

Snode Family Send Off Service

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. And I appreciate the opportunity to preach tonight and hope to be a blessing.

A few years ago I was in London and I was there at a church and every time I went there I was like, man, what an opportunity. And every time I went I thought, man, somebody really needs to come here.

One of my good friends did go there. But then that last time I was there I was like, Lord, if you let me come here, I would just think I'd died and gone to heaven. Not really, but I mean I was really like, Lord, if you'd let me do it.

And then, of course, so we were on furlough thinking we would go right back to our church. God raised up James. And as a matter of fact, if I tried to go back to that church, he would probably say, sorry, this church is taken.

You need to find somewhere else. So God raised him up and God's raised up Christian Sherry Way. And we really are excited. And we really, we feel very responsible and very accountable.

[1 : 05] It's not just a personal thing. There's a lot of people and a lot of money and a lot of time that's invested in us. And we don't want to just go where we have some feeling of, you know, we like it there.

But we want to go where we believe we can make the greatest impact for the gospel. And certainly London is one of those places. It is definitely a world city. It's, if not the most important city in Europe, it's one of the most important.

And it's just a great opportunity. So we are very excited about it. And we do hope you'll pray for us. Revelation chapter 5. This comes right after Revelation 4. We don't have time to read it.

But the book of Revelation is an incredible book. It deals, obviously, with many end times events. But more than just revealing God's plan for what's going to happen in the end, it reveals Jesus.

It's the revelation of Jesus Christ. And as he lays the foundation and as we are beginning to see some of the things that will be, the very first place that we are taken in Revelation 4 is in the throne room of God.

[2 : 15] And so we're going to read Revelation 5, which is a continuation of this great vision that God gives to John to show us what things are like up in heaven. And, you know, we need to have a heavenly mindset.

We are very inundated with what the world values and what is important here. But it's good to be reminded of what is actually going on in heaven.

And it helps us with our priorities and with our life. So let's begin in Revelation 5, verse 1. The Bible says, And I saw on the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven nor on earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. One of the elders saith unto me, Weep not, behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

[3 : 23] And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, in the midst of the elders stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. When he had taken the book, the four beasts, the four twenty elders, fell down before the lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof. Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.

And we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands sang with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

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, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power. Be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and under the lamb, forever and ever.

[4 : 49] And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down, and worshiped him that liveth forever and ever. Let's have a word of prayer. Father in heaven, thank you for the opportunity to gather together tonight as a church.

And thank you, Lord, for how you have blessed this church. It's been said you judge a church not by its seating capacity, by its sending capacity. Lord, truly you have blessed Vision Baptist Church.

And Lord, I thank you that we get to be a part, not of somebody's church, man's church, but it's your church, Lord. And it's the work that you're doing. And Lord, we praise you for it.

And I pray, Lord, you would continue to do great and mighty things as we are reminded and seek to remember that we're doing it all for you. Please bless our time in your word tonight.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, in this chapter, there is a phenomenal event that takes place. John, of course, is seeing a vision that God gives to him.

[5 : 48] And in this vision, there is a problem. And this story, we see, first of all, tonight, that there was a book that no man could open. Chapter 5 continues from chapter 4, and it says that in the right hand of the one that sits on the throne, there's a book that is written.

And it's an unusual book. It's written within and on the back side, the idea that it is completely filled up. And there are seven seals on this book.

And they're looking for someone who would be able to open the book. Now, there's been debate about what this book is. But as we see, as it is open later on in the book of Revelation, we find that that contained in it, and actually as a result of opening this book, God will begin to deal and to judge and to reveal his plan for the earth.

And now he is going to complete his redemption of souls and of his creation. And so it is a very, very important book. But it's more than just a book that deals with end times events.

It is a book that is like the title deed or a will for someone who is inheriting something. And so the only person that could obviously open a will and that a will would pertain to would be the one that it's made out to.

[7:10] And so this book here is going to give great authority and going to recognize the authority of the one that can open it. And so there's seven seals in this book.

And I see a lot of sevens in the book of Revelation. Seven is really the idea of complete or perfection. There's lots of sevens that are mentioned. There's seven seals in this book.

And it's a book that no one can open. This book in Jewish history, if there was a person who had bought a piece of land, they would be given a roll, a scroll that was like the title deed to that land.

And if for some reason they couldn't meet their financial obligations, they couldn't pay for the land, then that roll, that title deed would be given back and there would be seven seals that would be placed on that and that roll.

And within the next seven years, if they could pay off their debt, the seals would be broken and they would receive the title deed back. And many people think that that's what the analogy here is used of that title deed.

[8:17] But whether that's exactly what it's talking about, we know that our world is in a bit of a mess. We know that our world is hurting and that people are hurting, that even lost people.

I was talking to one of the guys in China and they said that one of the common answers, I think it was Mark Tolson in China when they did a survey, was they knew there was something wrong with the world. And there's definitely something wrong with the world.

When Adam sinned, he lost his right to be the one who would subdue and have dominion over the earth. And so really that role has kind of been passed over to Satan.

And he's the prince of this world. And he has been allowed to control the world system. He's been allowed to influence the minds of people. And so our world is in a mess.

And we are looking for someone who will take back control of our world and our lives. Someone who will right the wrong. Someone who will redeem and make a new heaven and a new earth.

[9:15] And so there's the voice that goes out in verse 2 and says, Who was worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? And as John watches, it says in verse 3 that no man in heaven or on earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book.

Not even to look on it. No man can write, really inherit the authority and the leadership and the ownership of this earth. No man.

It doesn't matter how good a person they might be. And we have a Bible full of very incredible people, but none of them were able. And as he looks, there is no one who is able to have the authority to go in to open this book, to set in motion God's plan for the earth and how he's going to judge and write everything.

Nobody could do that. And look how John responds when he finds this out. It says, I wept much because no man was found worthy to open the book.

And to read the book, neither look their own. He's broken. And when it says there he wept much, it means he sobbed uncontrollably. And you know, as I thought about John weeping, and I don't know how much of this he understood.

[10:28] I don't know how much of this I understand. But he knows there's something wrong. And he knows that this book needs to be open. He's got this vision. God said, I'm going to show you what's going to happen.

And he's like, if the book's not open, I'm not going to know how it happens. Have you ever had to stop a book like with the last chapter, and you know all the things are going to come together, and you don't know what happens?

Maybe you're watching a movie, and you stepped out, and you couldn't finish it. And there's just like this, well, what happens? What happens at the end of the story? And John is weeping because he's wondering what happens.

And we think about our world, and we know that people are wondering, and they're trying to figure out a solution. And they're trying all sorts of things, aren't they? They try whatever they can find. Alcohol, drugs, money, whatever they can find to try to find a solution.

They look to even religion. Where we work as missionaries, there are churches everywhere. But it doesn't seem to change people's lives. Without someone to open this book, and without someone who rightfully has the authority to come into our lives as our Redeemer, and later, for those that don't believe as the Judge, without that person, we weep too.

[11 : 48] And we sob uncontrollably because we don't have hope. And the world is weeping, and the world is sobbing, and the world is broken, and the world is hurting because they don't know this One that we're going to read about in just a moment.

They stop with verse 4. They're left there. What happens? Who can solve all these problems? Who is the answer? So we see there's a book that no one can open, but no man can open.

But look at now verse number 5. Here we see that it was only the Lamb that prevailed. Verse 5 says, And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not. Behold.

He says, Hang on, buddy. I know you think things are out of control, and I know you think that there's no answer, and I know you think that you've searched, and they've searched, and they've cried, and they've went out.

And it's almost like, you know, in my mind it's kind of like when you go to a fair, and they have those competitions where you have to like try to swing a hammer and hit the thing that rings the bell, and everybody's stepping up, and everybody, these guys can't even get up to even look at the book, let alone open it, but everybody's like, I can't do it.

[12 : 57] I can't do it. And they're going around, and nobody can do it. And then the guy that's with John says, Hang on just a moment. He says, You don't need to cry. He says, Because I want you to notice, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed.

He has been victorious. The word prevail means victory or conquering. He has conquered. He has done what is necessary to be able to open this book that will bring the consummation of all that God is doing in this world, and to right all the wrongs, and to bring salvation and redemption.

He has prevailed, so you don't need to weep. You know, the world is weeping because they don't know this one. The world is weeping because they don't know the one that has prevailed. Try as they might.

Where we lived in Northern Ireland, we were in a very Catholic area, a very religious area, a lot of Protestant people, very devout people, believed strongly in their religion. But the religion was not the answer.

Because religion can't prevail. Only the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Of course, we know that's talking about how Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, that He had the credentials necessary, that had been prophesied through Judah, the Messiah would come.

[14 : 13] He's the Lion of that tribe. He's the conquering one. The Lion's the King of the jungle, right? And saying, this is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. This is no ordinary person here.

This is the root of David. Jesus is said that He came out of David, but David also came out of Him.

Because as a man, yes, Jesus came through the Jewish line and through David, but really, if it wasn't for Jesus, there would have been no David. Because Jesus wasn't just a man.

Jesus was God. And Jesus invented David. And so, He's the root of David. And the elders said, He has prevailed to open the book.

And He loosed the seven seals thereof. And so, John is like, excited. Now, he's just been crying. He's been weeping. And one of the elders says, Buddy, don't worry about it.

[15 : 07] I mean, He's like, man, a lot of this guy has not seen the whole picture. He's like, hey, hey, look, don't worry about it. The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, He's prevailed. He's opened the book. And so, John turns.

And look what John sees. He's heard it's a lion, but look what he sees. He says, He says, If I beheld him low in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, almost like he had to take another look, and he didn't see everything when he first looked at the throne.

The Bible says, There stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God. He tells him it's a lion, but when he looks, it's a lamb.

The one who is the lion of the tribe of Judah, the God who came down in human form, became as a man, and became weak as a lamb, to die on a cross.

And the Bible tells us, it's a lamb that is slain. He was able to open the book, because he died. He was slain, and he shed his blood. But notice, he's not just a slain lamb, he's a standing lamb.

[16 : 15] He's standing there. This lamb was slain, but this lamb is alive now. Yes, he has the evidence of the prince in his hands and his feet, but he is alive now, and he is standing there, kind of like, is that the best you could do?

I have conquered all. I have prevailed over all. And when the devil, and sin, and death, and hell tried their hardest, he is still standing, having died, and now he is the lamb that has prevailed.

He is perfect. It talks about the seven horns, and the idea of all powerful, perfect power. It says seven eyes. It says the idea here of being able to, perfect wisdom, knowing all things, and then the seven spirits, that he of perfect presence, omnipresence, it's being able to be everywhere.

And look what he does in verse 7. He doesn't say anything. At least here, he just comes, and he takes the book, out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

And as you think about it in your mind, as you picture that scene, that beautiful, glorious scene, and everyone just says, I passed.

[17 : 28] I can't do it. And he steps up. He takes the book. That's the lamb that has prevailed. Then I want you to see lastly, the worship that erupts from this.

Because as we see that the hope that this brings, John moves from uncontrollable weeping and sobbing to great hope that yes, there is one.

When no man could answer, when no man could step up to the plate, when no man could do it, there was one. And he is standing, and he takes the book now that represents this authority that's going to set in motion how God will turn it all around.

And he is now the heir of all things. Look what happens. And this is what I hope would happen in our hearts. It says that when he had taken the book, the four beasts, the four and twenty elders, the four beasts, different opinions on those guys.

We'll just leave it there. The four and twenty elders. The four beasts are incredible creatures. You can read about them in chapter four. The four and twenty elders, many people think that that's talking about saved people.

[18 : 41] They fall down. Look at what they do. They fell down before the Lamb. Having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.

And that's a beautiful picture. The idea of all those prayers that you think are going unanswered and unnoticed, man, they're filling up a vial in heaven. They're filling up a vial.

And they go up as an odor, as a sweet smell before the Lord. And they fall down. And then they begin to sing a new song. They begin to say, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals up, for thou was slain.

You died and you have redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Why was he worthy? Because he was the one that died and the one that redeemed us and the one that redeems every person out of every kindred, every group of people, every tongue or every language, every people, every larger group of people, no matter who they are, he's the redeemer and he died on the cross for their sins.

And we should praise and honor our God because everywhere around the world that people finally see the Lamb, he redeems them. Out of no matter what tribe or what kindred or what language or what nationality.

[20 : 01] And sometimes people will say, well, you know, in that country it's very hard or what that language is very hard or those people are very hard, but we serve a God who can and will redeem people out of every tribe and every tongue and every kindred and every nation.

Not only that, but look what else he's done. This is why he's worthy because not only did he redeem us, but he takes those that were lost and he says, they made us under our God, kings and priests, and they say, we shall reign on the earth.

What an incredible Lamb. What an incredible Savior that he makes us now, kings and priests, and one day those who are trusting in Jesus will literally rule and reign with Jesus on this earth for a thousand years.

And we look forward to that. Can you imagine a God like that that would let us rule and reign with him? So we see those closest to the throne here, the beast, the four and twenty elders, but then also all the angels.

It's almost like they're these circles. And this praise kind of, it's like when you throw a stone in a pond and the ripple effect. He steps up and he takes the book and immediately the people closest to him begin to praise and say, you are worthy.

[21 : 19] You've redeemed us and you've made us kings and priests. And then it's like the chorus now. Look at verse number 11. He says, And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders.

These angels are surrounding the throne and the beasts and the elders. And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand. A hundred million. And thousands of thousands are millions of angels.

And they are now saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the land. You deserve it. You're worthy. You are worth it all. You are worth to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

You deserve it all. The word worthy means you're worth it. And they said, You're worth it because you died on the cross. What did Jesus do that would make us want to serve Him?

What did Jesus do that would make us want to go to the mission field or let our children go to the mission field or give so others could go to the mission field or get very invested in people here in this community and make sacrifices and do things and do all the work that goes on in a church like this?

[22 : 30] What would make us want to do that? What would make it worth it? The Lamb. The Lamb. He's worth it. He is worth it. You know, isn't it amazing how we will sacrifice and we'll do so many things for so many other causes?

But you know, those causes really aren't worth it to be honest with you. But the Lamb is worth it. He is worth it and they say, You are worthy. Verse 13, In every creature.

It just keeps going. You think, Man, when can this stop? You've got the inner circle. You've got the next circle of angels. But it doesn't end there. Look at verse 13. It says, In every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth.

I don't even really know what that's talking about to be honest with you. And all that are in them heard them saying. He says, Man, every creature that there was, no matter where they were, in heaven, earth, under the earth, in the sea, they all began to say, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

looking forward to the time when every knee shall bow and every time will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There will come a day like that. And John has that vision here.

[23 : 53] As every creature realizes, he is worthy. And look at verse 14. And then the four beasts said, And what else can you say after that? They just say, Amen.

What else can you say? And the four and twenty elders fall down and worship Him that liveeth forever and ever. What else can you do but fall down and worship Him?

One day we're going to be there. One day we're going to see that. And one day there is going to be absolutely no doubt in our minds that He is worthy, that He has every right, He deserves every single ounce of our praise, of our worship, and of our service, though we no doubt in anyone's mind.

Because He will be revealed and we will see Him as the one who can take the book and as the Lamb that was slain. And we will worship Him. So my question for us tonight is, will we praise Him?

Do we see Him as the Lamb? Maybe you're here tonight and in your spiritual experience you've just stopped at verse 4. You recognize there's a problem, you know there's a problem in your own heart.

[25 : 05] You know that you don't got the answer. You know that even when you try to be good, you can't be good. You know that the world is broken. You know that even the smartest people in the world can figure out how to fix it.

Maybe you stop at verse 4 and there's a lot of weeping in your heart, but you've not looked to the Lamb. Look to the Lamb tonight. And if you know the Lamb, would you not praise Him?

Would you not give Him blessing and honor and glory and power and everything in your life? This is why we serve Him. And as I thought about leaving for the mission field, we were up with my parents who said goodbye to them at the beginning of the month.

They live in Ohio. And the first time we left was a little easier. This time it was a little harder because of our kids. But you know what? It's not really that hard.

It's Jesus. If I didn't have Him, it would be hard. We've got Jesus. Jesus. And I don't know what it is you're dealing with. God's not going to lead all of us to go to London.

[26 : 15] But God's going to lead all of us to do something. And where you're at, whatever it is in your life you're dealing with, whatever God wants you to do, it's going to always be hard until you find out and realize and admit that He's worthy.

He's worth it. And may we give our life to Him. Let's have a word of prayer tonight. Father in Heaven, thank You for allowing us to enter in to this scene through the record that You gave to us through John.

And Lord, when things get tough and when we get afraid and we don't know what to do, help us, God, to see through the fog and see the Lamb who's worthy.

May it help us to praise and honor and glorify You. Lord, we praise You for what You're going to do. In Jesus' name. Amen.

This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.