**BBC MEN’S BIBLE STUDY: A Study of the Book of Revelation #5**

**Hope in the Darkness**

**A CRISIS OF HOPE:** Can meaning be found in such a broken evil world? Will there be a tomorrow? Where is history going? Can we really know?

**Revelation 5:1-14** Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" 3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. 4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.

**THE CHRIST OF OUR HOPE:** Jesus is no mere answer; He is God’s consummate provision for all personal and cosmic brokenness. Apart from the person and redeeming work of Jesus Christ, history is a cruel enigma.

**Revelation 5:5-7** Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." 6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

**THE CRESCENDO OF HOPE:** Those who see and experience Jesus as he is revealed in the Gospel respond with adoring love and complete surrender. God-preoccupied worship will stretch **all** of us! Here is my favorite description of God’s worship:

William Temple: “Worship is the submission of all of our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by his holiness; the nourishment of mind with his truth; the purifying of imagination by his beauty; the opening of the heart to his love; the surrender of will to his purpose—all this gathered up in adoration, the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable.”

**Revelation 5:8-14**And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song:  "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." 11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang:  "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" 13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:  "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, forever and ever!" 14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

**A Worship Culture shaped by the Truth & Beauty of Jesus, the Love of the Father, and the Work of the Holy Spirit**

**Truth** **and Spirit** – We are to worship God with informed minds and enflamed hearts. Rich theology leads to deep doxology.

**Transcendence and Immanence** – Those who worship God through the riches of his grace have a profound sense of humility and awe AND a peace and joy that cannot be found anywhere else.

**Horizontal** **and Vertical** – The more we worship God as he deserves and delights, the larger our hearts grow. Our capacity to love increases. Just wait for Revelation 7!

**Inward Reflection and Bodily Expression** - God’s worship isn’t to be limited to our “comfort zone.” There are a lot of things God commends in his worshippers that aren’t commanded but are totally appropriate and beautiful.

**Liturgy and Life** – Before there were “services of worship” there was only “worship service.” All of life is meant to be lived to the glory of God, by the grace of God, with the joy of God.

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:**

1. What had the most impact on you this week in your preparation for today’s gathering, and from Scotty’s chat with us? What was encouraging, helpful, still needing some clarification?
2. To “worship” is “to declare worth. What stands out to you in Revelation 5 about the worthiness of Jesus? What are you learning about him (or reconnecting with) that is fueling your gratitude and adoration of Jesus? When have you been most alive to the truth, goodness, and beauty of Jesus?
3. If you have seen any of the footage of the beautiful gatherings at Asbury University (and other campuses), how are they demonstrating some of what we see going on in Revelation 5? Affirm the best, don’t drift into criticizing what accompanies every movement of God’s Spirit. Is this awakening making you hungry for a fresh work of the Spirit in your own heart?
4. I suggest closing your time today worshipping Jesus, for what we saw about him today in Revelation 5 AND asking God the Holy Spirit to bring us into a season of awakening, renewal, and refreshment in the Gospel! Why not now? Why not us?