

We worship Jesus: the Lamb of God, King of Kings, Saviour...

Message for Sunday, February 4, 2018
by Bruce Fraser

Scripture: Revelation 5:7-14; Matthew 28:1-10

Children's Message:

Have you ever had a gift certificate? It's a piece of paper – but a very *special* piece of paper! It's a promise printed on paper (hey, that's fun! Can you say that? "a promise printed on paper").

For instance, here's a paper which says, "This paper is good for one free cookie from Bruce Fraser." So if you take this paper – I've got one for each of you, then you can come to me and say, "Can I have my cookie, please?" I'll say, "Do you have a gift certificate for a free cookie?" You give me the certificate, and I'll give you the cookie. Would you like to try it, and see if it works?

Now here's another gift certificate for you. But this one isn't from me. It's not from a store, either. It's from the Bible, and it's about Jesus. All I've done is copied what it says onto this paper, for you to have. It's a promise that God makes to all of us.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

"Eternal life" means to live forever, with Jesus.

Message "We worship Jesus: the Lamb of God, King of Kings, Saviour..."

Over the last three weeks, we've been reading the Bible to see what it tells us about worship. We've seen how exciting it is to know God, to be in God's presence, to praise God. We've seen that worship isn't just what we do when we're together on Sunday morning; worship is also what we do all week long.

Somewhere along the way I said that I like worshipping in Pentecostal churches, because they are so joyful. But today we are going to visit a worship service that makes even the most vibrant Pentecostal church look boring and blah.

This other worship service is going on right now, but we've arranged to drop in on them for a brief visit. Let's go see them now. It talks about the "Lamb of God." That's one of the names given to Jesus.

Revelation 5:7-14, New Living Translation:

[The Lamb of God] stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And as he took the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they held gold bowls filled with incense — the prayers of God's people!

And they sang a new song with these words:

"You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it.

For you were killed, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

And you have caused them to become God's kingdom and his priests.

And they will reign on the earth."

Then I looked again, and I heard the singing of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and the living beings and the elders. And they sang in a mighty chorus:

"The Lamb is worthy — the Lamb who was killed. He is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing."

And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea. They also sang:

"Blessing and honor and glory and power belong to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever."

And the four living beings said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped God and the Lamb.

This is the worship service that is going on in heaven. At the centre of the worship is God the heavenly Father, seated on the throne. With him is Jesus, who is called "the Lamb of God." He is the Lamb who was slain to bring forgiveness to the people of the world. Together, they are the focus of the worship.

We do a lot of things as a church: Junior Church, help people in need, bring comfort people who are

sick or shut-in or grieving the death of a loved one, pay for kids to go to camp, and so on. But the heart of all that we do is worship. And the focus of our worship is God: our heavenly Father; Jesus Christ the Son our Saviour; and the Holy Spirit.

On Palm Sunday we usually read in the Bible how Jesus entered Jerusalem as the star of a huge parade. Everybody loved him (well, almost everybody). Then just five days later, on Good Friday, we read how the crowd shouted for him to be put to death as a criminal.

But we also read on Good Friday that, when Jesus died on the cross, he gave his life for us, as a sacrifice for our sins. He died so that you and I could be forgiven for the wrong things we've done.

John 1:29, New International Version:
John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

When Jesus had the last supper with his followers he talked about his sacrifice:

Matthew 26:28, New International Version:
"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Now in this Bible passage from Revelation, we see that his death, instead of being a terrible defeat, was actually a great victory! Because of his willing sacrifice, Jesus is exalted and worshipped and glorified.

Jesus isn't worshipped only in heaven. People all over the earth worship him. We can actually see when it started in the Bible.

While Jesus lived on earth, teaching and healing, there are only three records of people worshipping him. (Some translations use the word "worship" when what they really mean is that someone knelt before Jesus in respect, asking for help).

- ◆ The wise men, after Jesus was born:
Matthew 2:11, New International Version:
On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

- ◆ Jesus walked on water and calmed the storm:
Matthew 14:33, New International Version:
Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

- ◆ Jesus gave sight to a man who was blind when born:
John 9:38, New International Version:
Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him."

These are isolated cases, though. For the most part, even his disciples didn't understand who he was or what his mission was.

But after Jesus rose from the dead, everything changed.

Matthew 28:8-9, New Living Translation:
The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to find the disciples to give them the angel's message. And as they went, Jesus met them. "Greetings!" he said. And they ran to him, held his feet, and worshipped him.

As soon as they saw him, they worshipped him. It was as if their eyes had been opened.

So we today also come and worship Jesus, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Lamb of God, the Saviour.

I usually conclude my messages with some "next steps" — things we can do this week to put into practice what the Bible teaches. But the next step here is very simple: worship God! And we're already doing that. Let's keep on doing that, for the rest of our lives.