

Worthy

In the 5th chapter of Revelation, John speaks of a book that no one could open. He is upset and begins to cry when one of the elders tells him that the **Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (Revelation 5:5 NASB)** is able to open the book. The book is given to Jesus and the elders and those in the throne room of God sing.

And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (Revelation 5:9 NASB)

In this scene, Jesus is worthy. Worthy is a word that suggest that a person or thing has certain value. Some things of value have sentimental value. We may cherish a photograph of a loved one who is longer with us. This photo may mean nothing to anyone else, but for us, it is priceless. Other things may have value because of the material value. A gold coin may be worth far more that the inscribed amount on the coin.

The world has trained us to hold those items with material value in high esteem. We work in jobs where we have our abilities rewarded. We gravitate to jobs that pay more and constantly seek a higher return on our time and resources. Our need for financial resources is clearly understood. However, it is easy for us to become caught up in the pursuit of material gain that we lose our perspective and money becomes the most important thing in our life.

Paul wrote to the church in Colossae and listed several things that Christians should put away from our conduct. In Colossians 3:5 we find this list.

Therefore, consider the members of your earthly body as dead (*Lit. put to death the members which are upon the earth*) to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to (*Lit. is*) idolatry. (Colossians 3:5 NASB)

In this verse, we are told that greed is idolatry. It is easy to allow our need for money to become an obsession and forget or misplace Jesus in the relative wealth column of our life.

Just where is Jesus, when we consider the value of things in the world? The writer of Hebrews opens his book with these words:

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son (*Lit. in the person of a son*), whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:1-4 NASB)

As we look in this book, we know that it was written to Jewish Christians and the fact that God spoke through prophets was an accepted fact. The writer is telling us that in these last days God has spoken through Jesus. Jesus is one third of the trinity. The writer is literally telling us that God spoke through the person on a son (literal translation). The writer repeats what John tells us in his gospel that Jesus was actively involved in the creation.

Once Jesus was sacrificed for our sins, He was given a place of honor. Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God the father. His mission on earth was complete and now He reigns over all things. If we read on in the first chapter of Hebrews, we see the argument put forth that Jesus is better than the angels. God has called Him to be His son, Jesus was there when the foundation of the world was laid, and Jesus will remain when this world dies.

“YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”
(Hebrews 1:10-12 NASB)

The thrust of this chapter is that Jesus is above the angels and all things. This same theme is carried over into the next chapter. In this chapter, the idea that if we need to respect and listen to Jesus. God has placed Jesus in a unique situation.

For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. But one has testified somewhere, saying,

“WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM?

OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM?

“YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”

For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. (Hebrews 2:5-8 NASB)

Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy found in Psalm the 8th chapter. Jesus left His home in heaven and was, for a little while, made lower than the angels. Upon the completion of His mission, God crowned Him with glory and honor.

As we have seen from the various scriptures we have read, is that Jesus is highly esteemed in the eyes of God and all of the heavenly host.

The fact that He came to earth and died for our sins should indicate the value that God places on our souls. This is pointed out in the final section of our reading from Hebrews.

But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one *Father*; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying,

“I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN,

IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.” (Hebrews 2:9-12 NASB)

When we hear or read that “it was fitting for Him...”, we may have a question. How does the writer speak of something being fit for God? Especially the sufferings which Jesus endured? It demonstrates that the way of salvation is not arbitrary but truly fits God’s character. The words show that the sufferings of Jesus did not take place by chance; they had their place in God’s great eternal purpose. These words may remind us of the passage from Isaiah the 53rd chapter:

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. (Isaiah 53:5-6 NASB)

Not only are our sins taken away and through the sanctification Jesus brings, we are made brothers and sisters with Jesus.

This brings us to the main question of the day. Do we live in such a way that we show the value of Jesus and His sacrifice? We have been placed in His family and some of us may have a self-esteem issue. We either fail to appreciate just what Jesus has done for us or we fail to appreciate that we have to turn away from our own self-centered life to follow Jesus.

Many have come to believe that Jesus will save them regardless of their life-style. Yet, while He was on earth, Jesus repeated the call to deny self to follow Him. He called for people to turn away from the things they held as valuable and value the things of God.

In Luke the 18th chapter, we read the familiar exchange between Jesus and a rich young ruler. We remember what happened. The young man wanted to know how to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him to follow the teaching of the commandments: not commit adultery, not to kill, honor his parents, not to steal, not to lie, and the rest of them. The young man told Jesus that he already was doing those things. Jesus then went for the heart. Jesus knew the man valued his wealth and Jesus told him the one thing he lacked.

When Jesus heard *this*, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. And Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” They who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” But He said, “The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.” (Luke 18:22-27 NASB)

For some, the thing we value most is our material possessions. Others value our pursuit of physical pleasure through many choices that Satan offers. It is our choice. Are the things offered by Satan (wealth, pleasure, power, etc.) worth more than what Jesus offers?

Part of following Jesus is mentioned in Romans 6:11 where Paul tells us we are to **consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:11 NASB)**

Again, Paul contrasts the things of this world against our inheritance. Listen to this brief passage from Ephesians

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Ephesians 5:3-5 NASB)

What do we value? What is worthy in our sight? We know that Jesus is worthy and God sacrificed Jesus to pay the debt that we owe. Therefore, God places a value on our soul. In doing so, **He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NASB)**

When we look at Jesus, do we find Him worthy so that we will surrender those things we hold dear just to have Jesus?