

(Covenant Series) 5. the Father Reveals the Lamb of God

by Al Whittinghill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding Jesus as the Lamb of God, revealing God's character and the necessity of sacrifice for sin.

Duration: 1:08:14

Scripture: John 1:25

Topics: "Covenant Series"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the praise and worship of God as the creator in Genesis chapter 4 and as the redeemer in chapter 5. The speaker emphasizes that God's redemption required more than just speaking; it required His active involvement and the shedding of His blood. The sermon also mentions the importance of Revelation chapters 4 and 5 in understanding the heavenly perspective and setting the tone for the entire book. The speaker uses the analogy of a shadow on a stage to illustrate the anticipation and awe of seeing the main character revealed.

Transcript

Father, we want to please you tonight. We want to please you and bring you glory. We know that you've made every provision for that as we just trust you to be yourself through your Son and His Spirit that you've given as part of our very being now that we've trusted you.

And so we thank you for the truth of it, that you've given us everything we need tonight to be the Christian that the world longs to see and that the Word of God promises and that all that's lacking is for us to come to your presence and surrender wholly and totally to you. And we do that tonight. We thank you that you're worthy of an utter surrender.

The problem with us is that we just don't know you enough to truly trust you. And so tonight we pray that you will really let us see a part of yourself that will make it easier for a piece of dust to rise up and dwell in the presence of deity. Thank you, Lord, for the treasure in earthen vessels that we have since we're yours.

And so we ask you tonight to bless your Word to our hearts and to others through us now. In Jesus' name, amen. Well, I believe the most crucial need of the hour, as you heard me just pray, is for those people who are in the presence of God's Word and who gather together week by week to really know who God is.

In fact, I believe that the need to know God as He truly is is the most vital need in America today. We know a lot about the Lord, knowledge of the Lord, but to know Him truly is what we must have. And you know, your concept of God is the most important thing about you.

When I say that word God, what comes to your heart and mind is really the most important thing about you. And when you think of the Lord, you'll find that if it's not scriptural what you really think, that you'll be headed in a different direction from the scriptures. No nation or no person ever rises above their concept of God.

If they worship a frog, then you'll find the nation acting like a frog. Whatever they worship, if it's a fertility God, like in the Bible, Old Testament, they'll be full of licentiousness and sensuality and the society will be just the same. So the character of God tonight is so vital to understand.

There are a lot of people who are content to worship a God of their own design. It's not really biblical. That is a kind of a self-initiated, invented thing that serves them and the system of religion that they have.

So tonight we've got to see Him as He really is to worship Him in spirit and truth. So God gives us His word as a safeguard against a false concept of God. And He promises to reveal Himself to those who really want to know Him as He is and those who really want to reverence Him and belong to Him.

Now God presents some truth in the scriptures that are meant to absolutely shake us. They're meant to grip us and not let go of us and possess us. So that after we read them or hear them, the foundations of our life will literally be shaken.

And I believe tonight that we're going to cover just such a truth to shake the foundations perhaps of what some of us have worshipped in the past to consume us and to open us up to who He really is. And so we have to cover a lot of ground. Tonight I will urge you to take notes.

Last night, last time I said you wouldn't be able to. Tonight I've prepared some overhead transparencies so that you'll be able to get a juicy chart down. For those of you that are chartaholics, there are chartaholics around, you know.

We want to go to the Gospel of John chapter 1 at the very beginning of our night together. And we want to look beginning in verse 25. And we come on the scene when John the Baptist is out at a place called Beth-Avora.

And there he's baptizing. In verse 25, the Pharisees came and they asked him, saying unto him, Why do you baptize if you're not that Christ or Elijah or that prophet? John answered them and says, I baptize with water, but there stands one among you whom you do not know. Nothing is more tragic than a blinded priesthood.

And there we have one. He it is whose coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoelatches I am not worthy to even unloose. These things were done in Beth-Avora, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The next day, John sees Jesus coming unto him and he says, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me. Verse 29 being the key, Behold the Lamb of God, which is taking away the sin of the world.

Now that's our first major text tonight. We'll go to many others, but here we have at Beth-Avora the introduction of Jesus Christ to humanity publicly as the deliverer of the world. The father is introducing his son.

He's going to tear the heavens apart and say, This is my son in whom I'm well pleased. And John the Baptist points to Jesus and says here, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. Now why did he call him the Lamb of God? Last week we saw what the scriptures meant in calling Jesus our Passover, our Lamb of God.

But when John the Baptist said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Why did God introduce him as the Lamb of God? After all the other things he could have introduced him as. Behold the root of David.

Behold the Word made flesh. Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Behold the Prince of Peace.

Or a dozen wonderful things that he could have introduced him as. What Jesus says of John the Baptist, that there was no greater preacher, there was no greater prophet. So was John the Baptist just being preachery? You know, picking out some good metaphor and saying, Behold the Lamb of God.

That makes everyone say, Well, what a wonderful preacher. Well, no. He was actually answering that question that we said last week.

Where is the Lamb? In Hebrews chapter 8, there's a verse there in verse 5 that says, All the Old Testament served as an example and as a shadow of heavenly things. All the Old Testament showed foreshadows and shadows of things that were coming. And in Hebrews 10.1 it says, The law, all the Old Testament was a shadow of good things to come.

Now, what does that mean? It simply means this. All the Old Testament is about a coming deliverer. A deliverer who would deliver not only Israel, but all the people who would trust him from sin.

Psalms 40 verse 7 said, Lo, I am coming. In the volume of the whole book it is written of me. I am coming to do thy will.

Thy law is within my heart. I delight to do thy will, O my God. Psalm 40 verse 7. Well, God foreshadowed the Lord Jesus saying he is coming.

And we see a shadow before we see the reality. If you see a shadow coming around the corner, you say, aha, here comes someone. I wonder who it is.

There is a scripture in Colossians chapter 2 that speaks of the shadows of the Old Testament. Pretty mysterious until you see it in the light of the shadows of the Old Testament giving way to the reality of the new. Colossians chapter 2 verse 16 when Paul writes, Don't let any man therefore judge you in eating or in drinking or in respect of a holy day or of a new moon or of Sabbath days.

All of those things, he says in verse 17, are a shadow of things to come. All those Old Testament laws and holy days and eating and drinking, whether you keep the feasts, they're shadows of things to come. Look at the last part.

But the body is of Christ. What does it mean, the body is of Christ? Well, it means this, I believe. It means that the body that is casting the shadow is Jesus.

It's kind of like you or me going to a movie theater or a drama, say the Passion Play, the first church Passion Play, and here we sit before it begins. We're watching the stage and all of a sudden we see these lights come on from off the sides and no one's there on stage. And here comes a shadow lengthening out onto the stage.

And we say, look, the main character is coming. And we look at the head of the shadow. We say, oh, he's got a hat on.

And then we look, he's got a cape on. We can tell from the shadow a lot of things about the main character that's coming in just a moment while he's yet invisible. And then as it grows longer and longer, look, he's got a sword.

Ah, it's a man. And look, he must be a tall man. But then out comes the character and the light hits that character and all of a sudden we quit watching shadows and we start looking at the character.

And this is exactly what our Father did with His Son. All through the Old Testament, He let the shadow begin to get bigger and longer. And the shadow grew and grew till more and more was learned about the Lamb that was coming.

And so as the Lamb became more and more known, John the Baptist, as Jesus marches out of eternity into history and there He is for all the world to see, He says, behold, there it is. There's the Lamb. The one who's casting the shadow.

Good things to come. Jesus cast a shadow all the way through the Old Testament. Well, the Jews were expecting their Messiah.

Except they were expecting the King Prince, the prophet warrior, to come and shake the cage of the Romans and free them from bondage. And consequently, because they had a wrong concept of God, preconceived notions about God, they missed Him when He came. And I would say that a lot of people today who have a preconceived notion about how God's going to act when He acts, or how He's going to do certain things when He does them, they miss Him because they're not trusting Him personally at that moment, and listening and reading the Word.

Well, they changed the Scriptures in their own minds to fit their notions. And so therefore, when Jesus came, not as a king on a white stallion, but as a savior on a lowly donkey. Not as a warrior prophet, but as a servant priest.

It blew their mind. And therefore, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. They didn't want a God like that.

They didn't want a Messiah like that. He didn't match up to what they had already wanted to believe about Him. And so, the Pharisees missed God when He walked right through their midst.

Like so many people do today, as we gather in our little chummy groups with preconceived notions that often go astray from what the Bible really says about the cross, about the character of God. We must be careful in this day of deception. Well, Jesus was announced as the Lamb of God.

Why? Because that's how they needed Him. They didn't need Him as the Lion of Judah, or the Root of David, or the Seed of Abraham, or the Christ. First, they needed Him at the altar as a sacrifice for sin.

The Lamb of God. And that's where we must meet Him first. If I come to the altar, I'll find God's Lamb there waiting.

If I go to the throne, I'll see God's Lamb there reigning. Wherever I go, God has Jesus meeting me as a Lamb. Well, God met them as a Lamb just exactly where they needed for their sin.

I want to trace a shadow with you through the Old Testament of this Lamb, because as God gives revelation about Jesus, little by little, we learn more and more about this one that John says, there He is. It's called, in theological terms, progressive revelation. You see something first mentioned, and then you see it added to, and then more is added, and you learn more and more about it as you go through and finally come to the New Testament.

I've made a chart here. Don't get so busy copying down this chart now that you miss what I'm saying. I want to put this up here and show you, first of all, in Genesis chapter 4, we're going to have headings here.

First of all, what is said about the Lamb, and then who the Teacher is, and then the lesson that we learn about the Lamb in that particular section. In Genesis chapter 4, we see the first real hint about the fact that God has a Lamb. It's in the familiar account of Cain and Abel.

Somebody asked once, where did Cain get his wife? Well, you ought to just answer them. I don't know. I'd tell you if I was able.

Anyway, in Genesis chapter 4, we see that God had an appointed place for worship, and Adam and Eve had been covered with skins. They had learned the principle of something else covering their nakedness, an innocent victim laying down its life. And we know that Adam told Cain and Abel about how to come to God.

We know this because in Hebrews 11.5, it says it was by faith that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. And faith comes by hearing God's Word. And so somewhere they heard God's Word, and surely Adam was the one to tell them.

Well, we learn about the Lamb. The Lamb is typified, that it's by the blood of the Lamb we must come, and it's by faith. Abel teaches us as he comes with the firstlings of the flock, and Cain comes with the best of what God has condemned.

Nice bouquets of flowers. If you've ever seen one of those horns of plenty with all the fruits of pears and oranges, you know, that can make your mouth just drool, juicy old grapes, and all these wonderful fruits. They're so beautiful with flowers and mums and dads and all those different things coming out.

Anybody that could see that and then see a bloody bruised Lamb, which one would you choose to the human mind? Well, Cain went with the logical. He went with the nice cosmetic. And God said, I have respect to the Lamb.

And we learn from this account of Cain and Abel that God's way is by the blood of the Lamb. We must come. Abel took the first of his flock, the blood of the Lamb, and it typified that by blood we must come.

But then as we saw last week or the week before in Genesis chapter 22, the account when God speaks to Abraham to take his son, his only son Isaac, who he loves, and go to the mountain that he would show,

Mount Moriah. There he takes two young men and wood and fire and goes up that mountain with Isaac alone. And we saw the picture of the father with his son, the son with the wood upon his back that he would be sacrificed on right where Calvary was in that day.

And the father saying, I'm doing this out of love. And we saw in verse 6 through 8, Isaac asking a question to Abraham, My father, here is the wood and here is the fire, but where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? And we saw Abraham answering, saying, My son, God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt offering. Change the wording or change the emphasis.

My son, God, says the father, will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt offering. Abraham never saw the Lamb then. He got a ram.

The reason the ram would do is because he saw the Lamb far off. As he lifted up his eyes, Abraham prophesied, My son, God, will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt offering. And we learn from the lesson of Abraham, the Lamb will die as a substitute.

The ram was offered up for Isaac and we see that God will provide Mount Moriah. So, we learn something else about the Lamb. By the blood of the Lamb, we must come.

It's necessity. Then secondly, here in Genesis 22, the Lamb will be provided by God. It will die as a substitute and it will be a provision.

Thirdly, we've seen the Lamb typified, the Lamb prophesied, but now we saw last week how the Lamb has its blood applied in Exodus chapter 12. In Exodus 12, we read the whole chapter and then saw how the teacher was the family in Israel. And we saw that as God came through Egypt and said, I'm going to kill all the firstborn, you take the blood of the Lamb spotless on the very day of the month corresponding to the crucifixion years later.

Slay it outside your door. Put the blood on the top and the two sides which would foreshadow the cross. If you could look at that door and see blood on the top and the two sides and then on the bottom.

And when I see the blood, it will be a reminder, a token. And I'll set a watch over you and protect you. So, we saw the family teaching us the blood's applied.

And the Lamb's blood will cover us from the death stroke. And we then see protection. The slaying of the Lamb and the protection.

See how the shadow is getting longer? Book by book, God is preparing people for the coming of His Lamb. Well, we didn't mention this scripture yet, but let me just mention Leviticus chapter 16 because that's the famous Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement. The first mention in the scriptures of the Day of Atonement in detail.

The teacher is Israel. And we see the Lamb of God exemplified or set forth very clearly. Because in this chapter we see 20 times we learn that this Lamb that you're going to offer must be spotless.

This sacrifice must be without blemish or without spot. It must be absolutely pure. And we see in Leviticus 22 verse 21, this Lamb shall be perfect.

So here we see about God's Lamb that it will have character that's perfect. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would take two goats. He would cast lots.

On one of them, the lot would fall. It would be called ezezel. The remover of sins.

He would then offer the other goat, the Lord's lot, to the Lord as a sacrifice. He would take the blood of that goat into the Holy of Holies for a sin offering. He would sprinkle the blood before the throne of God once on the throne, seven times before the throne.

And then he would come out to the people and say, it is finished. Your sins are forgiven you. And when he got out there to demonstrate to them before their eyes what had just gone on concerning sin in the Holy of Holies, he would go over to the sin bearer, lay his hands on the head of it, and confess the sins of Israel.

He would lay their sins on them. We are stiff-necked people. We are hard-hearted.

We have sinned against you. He would impute sin to that goat. They would then tie a piece of red ribbon around the horn of that goat.

And a young man, about the age of 30, 33, 36, would take that goat out into the wilderness where he would then kick it over a cliff or throw it down to the abyss or give it over to wild beasts, the hands of the destroyer. And it took all of that to show that our high priest would offer his own blood as a sacrifice, go into the Holy of Holies, come back out and tell the people of God it's over, and say, I've carried your sins away and I've left them down in the place of corruption. All of that would show about God's Lamb exemplified.

His character is spotless. Perfect Lamb of God. The Lamb typified.

The Lamb prophesied. The Lamb's blood applied. The Lamb exemplified.

And now, this glorious chapter in Isaiah 53 that I want to just read with you, this couple of verses, we see the Lamb of God personified. What an amazing chapter. They don't even read this in the synagogues today.

You won't find it read in synagogues today. In Isaiah 53, 6-8, it says, As all we, like sheep, have gone astray, we've turned everyone to his own way. Perfect definition of sin.

We've turned to our own way. And the Lord has laid on Him, Jesus, the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed.

He was afflicted. Yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth.

And so we see about this Lamb, He was taken out of prison and out of judgment, and who will declare His generation? You see, this is a large Lamb. He's of eternal origin. We see by the prophet Isaiah the lesson we are plainly told this Lamb we've been told about will be a person.

Now, if you were to look in the book of Acts, in the account of the Ethiopian, as someone would say, unich, or eunuch, you see him reading a portion from Isaiah 53. And as he's reading this, Philip says, do you understand what you're reading? And he says, how can I unless someone teach me? And so, he's reading this very verse right here. He's brought as a lamb to the slaughter in Acts 8.32. And he goes up and he begins to explain to him Jesus, it says.

So we have it clearly said in the Word, this is Jesus. So the Lamb is personified. Well, in our text we just read, we see the Lamb of God, John 1.29, we see the Lamb of God identified by John the Baptist.

And we saw him say, He's standing in your midst. He will take away the sins of the world. He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

This Lamb of God, this person, well, when John identified Him, it was quite something. But then, if we follow it through the New Testament, walking in the true light, we see that glorious, glorious 1 Peter passage. Let me read it to you.

We see something else about the Lamb. This same Lamb in 1 Peter 1, beginning in verse 18. For as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your empty way of life received by tradition from your fathers, but you were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish, without spot.

Look at verse 20. Who of a truth was set up before the foundation of the world for this, but was revealed in these last times for you. You who by Him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory that your faith and hope might be in God.

What do we see about the Lamb of God here? Well, the Lamb of God is clarified by Peter that this Lamb, we look backwards in the Old Testament and forward into eternity, and we see that this Lamb has been raised from the dead. Oh, a risen Lamb. So we see more given to us about the Lamb.

But we're not through yet. We're not through yet because we see in the book of Revelation, and we'll read this in a moment, so don't try to turn there. In Revelation 5, verses 6 through 8, we see the Lamb of God magnified.

Today, tonight, by all of heaven, He's being magnified. And He is the center of worship in the throne of the sovereign of the universe. And He is reigning on high, the Lamb of God.

That's not all. There's another one. I'm sure there are more than these, too.

But these are the ones that I have for you tonight. In Revelation 21 and 22, we see the Lamb of God glorified, absolute monarch by the Father. He's the Teacher Himself, and the Lamb is the light in the city of God.

And the curse and the pain and the tears and all the agony are gone, and He's absolutely reigning forever on high. We see that He's worthy, and He has dominion and power and transcendence, and He's in the New Jerusalem, the Lamb. So, from the first to the last, the Alpha and the Omega, from the beginning to the end, we see the Lamb of God.

Now, just to take it a little further, that same picture, I'll put this up after the study tonight, but I want to show you in this particular overhead here, how the power of the blood of the Lamb, in those same Scriptures that we just went through, we saw in the book of Genesis the blood of the Lamb for Abel and Isaac was for one person. Just one person. Never forget the individual.

But then in Exodus, we see the blood availing for the family. A family would be under the blood of the Lamb. But then we get bigger.

Praise God! We see the blood for a nation in Leviticus 16, on the Day of Atonement. A person, a family, a nation. And then we see Isaiah 52, verse 15.

With His blood He will sprinkle, it says, many nations. So not just Israel, but now many nations He will sprinkle with His blood. So, one person, one family, one nation, many nations.

And in John chapter 1, for the whole world. Every nation. Every nation, His precious blood.

But then in that 1 Peter passage, we saw backwards and forwards for all of history. The blood of the Lamb is enough for all of history. Every nation.

But then let's get cosmic here. In Revelation chapter 5, for all the universe, we see Him praise for His blood there. And in Colossians it says, by His blood He cleans the heavens.

He's going to rid heaven one day of the results of the fall. Well, that's not all though. Because in Revelation 22, we see His blood for all eternity.

Not just the universe and history, but outside of that, bigger than that. The blood of the Lamb for all eternity. Now, I don't know if you followed that.

But you see, what we have said is this, that His blood avails for me. If His blood satisfies for all of that, how much more can His blood cover your sins tonight? If you'll trust Him. Think of how rich, and the Bible calls it precious blood.

Incorruptible blood. The blood of God. The blood of Jesus.

The Bible is God's testimony to the Lamb of God. And Christ is the central figure. The Lamb.

And the cross is the central factor. All the way through the Bible, you see the person and the cross. The person and the cross.

Over and over and over again. And so, with that background, we must remember that Jesus was at His birth. Born where lambs are born.

In the stable. We said that last week. And shepherds were the first to worship Him.

We saw Him at His baptism. He's owned as the Lamb. We saw Him at His triumphant entry as the Lamb.

Hosanna. Blessed be He who saves. And He came in on four legs.

Meek and lowly. On a little donkey. We see Him before His accusers as a Lamb.

He opens not His mouth. We see Him tonight on the throne as the Lamb. You see, this is what God has chosen as that which represents His character.

And we need to see tonight that this is who He is. Under the law, in the Old Testament, just the specified sacrifices, there were 1,273 sacrifices every year. Not to mention the millions of sacrifices for individuals.

1,273 sacrifices. If you were to say that times 1,500 years, all those bulls and goats and lambs, just the legal ones, you have right at 2 million sacrifices over that period of time. Plus millions, oceans of blood of bulls and goats.

Solomon slayed 100,000 in two or three days when he dedicated his temple. Think of all that blood. Just an ocean of blood.

But all of that points to Him. And one drop of His precious blood, just one drop of Jesus' blood, is worth more than all of that because all of those were only acceptable because they were tokens and foreshadows and hints. When they offered up a lamb in the Old Testament, don't think that that's what made their sins forgiven.

It was only the one who came and said, I'm offering this up as a picture of Him who's coming, who will offer His blood. That's what they said. And when they did that, their sins were forgiven, they looked forward to the cross just like we look back to the cross.

The blood of bulls and goats has never taken away sins or never will. It's always a picture of that which God is doing in His Son. The cross is the only place in the history of this world or the universe that God deals with sin.

So, in the book of Revelation now, we come to our main text. That was my introduction. We come to our main text tonight in the book of Revelation.

Now, just a little bit of words about Revelation before we go there. You can be turning to chapter 4 and chapter 5 of Revelation. Let me just say that the book of Revelation has several key words.

If you were to go through the book and count the mainly used words, you would find that the key words are threefold. Number one, the word lamb. It's the book about the lamb more than any other book.

It mentions the Lamb of God. And it's also the book about worship. More than any other book in the Bible, worship is made reference to and exhibited.

It's the book about the lamb. It's the book about worship. The two go together, you see.

And it's also the third major word is the word throne. And so, we learn from this emphasis in the book that the throne of God, the Lamb of God, worship Him. We sang it tonight.

Thou art worthy. And we said to receive glory and honor and power. So, Revelation chapter 1, 2, and 3 kind of introduce us to what God wants to say.

In Revelation chapter 1, we have a vision of Jesus glorified, mighty with face like the noonday sun, voice more than many waters, and eyes like fire, feet like brass. An overwhelming vision. But we don't know about His character from that vision.

We only see His power and His might. Well, in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3, we have a word to the churches. Seven churches, typical of any church.

You can find your church in there if you look carefully. And typical of the history of the church. You trace the history of church through and you'll see a history of church history right there.

It's a glorious two chapters. And then, however, we have a little window. And God says, Come up here, John.

And up He goes. And He takes a look into the throne room of God. And there John sees right what's going on in heaven.

Chapter 4 and chapter 5 are to give us God's perspective on things. We're going to need it. Because in the remaining chapters, chapters 6 through 21 of Revelation, we see judgment and things that our mind can't ever comprehend.

And so God wants us to understand that there is never a panic in heaven. They go right on worshipping Him regardless of even when the bowls of wrath are poured out. There's nothing to fear.

He wants to establish us and strengthen us before the bowls and the trumpets and the seals come to pass. And so, Revelation chapter 4 and chapter 5 set the tone for the whole book. They're the most important chapters, I believe, in the book of Revelation if such a statement is possible.

I don't think it really is valid. But in terms of understanding, we need to anchor ourselves in those two chapters to see from a heavenly perspective. Now, John the Beloved, as he's caught up in chapter 4 and in chapter 5, he sees two things.

And they're so startling that there's that word that is a word of amazement. That word, behold. In the Greek, it's a word that's full of awe and amazement and almost stunned at what is seen.

In Revelation chapter 4, let's read the first three verses and verse 11. After this, I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard were as it were of a trumpet, talking with me, which said, Come up here, and I will show thee the things which must be after this. And immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was set in the heavens, and one sat on the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper, it's white and glowing, and a sardine stone, deep red.

And there was a rainbow in a circle around the throne, in sight like to an emerald. And then we go and read how there's four and twenty elders around the throne, and they're falling down before him, and the seven spirits of God are there, and the cherubim are there, and there's a large host there. And verse 11, they all sing or say, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

Behold, a throne. That's the first thing John sees when he's caught up. And what this shows him is the rule and the power and the holiness of God.

We see God as Creator. Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Here we see God in His awesome holiness, in His magnificent power, creating and by right, having the right to be worshipped by His creation.

He has a right to me. He has a right to you, to be worshipped, because He created you for His pleasure. And so, when these 4 and 20 elders see Him on His throne, they fall off their throne and worship Him.

And whenever anybody sees Him on His throne, the result will be the same. We fall off our throne and we worship Him. And there's a rainbow around this throne.

Do you know what that says? It says that the God who sits on this throne is a covenant-keeping God. It reminds of Genesis 9. The rainbow and the cloud. Man only saw half of it then.

There's a circular rainbow around this throne to show eternal faithfulness for the covenant-keeping God. So we see this is a throne of grace. We learn what sin is by inference.

Sin is simply this. It is being away from that throne of the One who made you. It's saying, I'll run my own life.

That's exactly what sin is. It's a life apart from the throne. Living in the power of your own strength.

Acting like you're in charge of yourself. Being away from God's authority. Well, then on the other hand, repentance is simply this.

Coming back to that throne and bowing and staying, abiding in the presence of the throne. Now, to have tears and feel sentimental about God without bowing at that throne is not repentance, but is the sorrow of the world that is mentioned in Corinthians that is folly. In fact, is mockery.

We must not just trust emotions. We must come to the throne and bow if we're going to repent. So we see the throne awesome, holy, and glorious.

But the second thing that John sees is in chapter 5. And we see in those first four verses several things. I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside sealed with seven seals. Now, that's a scroll.

And what they would do is they would write some on both sides and seal it. Then they would write some more and seal it. So there were seven consecutive seals, not one roll with seven seals on it.

But a seal, then rolled around and sealed again and rolled around and sealed again seven times. And if you know the imagery of the Old Testament, and if you know the Hebrew custom of the Goel, the Redeemer kinsman, you will recognize here that this is the Redeemer's scroll. One would be lodged with the high priest, and one would be kept by the next of kin.

And to open and redeem someone from debt, you had to present yourself credentials, and therefore then you could redeem your next of kin if you were the right one to open the book. And here we see the God of the universe having a book with seven seals on the front and back, written, and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice a challenge to the universe. Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? In other words, who can redeem? Who is the kinsman? And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book or even look at it.

Even look at it. And John loved God because you see, this scroll represents God's plan of redemption to redeem the world, to put an end to sin, to judge sin, to bring in His everlasting kingdom of righteousness. We see this scroll unrolled in the book of Zechariah and thrown in the Euphrates in the book of Jeremiah.

Whenever this scroll is there, sin is judged, and God's power comes in, in glorious power. You'll see in a moment as it's opened in the book of Revelation, that judgment takes place. Who's worthy to judge? And John wants God to bring in His kingdom.

And so he weeps because there's no one that's going to be able to do it. It's at a loss. And he weeps much, it says verse 4, because no man was found worthy to open or to read the book or even to look at it.

And one of the elders comes and says, John, don't weep. Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, he has overcome, he's prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. Don't

worry, John, there's a lion, there's a root.

And I'm sure his heart must have been encouraged as he turned to see this magnificent lion or this strong foundation for David, the mighty king. Then comes the behold, verse 6, and I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb, as it had been slain with marks of death, he's saying. Having seven horns, that's perfect power.

Having seven eyes, that's perfect knowledge. And having seven spirits of God, that's perfect omnipresence. Omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence.

And in verse 7, it says he came and he took the book. He took the book, I love it, out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he did that, oh, the praise overshadows that of even chapter 4. Much more praise, as it says here in verse 8, after he had taken the book.

What a commotion! The four living creatures and four and twenty elders, they fall down in the presence of the lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of incenses, which are the prayers of the saints. Some of them are from this room, I'm sure. And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for you are slain, and you have redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kind and tongue and people and nation, and you've made us to our God, kings, priests, and we shall reign on the earth.

It's almost like that celestial throng of Romans 5, those who've reigned in life through Christ Jesus. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels rounded out the throne, and the beasts are the living creatures and the elders, and the number of them was ten myriads, is the word, times ten myriads and thousands and thousands, saying, can you hear this? This is taking place now, at this moment, saying with a loud voice, and it sounds like a heartbeat. Listen to it as I read it.

Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. The heartbeat of heaven, the praise of those around the throne, and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as in the sea and all that are in them, heard I say, blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sits on the throne and unto the lamb forever and forever. And the four living creatures said amen, which is so be it.

And the four and twenty elders, they fell down and worshiped. They're always doing that. You count it, seven times through, those precious beings, if calluses are possible in heaven, they've got calluses on their faces from always being face down before the throne of the lamb of God.

And so we see what's going on in heaven right now. These two chapters show us something rather phenomenal. And I want to show you another parallel here because God's word is perfect.

Again I say it. We see in chapter four, behold a throne. And in chapter five, behold a lamb.

In chapter four, we see the throne of God showing the dominion of the throne. Power. There's power there.

And He has the power to reign and rule His creation. But in chapter five, we see something else about that throne and that's not just its holiness and awesomeness, but the person that sits on it. We see the person who's on the throne, the disposition of the throne.

God's holiness and power and sovereignty, His right to reign. In chapter four. But in chapter five, sacrificial love.

Let me say it another way. In chapter four, we see praise. God is worshipped as the creator because He spoke and it stood fast and it was created.

And when He did that, they praised Him. He's worthy to be praised for His creation. But in chapter five, there's even more praise.

Why is there more praise? Well, because He had to do more than speak. In chapter four, He's worshipped as creator. In chapter five, He's worshipped as redeemer.

And to redeem, He had to do more than speak. He had to get involved. He had to shed His blood.

He had to die and be raised from the dead. And so there is a Lamb on the throne tonight. And that's what God wants us to see.

That the sum of the whole message tonight is that on the sovereign throne of the universe at this moment, God has chosen throughout the whole Scriptures to reveal His character and His person in His power as a reigning Lamb on the throne. The sovereign of the universe sits on a throne sprinkled with covenant blood. It's surrounded by a rainbow and a circle which is a covenant rainbow.

He bears in His body the marks of covenant marks. He has in His hand a book which is a covenant book. And He has sprinkled on me that blood which is covenant blood.

And when I get together with the blood that's on the throne, it's the same blood. And the Father says, you go together to covenant keeping God. So you can just mark it down tonight.

Hear this carefully because this is the bottom line of the message. Who is sitting on the throne of God tonight? Who is sitting in the place of power makes all the difference as to what that throne requires out of me. Have you had a new boss lately in your job? Your job may remain relatively the same.

But what's expected of you may change in its character as you have a new job. Or when you have a new president and a new administration comes in. We keep the Constitution but the new personality gives it meaning.

Or in the Philippines right now. A whole nation or maybe a king of the Old Testament. You see, what we're seeing is that who is on the throne of power makes all the difference as to what the throne of power requires of me tonight and requires of you tonight as you worship God.

So, it is not just a big macho man on the throne or a tiger or some other figure like a stallion or a mighty tree. It's the Lamb. And the Lamb is to be my Lord.

The Lamb. You say, well, where's the God of the Old Testament? The one who sizzled Him and did all that. Well, He's always been the same, you see.

But this Lamb is a Holy Lamb. If you were to read Leviticus 19, that's why I recommended Leviticus to you earlier, Leviticus 19 is sometimes called the Sermon on the Mount of the Old Testament. And in that chapter is those familiar verses.

Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord. He's saying, I want you to be holy because that's what I am. And if you're going to fellowship with me, you're going to need to be holy because I don't change.

And He goes through there. He says, love your neighbor as yourself because I am the Lord. In other words, you love your neighbor because that's what I'm like.

I love my neighbor. And throughout that chapter, He has wonderful things that He says that show His character. And He just adds this little phrase, for I am the Lord.

He says, don't go about as a tale bearer or as a gossip. I am the Lord. In other words, I don't do that, so don't you do that if you're going to fellowship with me.

Honor the face of the old man and the ancient. Honor them because I am the Lord. He honors the old.

He says, when you harvest your field and you've got a big harvest, leave some in the corners for the poor people. I am the Lord. That's what I'm like.

And then He says, don't defraud your neighbor. Don't put a stumbling block before a blind man or curse the deaf man. He's saying all those things.

Don't curse your father or your mother. Don't have grudges against your parents or against your neighbor. See, the Lamb makes all the difference as to what the throne requires.

He's been the same God all along. He's been a gracious and compassionate God. If I were to ask you tonight in these last moments, are you fellowshiping with the Lord? I think you would probably say yes.

I think I would probably say yes. I'm fellowshiping with the Lord. But let's take it a little more specifically down to what it really means to be fellowshiping with the Lord.

Because you see, the Lord has not been unclear about what it means to fellowship with Him. In 1 Corinthians 1, verse 9, it says, we are called by God unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Called unto fellowship.

That's why He called me to walk in the present tense, fellowshiping with Jesus today. Are you fellowshiping with Jesus? Are you fellowshiping with the Lord? Do you seek to please Him? Do you seek to obey Him and bring Him honor and glory? Are you filled with His Spirit, His nature? Are you walking with Him? Well, I want to add another scripture. You can just mark it down and look at it later.

It's a question. Amos 3.3 says, Can two walk together except they be agreed? Can two walk together except they be agreed? Do you know what it's saying? It's saying that I can't walk in fellowship with Jesus unless I agree with Him. I cannot belong to Him in giving of myself to Him in fellowship unless I'm in harmony with Him.

Harmony with Him how? Harmony as He is, which is a lamb on the throne. I face some uncomfortable moments tonight at supper. You see, the world isn't walking with the lamb.

The world is walking with a tiger or with a snake or some macho or some fat king or something like that. The question is, am I walking with the lamb? The world scorns the Lord Jesus. They hate His weakness.

But those of us who the Lord has opened our eyes and hearts, we see that it is the humility of God that is the majesty. We see that it is the right that is really the might. We see that the victim has become the victor and that the lamb has become the lion.

We see the lamb within the lion. The lion within the lamb. We see all this.

So, it's the lamb that's the Lord. Are you walking with the lamb? That's the question. Or has it been a tiger? You see, because like I said, our concept of God is the most important thing about us.

If I think that He is some big tigrress type of God on the throne today and thrown up there huffing out fire and all that, then it's okay for me to huff out fire and think that I'm still in fellowship with Him as I call Him Lord every day and come to Him. Or if I think that He's some big macho fellow out there flexing His muscles on the throne, then it's okay for me to walk over people because He does it. If God hates the abortion people and the homosexuals and all, if He wants to just sizzle them like that and call it on fire, then it's okay for me to go out and feel the same way because I can do it excusing myself saying that's what He's like.

Do you see what I'm saying? Jesus said to some that wanted to call down fire on those who rejected Him, you don't know what spirit you are. There's a lamb on the throne. When I asked my wife tonight at supper, before I preached this, honey, if someone comes to you and says, because I was going to make this statement, if you want to know what a man is like, ask his wife.

And would your wife say there's a lamb on the throne? I said, honey, if I make that statement tonight, what if someone were to ask you, is there a lamb on the throne? She looked at me real funny. She said, well, a lot of the time, honey, the conviction of God hit me. And I said, honey, you mean that there's not a lamb on the throne? And I had to just right there be honest.

And she's just down here chuckling because she knew God was going to make me say it tonight. But it's true. And I was hurt.

I said, I want there to be more of a lamb on the throne. What I was asking around the table, and I was asking little Catherine, she's three years old, just turned three, and as I was asking my wife, what's on the throne? And my little girl said, donkey, donkey. Anyway, that's humbling, if you know what I mean.

But you see, this is the question, brothers. What would your wife say? What would my children say? What would your employer say? You see, because this is the testimony we must have. There's a lamb on the throne.

And this lamb is very sensitive and he's very gentle toward the weaknesses and the inconsistencies of others. And we cannot be fellowshiping with Jesus unless we're walking with the lamb. That's the point tonight.

There's a lamb on the throne. Does the lamb reign on the throne of your heart? Is he in the midst of the throne? Is he enthroned? Is there worship to him? The spotless lamb. The lamb of God takes sin seriously.

It costs him everything. And if I'm fellowshiping with the lamb, I cannot take unseriously what he takes seriously. So, when we consciously or unconsciously change who God is, we become deceived.

We must not tonight change this fact there's a lamb on the throne. We change Him so often to being less than He is or a God who serves us. Too many people want to fashion a God who just meets their needs.

And too many people want to change God into something they like instead of Him changing them into something that pleases Him. They miss the true God and they end up worshipping one of their own imaginations. Let me just read you a chilling scripture.

A chilling scripture to me from Psalm 50 as we're winding down shortly. I've got a few more scriptures so stick with me. Psalm 50 in verse 16.

God says to people who change Him as He is to be presented, not just a mistake, but He calls it wickedness. Unto the wicked, God says, why do you have to do to declare my statutes or that you should presume to take my covenant in your mouth? In other words, you're saying all these things, you're talking about my word, verse 17, but you hate instruction and you cast my words behind you. Well, how did we do that, Lord? He answers it.

When you saw a thief, then you consented with him. How did we do that, Lord? Because you didn't reprove him. You didn't come with God's word and love.

And it says, you have been a partaker with adulterers. How can we be partaker with adulterers? When we sit back and remain silent. I was amused when someone said the other day that AIDS wasn't God's judgment on the homosexual community.

That now it's hitting heterosexuals as well. And I say, of course it is. When heterosexuals continue to do nothing and allow the laws to continue to sanction sin, then they're going to reap the consequences as well and innocent people as well.

And so, he says, you gave your mouth to evil. Your tongue framed deceit. You sit and speak evil against your brother.

You slander even your own mother's son. This chilling word. These things you did and I kept silent.

You thought that I was altogether such a one as you. He's saying there that the people that are doing this, they're evaluating God in terms of their own thinking. It's not logical.

That's my concept of God. God, not my God, would never judge the world. You see, they're thinking God's like what they want Him to be.

And he says, I kept silent when you were like that. But then he says these chilling words, I'm going to reprove you and I'm going to set things in order before your eyes. Consider this.

You that forget God as He is, lest I tear you in pieces and there's none to deliver. Whoso offers the sacrifice of praise glorifies me and to him that orders his conversation aright, I will show the salvation of God. And so when we are truly saved, friends, we become partakers of the divine nature.

We become partakers of that divine nature. What nature is that? The nature of the Lamb. We become lambs and I can prove it because our names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

If I went down to the veterinarian office and said I'd like to see all the registered dogs that are German shepherds, he would take me to the equivalent of the German shepherd book of life. You wouldn't find any

Labrador retrievers in there or boxers or dachshunds or any other kind of mutts. You'd find German shepherds.

You know why? Because it's the German shepherd book of life. Well, who do you find in the Lamb's book of life? Only lambs. Only lambs.

And we come to the throne of grace and we discover that the Lamb reigns. And He said, My sheep hear My voice and they know Me and they follow Me. Or I know them and they follow Me.

He gives His life for the sheep. We are the sheep of His pasture. He told us that He sent us forth as sheep among wolves.

Yea, as lambs to the slaughter, He even said. But fear not, little flock, for I am with you. As I was sent, so send I you.

A living sacrifice. The church is called the Lamb's wife. In Revelation 19, verse 7, His wife, the Lamb's wife, has made Herself ready.

It's given to Her to be arrayed in pure white, spotless linen. She's spotless just like He is. She's made Herself ready through the washing of the water of the Word and through the blood of the Lamb.

You know, I've done a lot of weddings in my few years and it's been always amazing to me to see all the kinds of brides. I've done marriages for short brides and tall brides. My roommate used to be, well, still is, my present roommate, my permanent roommate.

My other roommate was 6'9". And he was single. And we used to pray for a wife for him.

And God sent him along a woman. She, well, she's 6'4". She's an inch.

I mean, she's 6'4". And she's absolutely gorgeous. But the thing that I love is she says about Steve that, oh, He makes me feel dainty.

Isn't that just like God? Isn't that just like God? Well, I've seen short brides. I've seen tall brides. I've seen wide brides.

I've seen skinny brides. I've seen beautiful brides. And I've seen some brides that really, I knew they had a lot of inner beauty.

But I'll tell you one thing. I have never seen a dirty bride. Have you? Look, Jesus is coming for a bride, not a widow.

And a lot of people are treating Him like He's coming for a widow. We need to put on our best vestal garments and get dressed immediately. We need to rise up, Zion, and put on your beautiful garments.

Awake, Zion, because your Redeemer is coming out of Zion. Fear not, little flock. You see, all who are in His church take sin seriously.

And the mark of not being in the bride of the Lamb is not taking sin seriously. It is a mark of it. And it doesn't mean that you're in the Lamb's bride and you're just an exception that you don't take sin seriously.

If you don't take sin seriously, you're not in the Lamb's bride, according to the Word of God. If you have a desire to be clean and holy for Him, then you're not saved, according to the Bible. You may fall on your face every day, but it grieves you.

You can't sin without feeling if you're in the Lamb's bride. And so, does the Lamb reign in your heart? One last thought. In the book of Matthew, chapter 11, Jesus says, Come unto Me, all of you that are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, because I am meek and lowly in heart, and you'll find rest to your soul. He says, Come and be yoked with Me. You know, God hates an unequal yoke.

He did then, He does now. Unbelievers with believers or light with darkness. The devil with the things of God.

He hates that. And in the Old Testament, He didn't let you be yoked like a mule and ox because they had a different step. You have to be in step if you're in a yoke.

Jesus says, Take My yoke upon you. Learn of Me. I'm meek and lowly.

I used to think that that was a picture of getting in a yoke with a big, strong Jesus and being pulled along until one day, that verse in Matthew 11, 28 and 29, He says, Take My yoke upon you. And I realized, I am meek, I am lowly in heart, humble in heart. You know who that is talking? That's the Lamb of God.

Can you imagine being in the yoke with the Lamb? You see, there's no such thing as an unequal yoke. You can't walk with Jesus in the harvest field unless you're a lamb. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

That's the testimony in Revelation 7 of those who He uses during the Great Tribulation. And so, you may be willing to do something great for God, but let me ask you this. Are you willing to do something little? You see, we need to be content to be lambs, to be weak, to be glorying in our shepherd, to be following Him wherever He goes.

We are not our own. We've been bought with the price of the blood of the Lamb. We're called to a holy life.

And so, I just exhort you tonight. If you're here and you're lost, to come to the altar, you need Him as the Lamb. You'll find Him there waiting.

We come to the altar, the cross, we find the Lamb waiting. If we come as a Christian who's been worshipping a tiger or something else, trying to fashion God to meet modern needs, I need to see Him on the throne as He is the Lamb. I need to repent.

That means change my mind. Agree with God. Fall at His throne and I'll find Him reigning.

The altar, I'll find Him reigning. On the throne, I'll find Him reigning. Come and fall at His throne, whether saint or sinner, and stay there.

And quit trying to shepherd your own life, because He's the good shepherd, the bishop of our soul. And quit trying to prop up your own life. Quit trying to bear burdens.

The sheep aren't beasts of burdens. The shepherd is the burden bearer. And so, we are to let Him bear the burdens.

Quit trying to be something you're not. Be strong and mighty for Jesus. Fall before His throne in your weakness, confessing your nothingness.

And take His allness, His somethingness, to cover your nothingness. And so tonight, I hope this word burrows down in your spirit. And that it wakes you up at night.

It's been waking me up just in the last two nights. And I rolled over and I said, no, no. But I can't get away from it because I learned tonight, first hand, from my own family, that there's a donkey.

Stubborn. I mean, out of a mouth of children. I mean, that may have been a mistake, but I'm going to tell you something.

I don't think it was God talking to me. Stubborn. Stiff-willed.

Jesus reigned. Am I willing to be just unnoticed? Am I willing to just be insignificant in the world's eyes? And a failure? And just be a Lamb of God? The Lord is my shepherd. I will fear no evil.

I will not lack. Just to love Him. The character of God in our hearts.

You see, He's more interested in character than He is conduct. Because character will ultimately be my conduct. So tonight, the issue for me is, I've got to change that, that my wife can say consistently, there's a Lamb on the throne.

You've got to see that your people can say to you, when I'm around you, I know there's a Lamb reigning in your life. And I sense His presence. That's what we've got to come to tonight.

The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and who one day is coming to judge the earth. Well, let's just pray together. Father, thank You for obedience tonight.

Thank You for hearts that surely do want to obey You that are here. Thank You for Your availability to those who will be honest with You. Thank You for the blood of the Lamb on the altar.

And the same Lamb who's been raised from the dead and gone through the heavens, sprinkling His own blood on the holiest of all, and now is set down in the center point of the universe today, God's throne. And He is reigning on high. And the kingdom of God comes to my heart and surrounds me there and brings me into that rule of the Lamb of God.

Oh, may I walk with Him. May we walk with Him. May people be changed here tonight.

May we lay down our false ideas about God and be back to the cross, back to the center point of Your character in us. Not trying to be something we're not. Not trying to worship a God that's not real.

But to let Jesus be Himself, truly reigning in our hearts. The Lamb on the throne. I want to give you an invitation if you're here tonight and you have not been worshiping the Lamb on the throne, you've been fellowshiping with a God that is not what the Bible says He is.

You may belong to Him, but tonight you've been convicted that there has been a tiger on your throne, and therefore when people talk to you, you roar back at them or claw them. And you get by with it because

your conscience thinks there's a tiger on the throne. If tonight God has shown you that that is wickedness, that is wrong, and you need to come back to that throne and behold the Lamb and fall and repent, then while our heads are bowed, would you quietly, where you are, just slip to your feet saying, Lord, I acknowledge tonight there is a Lamb on the throne and I want You to reign in me.

I want to be one of Your sheep. I want to be fed with the Shepherd's Word. I want to be a Lamb even among wolves.

It's living sacrifice. I want my character to be in fellowship with Yours. If that's your prayer, would you slip quietly to your feet while we are praying.

See those who have stood in Your presence for Your eye alone. And I pray that tonight will be a significant night for them as they allow you to reform things that have been deformed and to turn around things that are going the wrong way. Bless them.

Show them you're not mad at them. That the Lamb of God reigns and is triumphant and that He never fails. We thank You.

Be seated. We praise You, Lord, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24938.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/al-whittinghill/covenant-series-5-the-father-reveals-the-lamb-of-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net