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Revelation
Chapter 5
Revealing the Only Power "Worthy"
Worthy to Take
vs. 1-7

Revelation 5:1-7: I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals." And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came

and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

This is such a great passage, and it puts us directly in the realm of heaven and what is that which is most important to God. In His right hand, the place of power authority and that which is valuable is declared. There is something in His right hand. It is a book. It's hard to ascertain at this juncture exactly what it is, but you can begin to hear the stirrings in the heavens, and the picture is conveyed to us.

As we start off at the beginning of Revelation, it is a book of revealing; it is “*apokaluptó*,” unveiling to us God's purpose, God's plan, what God is like, what He desires. I mean, it's unveiling so many things. What is earth like? What are people like on the earth? What is it man really desires? Why is everything so mixed up and messed up? Well, it's going to reveal that, and we're going to look through this wonderful Book of Revelation.

He starts off by revealing to us the mystery of Light, more specifically the mystery of that which is hope and joy and peace. How do you enjoy life? How do you have

happiness? Where does it come from? Of course, as you read in John 1, it tells us that God sent Light into the world, and the Light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not overpower it or comprehend it. Christ is that picture of that great light and you see that.

In fact, if you look at the beginning of the Revelation 1, to me, one of the great verses is this,

(Revelation 1:5) “and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood—”

That's light, isn't it? That's the glory of the gospel of the light of God, and it begins to give us hope and peace and joy. So, you see in the rest of Revelation that God has so ordained that the 7 churches, as He pictures them as lampstands, be the light of the world, that they would proclaim this hope, this peace, this joy. I mean, we once too were immersed in sin, but when the kindness of God and His love for us came, He saved us. Not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, a wonderful passage in Titus 3.

So, we begin to realize that's what God has called the church to do: to proclaim the glorious light, to give people hope, to set them free, really from their sins. Man will define freedom in many different ways, but it's really your sin that's put you in bondage. It's not all these other things that we worry about that are external. So, Scripture begins to reveal to us that that's the purpose of the church.

As you go through the next few chapters, we begin to understand that there's a mystery to overcoming the darkness and as flawed as the church is and as weak as we have been throughout the years, God says, "I still chose you to be light, and it's through you that I'm going to work." And God has chosen even the weakness of the preaching, as He tells us in 1 Corinthians 2; proclaiming this message that seems to be weak in and of itself, that salvation comes from a crucifixion, that death is actually going to be that which brings forth life. It doesn't seem to make sense, and Paul touches upon that in 1 Corinthians 1. But it is through the weakness of this message that we understand that's the power of God. God has so chosen

to elevate this to the greatest source of strength and power in which is really what this passage is about, that we're going to be looking at, the great power of the gospel, the great power of Jesus Christ Himself, and how He stands out from all the powers in all the heavens. What an amazing picture it is. So, God is revealing to us the mystery of Light, the secrets of overcoming darkness as He begins to talk to the church. When you realize that each church has its problem; the church at Ephesus has an unloving spirit, overcoming an unloving spirit is what He begins to deal with. The church of Smyrna on overcoming the spirit of fear. All the way through, whether it's the spirit of fear or the spirit of compromise, or the spirit of timidity, He begins to deal with these things. And He says, "If you'll overcome, you can be a bright light. If in fact you don't overcome, then the light is taken out." And He gives that interesting picture with the church at Ephesus. So, God has called the church to proclaim the wonderful message of God's goodness, and so many things get in the way and obscure that. Take a light and hide under a bushel? No, don't do that, as

Matthew says. So, God is calling upon the church to be that light.

As we now come into this chapter, it begins to be revealed to us as it was introduced to us in Chapter 4, that we have this wonderful picture of heaven. What is heaven like? Well, if you look at the picture of heaven and without us getting once again too deep into that, you begin to see a picture of a throne of hope and peace and manifold grace and awe-inspiring power. You have all of creation surrounding the throne and declaring the power of this throne. The setting now comes into Chapter 5 as we begin to read about taking charge over all of creation, and I know that some have actually defined this book because it is actually used in the diminutive, which means that it's kind of a small book. It seems as if it's a deed, or more specifically, a title of such, and many have perceived it to be the title deed of creation or of the earth, more specifically, of all creation. So, we believe that [it is] in the hand [of who] is worthy to rule over all of creation, who will take charge. So, as we come to this passage, we're going to see the drama within the text, and really, there

are a couple of things that are instantly being revealed within the text, and that is to say that there needs to be a sense of ownership with this deed. Somebody needs to take ownership, and somebody needs to finalize its purpose and its destiny. What is the purpose of creation? What is the destiny of creation? So, he's going to be talking about that within the passage, as well as the fact that there seems to be different powers vying for this position or for this control. So, as we come in, we begin to see in Chapter 5 this drama playing out.

(Revelation 5:1) "I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back..."

Not unlike the commandments, is it?

"...sealed up with seven seals."

Once again, the sealing really describes ownership and only the person that had the authority to have this document was allowed to open it, not unlike when a king would roll something up and he'd seal it with his signet ring, and then he'd roll it up and he would seal it with a signet ring, and if any of one of those seals was broken and the person who owned it didn't open it, it was now

void. Only the person who was deemed the owner could open it. So, the passage reads that this was sealed up with 7 seals; completely sealed up.

(Revelation 5:2) “And I saw a strong angel...”

And you might want to underline the word “strong” there because it's emphasizing of course, what? Strength, right. Yeah, we didn't have to be smart to figure that one out, but it's talking about great power. Strength. Power. I mean, that's a very important thing really, when you think about it, and that's the people that are supposed to rule, right? The ones that are really strong. So, the picture is given that strength is in this mix, that power. Now, we're going to actually see a strong angel again in Revelation 10:1, and there will be another passage in which he is made reference to. But if you don't understand what's being done within the text, you're going to misunderstand Revelation 10, when we see the strong angel again. So, just to suffice it at this juncture, it's the strength and all power being personified.

(Revelation 5:2) “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice...”

Obviously, somebody that is not afraid and by virtue of the great power and strength, is not only grand and great, but intimidating by the things that he says. There is great authority with the things that he is saying, and “*kēryssō*,” as he begins to use that particular word within the passage, makes reference to the fact of something somber as being proclaimed and something that has a lot of weight to it.

(Revelation 5:2) “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?”””

Who has the weight? Who has the value? Who is the one who is sufficient for such a task? By virtue of his intrinsic value as well as his grand power, his great strength, his great authority, who has authority to do this?

Immediately I would become intimidated by the angel and I would just back away.

But it says this,

(Revelation 5:3) “And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth...”

I oftentimes think of Ephesians 4, where Jesus actually went in the earth. It's a great, interesting passage.

“... was able to open the book or to look into it.”

Obviously, not able to look or open a book would be authoritative, but to look into it, to look at it? The picture is that the book was so powerful that to literally “*blepō*,” gaze at the book, was impossible. It was just impossible to look at it.

John conveys right from the start that this book has tremendous value. Once again, back up into Revelation 5:1,

“I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne...”

So, you couldn't have something with any more value than that. Because the one who sits on the throne says, “This is the most important thing to Me.” I mean, that instantly makes it very valuable, but that nobody is able to open it, nobody is able to even look on it; well, it's stirring the heart of John.

And it says,

(Revelation 5:4) “Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it.”

It's touching that John would be so moved. I mean, he's so moved that the passage is saying he is openly crying out as a grievous mourning. It's like the death of somebody that you love and somebody crying out loud. So, John is moved to tears. Why is he so sad? That's the question you have to ask yourself. Here again, it goes back to that fundamental point that what we're dealing with is the title deed to all things created.

When you go all the way back to Ecclesiastes, if you'll go back there with me, the writer of Ecclesiastes is telling us something that, well, probably if we spent the time like he did, we will find and come to the same conclusion, that nothing seems to make any sense in the earth. I mean, wouldn't it be cool if there was a formula? You do this, this, this, this and always good will happen? But what is the phrase, “no good deed will go unpunished”? That sometimes you find yourself doing good and just reaping bad. It seems like that way. There's a lot of things that just

don't make any sense. So, it's one of the great themes of the Book of Ecclesiastes that on this earth, when we're looking at creation, creation doesn't seem to make sense. Nothing seems to really come together and have a purpose, and what then would be the ultimate destiny of creation? If I look on this earth and nothing seems to be making sense, what, then, is our destiny? How is this going to turn out? I mean, I need to know that somebody is controlling the affairs of all creation. Otherwise, we're in trouble. There is no hope. So, Solomon writes about this as he begins to investigate, and he begins to desire something, some advantage, some hope, and he writes this,

(Ecclesiastes 1:3) “What advantage does man have in all his work

Which he does under the sun?

(Ecclesiastes 1:4) A generation goes and a generation comes,

But the earth remains forever.

(Ecclesiastes 1:5) Also, the sun rises and the sun sets...”

You can hear the monotony of it all, and he goes, “There's nothing new under the sun.”

(Ecclesiastes 1:8) “All things are wearisome...”

Man doesn't know what's going to happen. Things don't make any sense.

He goes on within this particular chapter and he says this,

(Ecclesiastes 1:14) “I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.”

(Ecclesiastes 1:15) What is crooked cannot be straightened and what is lacking cannot be counted.”

It's really a book about a track to find some sort of meaning; go up to that mountain and find some sort of meaning. So, the first place, of course, obviously that he attacks is, “Maybe I just don't know enough. They say knowledge is power.” I don't know if they said it to him, but maybe he invented it.

But anyway, in verse 18, he goes, “But the problem with knowledge and wisdom and accumulation of all this stuff is it didn't make me feel better. “If I could just get more

knowledge. If I could just get more knowledge.” How is that working for you? “I'm a little depressed.” Yeah.

(Ecclesiastes 1:18) “Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain.”

So, obviously it wasn't working out for him.

You go into Chapter 2, and he goes, “Well, let me try pleasure, because maybe pleasure will give me a zing and help me out.” “So, what does it accomplish?” he asks in verse 2, and he goes through the whole process, and he says,

(Ecclesiastes 2:11) “Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.”

Now, he's going after pleasure; he's going after entertainment. I mean, that whole Chapter 2 is all about that. The problem is it didn't make him happy, and he doesn't understand why joy was elusive to him because he spent a lot of money. You ever have one of those

vacations where you get the kids together and you're going to spend a lot of money and have a really good time, and it's the worst vacation that you ever had? Ok, maybe it's just me. I was asking Jeremiah, "What were some of your greatest memories?" You know, he hardly remembered any of them that I spent a lot of money on. "You know that day that we worked on the lawn mower?" I'm going, "Wow, I could have saved myself so much money." But you long to try to make happiness and you realize, "I can't make it." I mean, you can set everything up just perfect, and then sometimes it turned out to be the worst. Especially, if you have a teenage girl, it's going to be the worst day in their life. You just never know. It's very unpredictable and, I had a teenage girl too.

Ecclesiastes 2, as you go on, he goes,

(Ecclesiastes 2:17) "So I hated life..."

That's an interesting statement, isn't it?

(Ecclesiastes 2:17) "So I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind."

(Ecclesiastes 2:18) Thus I hated all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun...

“Because I don't even know what's going to happen and who's going to control everything that I did, and there seems to be no benefit.”

So, all the way through this particular book, he begins to reveal that not only does nothing make sense, but if you look with me in Chapter 4, it's pretty interesting; he's revealing that life is unfair. Life is unfair. Did you know that? Ok. So, I've had people tell me, “Well, why do these people suffer so much? And why is this? Isn't that unfair?” Yeah. Yeah, life is unfair.

So, it says in Chapter 4,

(Ecclesiastes 4:1) “Then I looked again at all the acts of oppression which were being done under the sun. And behold I saw the tears of the oppressed and that they had no one to comfort them; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no one to comfort them.

(Ecclesiastes 4:2) So I congratulated the dead...”

I said, "You're the lucky ones. You're dead. You don't have to feel any pain."

"... who are already dead more than the living who are still living.

(Ecclesiastes 4:3) But better off than both of them is the one who has never existed, who has never seen the evil activity that is done under the sun."

In other words, if you look at things as if they have no controller over them, it's very depressing. It really is, and that becomes a theme throughout.

(Ecclesiastes 5:13) "There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches being hoarded by their owner to his hurt.

(Ecclesiastes 5:14) When those riches were lost through a bad investment..."

And who can predict that, right? Who can predict the stock market?

"... and he had fathered a son, then there was nothing to support him.

(Ecclesiastes 5:15) As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came...

And he says, "This is a grievous thing."

I mean, life is unpredictable. That's one of the things that make it so scary. I mean, "I've been saving. I've been saving. I've been saving" and somebody just loses it overnight. It's so unpredictable.

I mean, in Chapter 6, it begins with hope, and it ends with obscurity. Nothing seems to make sense. The reason why John is crying is because nothing will make sense unless somebody not only knows what they're doing but will do good through it all. That's a longing of all of our hearts.

If you look with me in Romans 8 in particular, it reminds us that by the sin of man, the earth was cast into a realm of confusion. Of course, Ecclesiastes says it probably better than this short verse in Romans 8.

But it reads this way,

(Romans 8:19) "For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing..."

That sounds like Revelation, doesn't it?

“... for the revealing of the sons of God.

(Romans 8:20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

(Romans 8:21) that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

(Romans 8:22) For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth...”

“When are we going to make sense?”

“... until now.

(Romans 8:23) And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

We believe that this all makes sense, but there's only One that can make it make sense. Who is worthy? And that's the drama that we see in Revelation. Who is going to set the destiny of this on track? Who is going to bring this to a

glorious close, not just an end, but a new beginning? Who is going to do that?

So, we go back to Revelation and perhaps in some way, we feel why John is so broken over the fact that nobody seems to be moving in all of the heavens.

(Revelation 5:5) “and one of the elders...”

And praise God for old people. “*Presbyte*” actually means old person. So, when you have an elder in the church, it's not only the wisdom of the truth, but there is the wisdom of time that is brought into the decision making. They're the guys that sort of have “been there, done that.” So, it's only appropriate that an elder says, “I've seen this One before.” That's one of those great reruns. Certain things have rewatchability, and this elder has obviously been around the block.

(Revelation 5:5) “and one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion...””

“Lion,” once again, just to emphasize, and we talked about the pictures of the lion last week, but “leōn” is the one that is mighty and brave.

So, “The mighty and brave One from the tribe of Judah is coming.”

Now, what's going to be interesting about the picture is that you're going to be looking for a Lion, and you're going to see a Lamb, but he's introducing a Lion. His point is that there is a bravery and there is a strength that you have no idea about, and it is the greatest strength, it is the greatest bravery in all of the heavens, in all of creation, and he'll introduce us to that power.

The passage reads this way,

“... Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah...”

It's only appropriate that it would be from the tribe of Judah. Why? Well, strangely enough, and when you go back and you read about the 12 patriarchs, there doesn't really seem to be one that has it all together. If you were to put Joseph maybe at the top of the list, but he still has his flaws. As good as Joseph was, there was one thing that he didn't convey that God wanted to convey as the greatest source of strength. So, he chooses probably one of the most flawed individuals, Judah of the of the 12

tribes. I won't go into the depths of his sins, but we know that he was clearly not a paragon in so many ways, but he did this one thing at the end. He was willing to die for his brother Benjamin. "Take me. Take my life. Don't take his." And God goes, "You're going to be the tribe by which I send forth the Savior." So, from the tribe of Judah, the strength is going to come.

If you look within the passage, it goes on, not only,

"...from the tribe of Judah, from the Root of David..."

From the root of the one that God said, "This is a man after My own heart." From the root of the one that God says, "This is a man who feels great passion for Me." From the root of the one that God, literally named him, "the beloved." Beloved. One greatly loved; one willing to lay down his life. This is where the force is going to come.

"... has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."

(Revelation 5:6) And I saw between the throne..."

Why in Chapter 4, "Didn't you see?" Why at the beginning of Chapter 5, "Didn't you see?" The passage is conveying

that if you're not looking for it, you can't see Him. He's so small. He seems so insignificant. The powers of heaven, how great they are, right? How small a lamb is. The word is not just "lamb". It is "little lamb".

The passage reads this way,

"And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a (little) Lamb standing, as if slain..."

What a picture that is; mortally wounded. You just see these little legs just shaking, bleeding all over the place.

"Ok, I was looking for a lion. Maybe the lion has been there. Well, that's the power. That's the reason I didn't see Him. He's so small. But it was in the mix. The great elders, the great living beings; you're just looking at them, and then there's a little lamb. Scripture is painting a picture. "Not by power, but by God's spirit," says the Lord. What spirit? Spirit of God's love. God says there's a lot of great powers out there. There's a lot of great forces out there. It's only appropriate that the greatest of powers would announce this. It will be the great, strong angel and

he will announce this, but what will he declare as the greatest power in all of the heavens? It's the Lamb.

“... having seven horns...”

Completely, fully in power.

“... and seven eyes...”

Fully aware and informed of everything. God has given them the power, for they are the seven spirits of God that He sent out into all the earth. Ownership. What is the destiny of this earth? It is certainly in question. There are powers in the heavens that are vying for the control of this earth.

1 John 5:19 reads,

“... the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”

You want to know why confusion exists?

Well, how about Colossians 1:13 calling this the domain of darkness, or Ephesians 6:12, the powers and the forces of darkness, and wickedness, spiritual forces? Ephesians 2:2, the prince of the power of the air over the sons of disobedience. You even see him fighting and warring for the powers in Daniel 10:13, where he fights for the prince

of Persia in the heavens against the great archangel Michael. What we begin to understand is that there are forces that are trying to apprehend and control. The question is, who is worthy to ultimately have control?

You read the Book of Job and in Job 2, God asked the question of Satan, and He says, "Where have you come from Satan?" And I quote, Satan says, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around." Then he poses the question to God, "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Of course, his point is, "Anybody would be nice to you God if you gave him everything. Take away his stuff. See if he likes You. Take it away." Then Satan says, "Touch his flesh. He'll curse you." Well, Job's wife did curse Him, but not Job. Job seemed to pass the test, but he didn't. As you go through the Old Testament, there is one character after the other that just can't pass the test. Who is worthy to open up the book? Who is the one that can defeat evil? Who is the one that will not in any way acquiesce or cave or be manipulated by the things of evil? Well, you go down the book, Job obviously looked like he was winning, but he didn't win without consternation. He didn't win

without a sense of confusion, "What are You doing? What in the world are You thinking causing this pain to me?" And the argument and the criticism that he begins to throw at God. Yes, it's understandable he was going through pain, but God is looking for somebody that isn't just merely looking out for himself and isn't just merely looking out for the purpose of doing right. He needs somebody that will do right, even if he has to suffer and do it willingly because he wants to. Job would not pass that test. He would be full of complaints. In fact, he says within the text, "I'm full of complaint." But Jesus will get on the cross and it says, "While being reviled, He did not revile in return." How can you do that? I mean, Job probably wouldn't have minded dying for somebody that was righteous, but for you, if you were not, he would not. Abraham, without sin? No, not without sin, not without compromise, and seemingly concerned about what other people would think rather than what was really right. You begin to see Abraham fall apart. In fact, in almost every case, well, I mean, Jacob, do we really have to talk about Jacob? I mean, is there somebody that is not conniving and manipulative that can rule? Do you want somebody

conniving and manipulative? That would be Jacob, right? You don't want him ruling. You don't want Moses ruling because he'll get angry and there'll be a time where he just says, "Enough. Enough." Elijah is right next to him. Except Elijah will probably just chop your head off and feel good about it. David, as wonderful as his heart is and as passionate as he feels, unfortunately, the passion will get the best of him and the passion will go into lust and he'll begin to drive for his own pleasures. Solomon, power corrupts, wisdom corrupts, knowledge corrupts. They corrupted him. I mean, it doesn't matter who you have; who is worthy? None of them. None of them can, and it's one of the purposes of the Old Testament, to begin to reveal the need for the righteous One. It's almost like all of the Old Testament is creation crying out, "We need someone. We need the anointed One that will come and rescue and save." This passage reads that it's the Lamb, as if slain, that is the one. He is the One that is worthy to take possession and take control, to take all power and all authority and to rule and to reign.

(Revelation 5:7) "And He came..."

And what does He do? He takes it. It's like it was His, and it's in the perfect tense, which means it's a completed action; it's His, and it belongs to Him. Can you imagine this picture in your head? A Lamb as if slain. Where does He get the strength from? I thought He was dead, and yet the power is coming out.

“And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

(Revelation 5:8) When He had taken the book, the four living creatures...”

They began to sing.

The question that you have to ask yourself is, what makes Him worthy? We're going to be talking and focusing on that specifically next week, but if you look in verse 9, He owns it because He purchased it with His blood.

All the way through, you begin to see. Hebrews 4:15 says that we have a high priest that can sympathize with our trials because He was tempted in all points, like as we, yet without sin.

Hebrews 7:25 says,

“Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him...”

Romans 8:34,39 says He intercedes for all of us, always. Why? Because He loves us. There are powers in the universe. There are powers that were created, good powers, strong powers, great powers, but God so ordained that the greatest power of all would be the power of love. He would not dance it up with great lightning bolts or great pictures of tremendous power. He would show it as a Lamb, One willing to be slain. Who would care for you when nobody would? Would it be the eagle? Would it be the lion? Would man even care for you when nobody else would? Romans says that while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you. Who would do that? A Lamb. The lamb would die for you. A lamb walks as if slain.

So that when you read in Philippians 2; once again, you're very familiar with the text. Philippians 2 tells us that because Christ emptied Himself; I love the picture, where it's actually encouraging us to have the same attitude in us.

(Philippians 2:5) “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

(Philippians 2:6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

(Philippians 2:7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

(Philippians 2:8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

(Philippians 2:9) For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

(Philippians 2:10) so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

(Philippians 2:11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...”

“The greatest power in all the universe.”

Colossians will say the same thing if you look with me in Colossians 1. The wonderful truth is that Christ delivered us.

(Colossians 1:13) “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

(Colossians 1:14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

(Colossians 1:15) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

(Colossians 1:16) For by Him all things were created...”

Ok, now, we're starting to make sense of creation.

“For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

(Colossians 1:17) He is before all things, and in Him...”

Yes, the Lamb.

“... all things hold together.”

And He chose the Church to reign with Him, the very next verse. You say, “Well, ok, that doesn't look like power. That doesn't look like strength. It doesn't look like...” That's the point.

So, in Colossians 3, if I could just make this applicable to you, what does it tell you to do? It tells you,

(Colossians 3:1) “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

(Colossians 3:2) Set your mind on the things above...”

Why does he keep using the word “things”? Why doesn't he say, “Keep your mind focused on Him?” Well, there are passages that say that. But this particular passage wants you focused on the things that God loves. Why was the Lamb elevated to the highest position? Because He loved one thing more than anything else, sacrifice. The only thing the Lamb is a picture of really is a sacrifice, and God is saying that the love of God is the most powerful thing.

So, if you read within the passage, what is he saying in Colossians 3? Well, consider the members of your earthly

body as dead to all this other stuff, immorality, impurity, all the things that you might even oppress people with by your great strength and power.

But he goes on, and he says this,

(Colossians 3:12) “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

(Colossians 3:13) bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

(Colossians 3:14) Beyond all these things...”

Become a lamb. We will watch this happen and it's just a wonderful picture of Revelation because you'll see this great beast come out of the water and he'll begin to control all the earth and he'll be ominous and powerful, and signs are coming from heaven, and lightning bolts are coming down and wow is he impressive. You're going to read in Revelation 14 that there's 144,000, and they're standing on the hill, the Mount of Olives, and there they are, standing and they're singing. Now, why are they

singing? Why are they so brave? Why are they not afraid of the beast? And then it tells you, they're standing with the Lamb, and they realize that the Lamb is the One who wins. Talk about David and Goliath. This is the ultimate picture. The Lamb wins. Now, here's the point. You have a lot of things going against you? You have the turmoil of the world, and nothing seems to make sense? Start following Christ. Start seeking the things that He loves, mercy, compassion, kindness, and watch, it'll all make sense. He begins to put the universe together. "That's why He had me here." It's like Paul, when he had problems with his vision, he gets held up in Galatia, and he goes, "I'm having this eye problem so I can see you and witness to you. I wasn't even planning on stopping in, but this was the reason why." Paul realized in Philippians 1 that the whole reason that he was in jail was that the Pretorian guard would come to know the Lord, and these great men of great position, he says, "I can tell you that my circumstances have proved out to be something better than I could have ever imagined. This is the place I need to be. I would have never thought about it, but this is the place." And everything begins to make sense. If

you'll start walking in love, everything comes together. Follow Christ. Follow Jesus. Everything becomes subjected to the ruler of all, and God will cause all things to work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Why? Because He reigns.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness, for Your goodness to us, for Your calling us into Your marvelous kingdom; out of that darkness and obscurity and depression and oppression, and that senselessness of the world and into a place that makes sense. Until we met You, nothing made sense. But now that we know You, it all came together. There is a reason why. Not only there is a reason why all things were created, but there is also a reason why difficult times come in my life. It is to bring me into the realm of the greatest power.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, Scripture is asking you to see this. Revelation is asking you to see this because the world is telling you everything counter to this. But God is revealing to you what the truth is. Life not

making sense? Come to Jesus. Seek the things that He seeks; pursue the things that He would pursue. Present your bodies a living sacrifice wholly acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of worship, and don't be conformed to the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. You pray. Just take this time to listen to His voice.