



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

The Third Sunday of Easter – Revelation 5:11-14

Focus: *The resurrected Christ – the Lamb that was slain*

word of life

“... they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with a full voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!’” Revelation 5:11b-12 (NRSV)

Read Revelation 5:11-14

CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!

The Easter celebration continues as we read again from Revelation. The verses assigned for today are a continuation of the heavenly vision revealed to the seer John. It is helpful to “set the scene” to get the majestic glory of this reading.

This heavenly scene is described in Revelation 4. The seer’s vision is focused on one sitting on a throne – surrounded by the heavenly hosts, spirits, and animals – holding a sealed scroll. Many scholars have interpreted this scroll to contain the fulfillment of God’s plan for creation. Breaking the seal would initiate its culmination. The seer weeps that no one in this celestial scene is worthy to break the seal. He is consoled in his sorrow by one of the elders in the vision, who assures John that there is one who is worthy: the “Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” who has conquered. (Revelation 5:5 NRSV) The expectation is to see a conquering hero, a warrior triumphant entering the scene. Instead, there is a Lamb, and not just any lamb, but a Lamb that bears the marks of being slaughtered. (Revelation 5:6 NRSV) This Lamb takes the scroll, and immediately the heavenly hosts bow down in worship and begin a heavenly anthem of praise and adoration of the Lamb.

1. *What do you make of such a vision? What emotions are stirred as it is described?*
2. *Does God still provide “vision moments” today? Explain.*

The heavenly voices grow in number – myriads on myriads, thousands on thousands – all singing with full voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Revelation 5:12 NRSV) Then all creation in heaven, on earth, under the earth, in the sea, all echo the song of praise, “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (Revelation 5:13b NRSV)

3. *Have you ever experienced a moment (maybe on Easter Sunday) when the whole congregation sang “with full voice”? What was that experience like?*

The vision, in subtle yet bold ways, proclaims the source of true power and the one worthy of homage. The words sung – power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, blessing, glory – are all characteristics usually attributed to the emperor. The cry, “Worthy are you...” would be shouted in homage to the emperor as he entered a city; yet all these attributes are given to the Lamb.

Clearly, the Lamb is the victorious one, the true emperor over all creation. Clearly, power comes in sacrifice. The risen Christ bears the marks of the cross. The Lamb that is slain is alone worthy of our praise and worship. Clearly, even when the faithful suffer persecution, pain, and death, the crucified and risen Lord is ultimately in control and has the final word. And that final word is Jesus – our risen Savior. To this word, we echo the heavenly chorus: “AMEN.” Let it be so. “AMEN”

4. *What does it mean to say, “The final word is Jesus?”*

word *among us*

It was another Sunday morning of the Easter season at Typical Lutheran Church. Folks were genuinely glad to see one another. The choir was busy with a last-minute rehearsal of the anthem. Others were assuming their assigned role for the day – usher, greeter, lector, acolyte, altar care. Walking down the hall of the education wing, voices of children and adults could be heard, engaged in Christian education. The high school class was studying the book of Revelation – a topic that sparked animated conversation.

As the appointed time drew near, everyone gathered in the sanctuary for worship and praise. The liturgy was familiar – words of confession, a word of forgiveness, an opening hymn, words of greeting and prayers to the Lord sung in peace. And then ... and then came THE song. “Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his.” The high school youth sang with unusual gusto the words that they had just read in their Sunday school class. The words had new meaning for them on that typical spring Sunday morning. They weren’t just words anymore.

In a world where there is suffering and death, the promise of comfort and life is proclaimed. In a world where others make fun of you because you go to church, the promise of God’s grace is sung. In a world where you feel alone and left out and seem to be singing out of tune, the promise of a chorus of thousands upon thousands – even all of creation – reminds that you were not alone. Yes, the youth that Sunday morning sang with the heavenly chorus of all time and all places with full voices, “This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb that was slain has begun his reign! Alleluia! Alleluia!”

1. *How do the familiar words from the liturgy “Worthy is Christ” affect you?*
2. *What does it mean to you to sing of Jesus as “the Lamb who was slain”?*

faith practice *in daily life*

Proclaim the Good News of God in Christ through word and deed

Easter is a time for proclamation! To a suffering, chaotic, death-filled world, we have incredibly Good News: **CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!** Some proclaim this news through music and the arts. Some proclaim it in their work with those in need. Others live the Good News through an invitation, a handshake of welcome, a touch of compassion, a card or text of encouragement. In many and various ways, in ways as varied as each one of us, through word and deed, we join all creation in proclaiming the Easter message. We are invited to join the heavenly choir, even if we don’t have singing voices, to join with full voices in praise and worship of the Lamb. “Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” Revelation 5:12 (NRSV)

3. *How might you join the heavenly choir and sing praises to God in the coming week?*
4. *How might you support others who are proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ Jesus?*

Prayer

O risen Lamb, you alone are worthy to be praised. We worship and bow down before you. Help us live what our voices proclaim, that through our words and deeds, you are glorified and your will is done.
Amen

last word

For your devotions each day, say or sing Revelation 5:12-13. (“This is the feast”)
Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!

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Written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade

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