

THE WHO OF OUR WORSHIP

REVELATION 5:1-14

We've spent our conference discussing the *what's*, and *why's*, and *how's of worship*, but I want to close our time together by leaving you a picture of the **who** it is that we worship. And there is no better place to go to find *the who* than the last book of our Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Let's turn to Revelation 5...

Let's pray, and then we'll get started...

In the "[Chronicles of Narnia](#)," the allegorical fiction of CS Lewis, the lion "[Aslan](#)" represents our Lord Jesus. The little girl "[Lucy](#)" illustrates the growing Christian.

One night Lucy sees Aslan in the moonlight. He appears huge, and shines brightly. She rushes to greet him and buries her face in his lush, silky mane. The mighty lion rolls over on his side and cradles Lucy between his enormous paws. His warm breath surrounds the little girl. She gazes into his wise eyes...

Aslan greets her, "[Welcome, child.](#)" Lucy is astonished, "[Aslan, you are bigger.](#)" The lion answers, "[That's because you're older, little one.](#)" She questions him, "[Not because you are?](#)" He explains, "[I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger.](#)"

And this is what happens as we grow in our faith. We discover our Lord Jesus is *bigger* and *brighter* and *better* than we imagined. He is magnified in our hearts. Jesus doesn't grow - *our knowledge of Him grows*. And this is what happens in Revelation 5. Here is one of the most *Christ-exalting, mind-expanding, heart-exploding, and praise-producing* chapters in all the Bible.

You approach Revelation 5 with a kindergarten faith, but you walk away from it with a faith that's matured.

After Revelation 5 the already mighty Lion - the King of the Jungle - seems even *bigger, brighter, bolder!*

[When John penned the book of Revelation](#) the first century of Christianity was coming to a close. John was the last remaining disciple of the original twelve. And I'll bet not a day went by that someone didn't ask John, "[What do you remember most about Jesus?](#)"

John had seen and heard the Lord firsthand! He had a myriad of memories on which he could draw...

A surprise catch of fish... jars of water into vats of wine... multiplying the bread and brim... John was there when the sick were healed, and at the Last Supper, and the

crucifixion... He even outran Peter to the empty tomb... Fifty years later, John still had a crick in his neck, after straining to see Jesus ascend to heaven...

Yet not even Jesus' resurrection was the highpoint for John. For the vision he sees in Revelation 5 alters forever how he looks on His Lord. Here John, sees the Christ not *as He was*, but *as He is and will always be*.

I'm sure you know the last book of the Bible is *not the revelation of four horsemen, or the number 666, or the whore of Babylon, or Antichrist... it's the revelation of Jesus Christ!* John first met Jesus on Earth, but now he encounters Him in Heaven. At His first coming Jesus' ministry encompassed an area the size of New Jersey. Now His ministry transcends the whole universe. The scope of Jesus' influence is now cosmic.

I get a chuckle whenever I invite someone to church without telling them I'm the pastor. *They're surprised!*

Folks get use to me in one setting... *I'm their kid's coach, or a neighbor, or the guy in the grocery store.* Then they come to Calvary Chapel and see me in a different environment. I've had my baseball players ask their parents, "**What's Coach Sandy doing on stage?**"

Well, in a sense this is what happens in Revelation 5. Jesus is revealed to John in a different environment. *And in one glimpse his faith is forever ramped up!* John gets a revelation... **Jesus is a lion that looks like a lamb, and He is a lamb that acts like a lion!**

If you're taking notes, this morning I want to track John's vision in Revelation 5 by noting *seven "S"s...*

This chapter revolves around a **Scroll**, a **Sob**, a **Sibling**, seven **Seals**, some important **Scars**, the **Supplications** of the saints, and a new **Song**. Pay attention, and your faith and worship may grow!

First, John sees a scroll. Verse 1, **Revelations 5:1 "And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals."**

The only other biblical reference to a sealed scroll is in Jeremiah 32. It's a title deed to a parcel of land. Ancient deeds were written on double-sided scrolls.

Written on the outside was a legal description of the parcel and its owner. The inside of the scroll contained the terms required to take possession of the property.

Often scrolls were long, and bound at intervals with waxed seals. The scroll John saw had seven seals.

When a property changed hands, the price was paid, and the seals were broken. The parcel belonged to a new owner - but the breaking of the seals disclosed the steps he had to follow to take possession of the land...

The scope of interest in *this* particular deed indicates it's a strategic document. Its appearance in heaven tips us off that a very significant real estate transaction is about to take place. *A deed is about to change hands!*

John is about to see **the deal that ends all deals!**

Verse 2, 1:2 "Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 1:3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 1:4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it."

We see a *scroll* - and now John **sobs** because no one is worthy to open the deed! Obviously, this real estate venture is an agonizing experience for John.

I don't know about you, but every real estate purchase I've ever engaged in has been an ordeal. The process of buying a house can bring you to tears.

In fact, here's a riddle... **When is a one-story house a two-story house? When you get one story from the agent who shows it, and another story at the closing.**

As far as I'm concerned real estate transactions are stress producing. *As with John, they cause you to sob!*

But John isn't sobbing because he's been told two stories. He's well aware of what's at stake! You cannot overestimate the value and costliness of this parcel. Like many Bible students, I believe this scroll in verse 1 is actually **the title deed to the entire universe.**

Understand, God is into land. He has an interest in real estate. Remember God gave a parcel of land to Abraham. He set up boundaries, and carved out plots for each of Israel's tribes. He set aside a special tract for David's heir to build the Temple. God gave Israel laws to govern the ownership and transference of land.

God is a realtor. From centuries before Christ until **Century 21** (*that's today, BTW*) God has been dealing in real estate in anticipation of one final blockbuster deal. And John is sobbing because he sees no one worthy to open the scroll and possess the property.

Realize the problem our universe faces. Our cosmic dilemma effects your quality of life every single day.

When God created the universe, the crown of His creation was mankind, *the creature made in His image.*

God put the man and woman in a garden to till and cultivate it, and eat its fruit. Because He loved them God gave them dominion - supremacy and control over all His creation. In naming the animals man was expressing his authority over the world God made.

You can't imagine the beauty and ease of life in the garden. Work was no sweat. All Adam and Eve had to do was pick fruit off a tree. They inherited a paradise.

We're so use to *disappointment*, and *pain*, and *injustice*, and *illness*, and *corruption* we can't imagine what life was like before sin entered our world...

But we ruined paradise! Eve listened to the snake, and rebelled against God, and Adam did nothing to stop her. In the wake of their sin all of life changed.

Everything under man's dominion began to buck against his authority. The creation became subjected to randomness. Mother Nature went nuts. Hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, and tsunamis now plague us.

And ever since Satan has had a field day. Since sin blinds us to God and the things of God, Satan preys on our ignorance. We're easily deceived and manipulated. And Satan has wrestled the world from man's control.

Today, it's obvious Satan has at least semi-control of the world we live in. Jesus acknowledged this in John 12:31 when He called Satan ^{12:31} "the ruler of this world."

Satan is the usurper. When mankind divorced himself from God, Satan stole control of the planet.

Recall in Matthew 4 Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world. All He asked in return was for Jesus to worship him. Of course, Jesus rejected the devil's deal, but He never questioned his right to make the offer. Jesus knew the world lies in Satan's clutches.

And this explains the awful shape we're in today. **Our fallen condition is not God's fault!** If you blame God for the suffering of innocent people, or cancer, or child abuse, or acts of nature, or war, or famine, or birth defects, or Alzheimer's - *you owe God an apology.* The world today is not the world that God created.

The world was gifted to man; then stolen by Satan. The miserable conditions we live in are the result of man's dominion and Satan's thievery - not the government of God. This world was given over to man, then forfeited to Satan... *and as a result John sobs...*

Imagine a teenager who takes the keys to his dad's new Mercedes, goes cruising without his permission, and wraps the car around a telephone poll... He was trusted with a valuable possession, he wrecked it, and now he doesn't have what it takes to make the repairs.

John feels this pain. It's humanity's predicament. This is why John weeps convulsively. If no one is able to open the deed and retake possession, the universe will remain in Satan's hands forever. One commentator paraphrases John, [Revelation 5:4](#) "[wept and wept and wept...]"

John hears a strong angel offer this challenge, [5:2](#) "*Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?*"

And this makes for a grim situation. Here is a strong angel - maybe even an archangel - *and he can't open the scroll? Okay, strong angels are out... who's left?*

A member of the human race is a steep step down. Not even an Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Peter - even the greatest saints aren't as strong as angels.

Verse 3 makes it official, [5:3](#) "*no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.*" They can't find anyone worthy enough to even give it a gaze. No wonder John cries like a baby.

It reminds me of the newlyweds shopping for their first house. They didn't have much money. They told the realtor their salary, then asked, "[Do you have a house in our price range?](#)" The agent answered, "[Yes, its current owner is a German Shepherd.](#)" This is why John sobs profusely - *all mankind is in the doghouse!*

Which brings us to the third "S" - the **sibling**. God knew how man would foolishly throw away his dominion, so early on in the annals of Israel God established laws that governed the control of real estate. He even added a provision for **redemption**. Every property transaction in Israel came with a clause. The original owner retained the right to buy back the land if he could afford the redemption price.

In ancient Israel, families lost their land in two ways. Either the owner died without an heir - or the parcel was used as collateral for a loan that didn't get repaid.

But if the owner was unable - or died - *a sibling* could step in and redeem the land to keep it in the family. This relative was called a "[Goel](#)" or "[sibling redeemer.](#)"

And John understood these Laws of Redemption. That's why he scans heaven for a rich relative, yet finds no one worthy. John is afraid the *fallen world*, and *fallen mankind*, will remain stuck in its *fallen state*.

That's when one of the elders sitting by God's throne walks up to John. He has good news in verse 5...

[5:5](#) "*But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."* There is One who has prevailed!

There's a Lion from the tribe of Judah who *matched the requirements* and who *satisfied the terms of the redemption*. There is **One** who can *bankroll the scroll!*

He is the ^{5:5} *“Lion of Judah”* and the ^{5:5} *“Root of David.”* The ancestral tree of Israel’s kings had the family of David as its branch, and the tribe of Judah as its trunk.

Jesus was born onto this tree - of the *right tribe, Judah*, and of the *right family, David*. This gave Him the perfect pedigree to be mankind’s *sibling-redeemer*.

And Jesus is a *rich relative - rich in righteousness*. Through *His perfect life* and *His sacrificial death* He earned enough equity in righteousness to pay the debt our sin had caused. Put it all together and *Jesus is the One!* He has the credentials required to pop the scroll.

Realize, Revelation 5:5 marks one of history’s most strategic moments. The opportunity to take back this fallen world is about to expire, when One emerges who can right all wrongs and redeem all that’s been lost.

And realize our Lord’s motivation in redemption, He endured the brutalities of the cross, and paid our debt, not just because He wanted to buy another planet.

We’ll learn later of a new heaven and a new earth. *Jesus is able to start over... why pay for what’s lost?*

Matthew 13 reveals this mystery in a parable. Jesus says, ^{Matthew 13:44} *“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”*

The man buys the land not to have another field, but to possess the treasure. And *you* are Jesus’ treasure. He loves you, values you. He buys back the universe to make you part of His family! *How amazing is that!*

Which brings us to the fourth **“S”** - what about those seven **seals**? Jesus doesn’t just open the scroll - He breaks the *seals*. Little wax seals bound up the deed.

It was one thing to buy back a piece of land - but it is another task altogether to force the person living on the property to vacate it, so the new owner can move in.

And the breaking of each seal revealed another step toward eviction. *The last seal... well, it sealed the deal.*

I read of a woman in Miami who recently moved into a foreclosed home. It originally sold for \$400,000. She signed for electricity, and water hook-ups - even got an internet connection. The only problem was she didn’t own the house. She was a modern day squatter.

Well, Satan is also a squatter. Adam and Eve allowed an interloper to take over God’s world. Satan usurped Adam’s place, and now he refuses to move.

It reminds me of the homeless man who pitched his tent in front of the public library, and refused to vacate. He wanted to live there. He called the library, “home.” When negotiations failed, *he was removed by force...*

And what if you were headed to the library when you saw the police manhandling this poor, homeless fellow? You might be tempted to cry, “[police brutality!](#)”

Well, this is why Chapter 5 is so crucial to what happens in the rest of the Revelation. Jesus is going to rough-up this rebel planet. He will evict Satan, his demons, and the legions of humans who’ve joined their coup. Each time Jesus pops a seal in Heaven sparks fly on planet Earth. Terrible judgments are unleashed.

But don’t forget Revelation 5! Jesus holds the title. He owns the universe! He is worthy to take the scroll! This world rightly belongs to Jesus. And He will eliminate everyone who stands in the way of His rule.

For centuries now a stubborn Satan has been *having his way...* a rebellious man has been *getting his way...*

We live in an age that might be called “[the day of man.](#)” But coming soon is a time the Bible refers to as “[the day of the Lord.](#)” Revelation 6-19 describes a period when God will have His say in the affairs of mankind, and Satan will get bounced from this planet.

We’re jumping ahead a bit, but sometimes it’s helpful to know the end of the story. When the smoke clears Revelation 20:10 tells us, [20:10 “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”](#)

Hey, Gentle Jesus also knows how to play hardball!

The same wicked world that nailed Jesus to the cross will get nailed by His judgments. A rebellious planet will find itself in the path of a Lion on the prowl!

[In verse 5 the elder refers](#) to John’s *sibling*, our Redeemer, as [Revelation 5:5 “The Lion of the tribe of Judah.”](#)

The lion is considered [the king of beasts.](#) Go to the zoo and watch the lion swagger as he walks. The other animals shutter in fear when they hear him roar.

Examine his jaws, his teeth, the sweep of his paws. A lion is a picture of courage, power, dominance, agility, ferociousness... [and a perfect type of Jesus!](#)

There’s an excerpt from CS Lewis where Lucy talks to Mr. and Mrs. Beaver. Lucy asks, “[Who is Aslan?](#)” Mr. Beaver is astonished, “[Why, don’t you know? He’s the King, He’s the Lord of the whole wood.](#)”

Lucy replies, *"Is He safe? I'll feel quite nervous about meeting a lion."* Mrs. Beaver jumps in, "That you will, dearie, anyone who appears before Aslan without their knees knocking is either braver than most, or just silly."

Again, Lucy asks, *"But is He safe?"* That's when Mr. Beaver utters his famous line, "Safe? Don't you hear what Mrs Beaver is telling you? Who said anything about safe? Of course, He isn't safe, but He's good. He's the King, I tell you." Revelation proves Jesus isn't a tame lion. He's good, but He's not necessarily safe.

Jesus will one day bring the wicked to their knees. He'll clean up the mess we've made. Jesus will stop the insanity, even if he has to halt the earth on its axis. Jesus *the Dying Savior* is also *the Righteous Judge*, and He will bring to order a planet that's in contempt.

Notice another "S" - it's a surprise. Jesus takes the *scroll*, and ends the *sob*, and is the *sibling*, and breaks the *seals*... but whatever you do don't miss the *scars*.

The elder calls Jesus a lion, but when John turns his head, we're told in verse 6, ^{5:6} *"And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ^{5:7} Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne."*

^{5:6} *"Horns"* are a symbol of strength. ^{5:6} *"Seven eyes"* speak of His omnipresence. He's empowered with the seven-fold anointing of the one Holy Spirit. He's King!

But surprise!... This Lion looks like a Lamb. What a paradox! The word translated ^{5:6} *"Lamb"* in verse 6 is *"little lamb."* *"Mary had a little lamb"* and He's now the conquering King in heaven - *the roaring Lamb!*

Lambs or sheep are the most talked about animals in all the Bible - but usually in connection with sacrifice. The lamb was God's sacrifice of choice in the OT.

A river of blood flowed from the Temple. The only way Israel could come before God was with a sacrifice.

And all those sacrifices were leading up to the ultimate, perfect sacrifice. When John the Baptist came out of the wilderness to identify the Messiah, he pointed to Jesus, and told the nation, ^{John 1:29} *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*

Now at this critical moment in the universe's history the Son of God steps forward to take the title deed to God's creation, and open the seals of judgment.

Heaven and its angels have always known Him as the Lion. But here Jesus appears as a sacrificed Lamb.

Here's another riddle, “What are the only man-made things in heaven?” *The answer: “The only man-made things in heaven are the scars of our Lord Jesus.”*

We know that after the resurrection Jesus showed Thomas the nail scars in His hands and side... But He bore other scars... There were also nail perforations in both His feet... The scourging Jesus endured left His back with crisscrossed scars... Puncture holes from the crown of thorns were in His forehead... Even His face was disfigured when they plucked out His beard...

If the wounds in his hands were visible, why not His other scars? When Mary first saw the risen Lord she didn't recognize Him. She mistook Him for a gardener. It's probable His face bore marks of severe scarring.

Isaiah 52:14 prophesies of Jesus, “His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.” Hebrew scholars Kiel and Delitzsch translate the verse, “So disfigured, His appearance was not human, and His form not like that of the children of men.” He wasn't recognizable as a human.

I believe when our Lord Jesus was taken off the cross His face was so badly beaten - so bruised and swollen - it looked like it belonged to a heavyweight boxer who'd just gone 15 rounds in a slugfest, and lost.

His body looked as if it had been torn and tethered in a devastating airplane crash. Trust me, if a funeral had been held for Jesus it would've been *closed-casket*.

Thus, when John sees Jesus the Lion in heaven He gasps... “(there) stood a Lamb as though it had been slain...” Here is a lion that looks like a butchered lamb.

I heard of a little girl who's mother's face was severely disfigured. Cruel classmates called her mom a monster. The girl began to resent her mother for the humiliation she caused. Until one day the mother explained to her daughter the source of her scars...

When the girl was a baby, the house had caught fire. The mom raced through the burning inferno to rescue her little girl. The scars on her face were from the burns the mother endured to save her daughter.

Needless to say, from that moment on the little girl was never again embarrassed by her mother's scars. In fact, those scars became a point of great pride.

I think at first we'll be shocked. We might even recoil in terror when we see Jesus' scars. I'm not sure anything can prepare us for our first look into His face. It's not what most of us will be expecting. Isaiah 52:15 tells us, ^{52:15} “So shall He (startle) many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider.” Could it be when we see Jesus rather than beholding chiseled contours, and stout muscles, and rosy cheeks - a *handsome visage* - we'll actually look into a damaged and disfigured face.

But it won't take long for us to recall that His scars represent the price He paid so we could be redeemed and made part of God's family. Suddenly those scars will become *a source of pride and a catalyst for praise!*

I believe when a million years have expired in heaven - we'll keep returning to those scars. From His scars we'll learn the depths of His marvelous love.

An old friend of mine wrote a song titled "[The Eternal Reminder](#)." It remains one of my favorite songs. In one of his stanzas he describes our first few moments in heaven, "I cried in glee, 'No more will there be any trace of sorrow or of pain!' But my Savior shook His head and said, 'Some things remain.' He showed to me His hands and feet, how badly they were scarred; and then I knew, as never before, how much I owed my Lord." The song ends, "The pain and struggles known on earth are gone forevermore, save the only scars that will not fade are on my precious Lord."

And this is where Jesus shatters the perception of how we viewed Him on earth. He was beaten because He made Himself vulnerable. He let cruel men arrest, torture, crucify Him. The Lion willingly became a lamb.

[Isaiah 53:7](#) "As a lamb before its shearers is silent, He opened not His mouth." Yet today, you can hear the Lamb roar!

Jesus is no longer vulnerable - He has overcome. He'll never take a beating again. Today, He's won the victory! Jesus is a Lamb, but He is *the roaring Lamb*. Jesus is a Lamb who forevermore acts like a lion.

The scars will always be there as eternal reminders of the price Jesus paid - *but the Lion suffers no more*.

His face speaks of love, but there's fire in His eyes.

The hands that cradled babies, and opened blind eyes, and passed out loaves and fish - will one day break open seven seals that'll wreak havoc on the Earth. Billions of rebellious sinners will die as a result.

And in this one moment, John's faith matures. He realizes that redemption is only half the Savior's work. After Jesus *takes the scroll*, He *breaks the seals*. Judgment will flow from the same spigot where mercy now streams. In Heaven today, God's throne is called the "**mercy seat**" - soon it'll become **a judgment seat**.

There's a popular song on Christian radio today. Its author croons, "there's only love in the heart of God." I know what he means, but that statement is not true. There's also justice, righteousness, vindication, even anger and wrath in His heart. We'll behold it at the end of the age when the Lamb returns to earth and roars.

And here is where *our* faith needs to grow up, and get strong. We should see Jesus not just as He once was on Earth, but as He *now is and will forever be...*

It's a jungle out there, but **Jesus is King of the Jungle**. The Master is more than a sacrifice. Jesus has ambitions far greater than just our forgiveness. **The Lion is a Lamb, and the Lamb is a Lion**. And in light of both roles our Lord Jesus is worthy to be praised!

Before this vision I imagine John was a lot like us. He quibbled about life's injustices. Every illness caused him to question God's love for him. How could a *good God* allow *bad stuff* to occur? His faith was fragile.

But after this vision John stops his quibbling, and wondering, and doubting... He knows that soon - very soon - righteousness will prevail. Our fractured world will be reset. Evil will be punished, and faith rewarded.

From now on John hangs, not only his hopes for his own soul, but for the whole world on the roaring Lamb.

And here John joins the heavenly host in what happens next. Verse 8, *Revelation 5:8* "Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." These are prayers... Here's another "S." Call it the **supplications** - or *requests* of the saints.

Realize your prayers really do matter! At times it's hard to see this truth from our vantage point on earth...

Several years ago I prayed at the bedside of an old friend. *The very next day my buddy died*. And I struggled. We're suppose to pray, and God is suppose to answer. That's how it's suppose to work, but at times I don't see His answer - at least not in the way I want.

Yet here we get a glimpse of heaven - God's throne - *and guess what's there?* **A bowl full of our prayers!**

Don't say the prayers you hoist up to God get lost in the shuffle, or don't matter, or get ignored. To the contrary, God puts angels and elders in charge of your prayers. They're kept in close proximity to His throne.

We'll see later, God addresses this bowl of prayers. Eventually every cry for justice, or deliverance, or blessing, or peace, or even retribution is answered by God - but *in His way* and *in His time* - not our own.

And notice our final "S" - a **song!** It's true, "In the end every prayer will become a praise." It may take 10 days, or 10 years, or 10 million years, but it'll happen.

Verse 9 tells us, *5:9* "And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your

blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ^{5:10} and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

Who is this in heaven singing? Who but the church can sing such a song? Who fits this description: ^{5:9} "*redeemed out of every tribe, tongue, people, nation.*"

This is certainly not Israel. Only the blood-bought Church of Jesus can sing this song of redemption. This means that while the seals are broken - *when the gloves come off, and God pummels the Earth with judgment* - the Church is in heaven singing His praise.

And I love this idea of singing a new song! When the witnesses see the roaring Lamb taking the scroll, and opening the seals, heaven respond with praise!

This is how we should always react to the *glory* and *greatness* and *grace* of our Lord Jesus... *with praise! Man, with something peppy! With a little peppy praise!*

And with a new song... not with an old, stale song sung mindlessly and mechanically. Not a song from the 1990s, but with a fresh song that comes from a current relationship with God - a heart that *must* express itself.

May God bless everyone in this room with a fresh anointing to write songs that glorify God in *a creative way*, befitting of the one that we all call "*Creator.*"

It's interesting, that the Bible begins and ends with a song. The first recorded words that come out of Adam's mouth are a love song too Eve. His words are melodic, ^{Genesis 2:23} "*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh...*"

Some Bible commentators suggest that before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve communicated with each other by *singing* rather than mere *speaking*.

If that's true, life before The Fall was a musical! Only after sin entered the world did the singing stop. And today, I believe singing is still the language of heaven. Addressing God is probably best received with a song.

And verses 11-12 gives us the lyrics to one of Heaven's songs. John writes, ^{Revelation 5:11} "*Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands...*" Too many angels to count.

^{5:12} "*Saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!"* Notice, Heaven is most amazed not by the Lion's claws, or paws, or teeth, or roar, *but those scars*. For time eternal when we see His scars, we'll bow and worship.

The Lion is hailed as ^{5:12} "*the Lamb who was slain.*"

The story of Robin Hood is legend, but the story's backdrop is historical. While the English King Richard was away fighting crusades his greedy brother John usurped his authority and reigned in Richard's place.

John abused the Brits and misused the throne. Then one day, his brother, Richard, returned. He marched straight to His throne. The revolt toppled like dominos.

"Richard *the Lion-heart*" as he was called, was hailed and praised by the British people. Bells of joy rang out all over England for weeks after his return. Everywhere Richard went his subjects would line the streets, and shout out, "The Lion is back! Long live the Lion!"

And this is what happens at the end of chapter 5. The Lamb that came to earth the first time to pay the redemption price is the Lion who is returning to take back possession from Satan. Today, heaven praises *the Lion that's a Lamb, and the Lamb that's like a Lion.*

And worship never dies down in Heaven. About the time one voice fades another eruption of praise occurs.

5:13 "And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them..." Now all creation joins with Heaven in the worship and adoration of the Lamb...

5:13 "I heard (them) saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" 5:14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever."

Here's what I think, I think it's time for us to stop *our* quibbling. Yes, we live in a fallen world. Yes, life isn't always fair. Yes, life can throw us some nasty curveballs. *Injustices and illness occurs. Disasters strike.* Life doesn't always turn out the way we'd hoped.

But a grown up faith realizes it's only temporary. A Lamb roars from Heaven. Jesus is worthy to rule. He has a deed in hand, and is about to settle every score.

Stop wondering and worrying, and start worshipping!

John's few moments in heaven taught him to recall those scars, certainly! *But don't stop there!* Don't just see Jesus as *He once was*, but as *He now is...* John's role as a worshipper had just begun. *The Lamb who was slain, is now the King of the jungle.* John learned to hang all his hopes - for a better life *and* a better world - on Jesus! *May His name be praised forever!*