not just feel it in this moment but Lord, that they would respond... that they would give in faith, their life to You. So Lord, I pray that here in just a moment when we have a time of response, that they would move... And I pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen."

Let me tell you how we're going to respond today. If Jesus is worthy, we are going to sing unto Him. There are going to be people here at the front. If you need prayer, you come and you pray. If you say, "Do you know what I need to do? I don't need to talk to somebody, I just need to get on my face before God..." "Shachah"... "Proskuneo"...turn these steps into your place of prayer. Come forward and you put your head on these steps and you pray... you give whatever to Him that needs to be given to Him. If today you raised your hand and you said, "Hey, Steve; today's the day I need to give my life to Jesus." Right back here is our Connection Center. There are people that love you; they have been praying for you. This is what they would like. Here in a second, when we stand and sing, that you would just get your stuff. Your family will wait on you... your friends will wait on you. Don't worry. Just head up out that aisle and go right to that glassed-in room. They would love to visit with you and just tell you what's next for you. All of us need to respond. Let's do so right now. Let's stand.