

A Unique Savior

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[0 : 00] All right, this morning, as we've come together today, as we are getting into this season of Christmas, we are going to be looking today at how unique Jesus is.

And as we look into our time of message today, we think about how many different religions are out there, how many different religions who speak about Jesus and talk about who he is.

And there are many who have proclaimed to be God or proclaimed to have the answer for men's lives. But there's only one who is able to take care of our problems, and that's Jesus Christ.

And what I want us to think about today, as we take these next few moments and think about Jesus, we're coming into the Christmas season, and over the next four weeks or so, we're going to go back and begin with the beginning.

But this morning, I would like us to go to the end and think about how unique Jesus is, and how unique Jesus is to take care of the situation in our lives.

[1 : 27] And I want to show us four characteristics about Jesus, what makes him unique, what makes him different. And then hopefully we'll see four reasons why he's worthy of our praise, worthy of our devotion, ultimate devotion, worthy of our time.

And I want us to dive in together this morning. And our first slide, if you're taking notes this morning, is that Jesus knows the ultimate problem.

Jesus knows that there is a problem. I want to see that Jesus knows that, and Jesus is going to take care of that, and he's the only one.

He is unique in all of history that knows the problem, that sets him apart from everyone else. And I want us to look together at Revelation chapter 5, and we'll start with verse number 1.

Revelation chapter 5, beginning with verse 1. I know we've got 14 verses, so let's go ahead and dive right into verse 1.

[2 : 32] John says, And notice John's reaction in verse 4.

He says, So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or even to look at it.

Verse 5, But one of the elders said to me, Do not weep. You don't need to cry, John. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open and to loose its seven seals.

And he says, And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

Then he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne. Now when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

[4 : 07] And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and you have redeemed us to God by your blood.

Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, you have made us kings and priests to our God, and we shall reign on the earth. Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, the elders.

The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb who 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.

I heard saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be to him who sits on the throne and to the lamb forever and ever.

Then the four living creatures said, Amen. It is true. We agree. And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped him who lives forever and ever.

[5 : 25] Father, this morning as we've come together to learn of you and to see how unique our Savior Jesus is of all who have ever claimed to have the answer, then Lord, help us to understand what makes our Savior so unique and why he is so worthy of our ultimate devotion and our praise.

Lord, we thank you, Father, for what you're going to do this morning, and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. And as we read this section in the book of Revelation, chapter 5, we don't have time to go through the rest of the book of Revelation and talk about God's ultimate plan for earth and for mankind, not even really to go into chapter 6 and talk about what's revealed in the scroll when the scroll is opened.

But we know that from the beginning of God's Word, back in the book of the Revelation, we know that sin entered into the world and admired God's creation.

God looked and saw what he had created and saw that it was good, but then sin enters into the equation and it did something that affected man's relationship with God.

God's ultimate purpose for mankind was for us to have a relationship with him. But because of our sin, because of Adam's sin, acting as the representative of the entire human race, what it did was it brought suffering, it brought pain, it brought immediate spiritual death, ultimately physical death, and separation from God in ultimately what would be the lake of fire unless God intervened and did something.

[7 : 16] So that's the picture that we have from Genesis 3, the sin problem that we have. And now we've come to God's final purposes, how he's going to bring an end to that, what he is going to do to purge this earth, to bring final judgment upon those who have not trusted Jesus as their Savior.

And then he's going to pour out his blessing upon those that are his. And for all eternity, we are going to be with him. Isn't that awesome? As we think about the pain, as we think about suffering today, as I think about this morning and how uncomfortable some of us are with the sinus and all the other things that we deal with, with death in our families, with the struggles that we have, one day we have the hope that we can know that all of that will be taken care of.

And so what we do is we have in Revelation chapter 5, we see John is transported into the throne room of God, and God is seated on the throne, and he has a scroll.

It's written on both sides, and it's sealed with seven different seals, most likely as very typical of a seal during the time of the first century, a wax seal on the scroll and sealed at different intervals along the scroll.

So you had to break a seal to get to the next section of the scroll. And the angel in verse 2, if you have your Bibles, says, who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?

- [9 : 05] And verse 3 says, there's no one in heaven. There's no one in heaven that is worthy. There's no one standing around the throne that's worthy to open, to take, to go, and to grab that scroll from the hand of God, much less to look upon its contents.
- And as a result of that, verse 4 says, he weeps. Understand, we ask ourselves the question, why couldn't God just open the scroll?
- Have you ever thought about that? Why didn't God just open the scroll? Well, I think there was a reason why no one wants God to open the scroll.
- The reason is, God is a holy God. God is a just and a righteous God. And because he is holy, because he is just, there can be no sin in his presence.
- And because sin is wholly, completely against the very essence of God, if God were to open the scroll, he would have to deal with sin.
- [10 : 14] And there would be no hope for mankind, because we all have sin. But what we need is, we need a mediator, to go grab that scroll.
- Someone who can plead our case. Someone who can deal with the sin problem. And that brings us to our next slide. Jesus knows the problem, and the problem is sin.
- Because of sin, we stand before a holy God, first of all, hopeless. We all stand, because of our sinful nature, apart from Jesus Christ, we stand before God, hopeless.
- And as we think about not being able to, excuse me, not being able to stand before God because of our sin, so many times, all these religions try to approach God the way they want to approach God.
- Well, by living a good life, or by doing this, or by having all of these brides, and this and that, and or by killing infidels, or doing whatever, they can be right with their God.
- [11 : 34] The thing is, we can never do enough. Have any of you ever been to Chuck E. Cheese's? Yeah, you know what I'm talking about? Why do kids want to go to Chuck E. Cheese's?
- It's not for the pizza. The pizza is not that great. Why do they want to go to Chuck E. Cheese's? For the games, right? And you go in there, and you've got this section, you've got, my favorite's always been the skee-ball, but you've got all these different games.
- You've got the basketball hoop, where you throw the basketball through the chain net, and every time it goes through, you get points, and you get tickets, spits out the machines, the machines, and skee-ball, and you spend like two hours there, and you get like a little handful of tickets.
- And what happens when, when your kids or your grandkids take those tickets, and when you're leaving, and you go to the counter there, and there's all these prizes on the wall.
- Well, what do they do? They say, I want that one on the top shelf, you know, the big, huge, stuffed animal. And, and the, the person behind the counter says, well, how many tickets do you have?
- [12 : 41] And, you know, you bring like, you know, 800 tickets, if you're that good. And they go, no, that was like 80,000 tickets. Kids are like, what?
- And, well, no, you can't have that one, you don't have enough points. And, or you don't have enough tickets. And they go, well, they go to the next shelf. Well, you know, I want that cool remote control, whatever.
- Oh no, that's 65,000 points. I don't know how many points they are, but it's like some out of this world number. And then your kids go, oh, and then you say, well, no, what?
- Pick something else. And then comes to the point, you know what they end up leaving with? They end up leaving like with five erasers and crayons. I mean, really? I mean, they wanted the, the, the radio control car and the stuffed animal, but they didn't have enough tickets in their hand.

And so we stand before God, like a Chuck E. Cheese's. And we say, God, I want to get to heaven. And God says, okay, what do you have? Well, look, I've got all these good works and, and man, I'm great at skee ball.

[13 : 48] And he goes, you don't have enough tickets. And we're staying, John is standing in the, the throne room of heaven. And, and the angel saying there's who's worthy.

Who's worthy to come grab this, this scroll from God. Verse three, no one in heaven or on earth could open or even look at the scroll. And John weeps because of that.

You know, sometimes we, we often talk flippantly about heaven, you know, the streets of gold and this and that and the other, but without realizing that we can't get there on our own.

We have a sin problem. And apart from Jesus Christ, you know, really we are hopeless. So, so John was weeping because there was no one there to provide hope.

There's no one there to be able to come and take that scroll and unfold God's ultimate plan for mankind and ultimately be able to usher in the blessing and usher in the eternal state.

[14 : 54] And so he's crying about this. Imagine with me as John is, because John has understood the problems that Christians have had.

They were persecuted. Many families had, had lost fathers, had lost mothers, families had seen their, their children taken from them and, and family members martyred and lost their jobs.

And John is saying, where's the hope? We want to, to see something we've experienced pain, but we want to see ultimately God take care of all of this because they believed in the Messiah.

Messiah had been prophesied about who would come and usher in peace for Israel for many, many, many centuries. And so John is waiting for this and he sees nobody in heaven or on earth that's able to take care, take care of this.

So that's why we see John crying. And it's huge because there's hope is gone. It's the same kind of questions we ask today. When is the suffering going to end?

[16 : 03] When is Jesus coming back? When is this going to be taken care of? You know, the hope we hold on to is that one day things will be different, but not only hopeless, but also helpless.

We stand before God, not only hopeless, but we stand before God, helpless. Everyone looks around. No one's able to figure it out. And they're looking around who's able.

And, you know, maybe they're thinking, well, what about Abraham? You know, he's the father of, of the people of God. Abraham goes, no, I can't. Well, what about the prophets? Prophets go, no, sorry.

We're not, we're not equipped for it. Not us. Well, what about Paul? Paul, Paul wrote two thirds of the new Testament. Paul goes, no, not me. What about Peter? And people are going, of course not Peter.

But, but no, there's no one in heaven. And so they, John finds himself helpless to be able to figure out what to do. Well, what about any of us? You know, here we are holding our tickets and saying, God, I want to be in heaven.

[17 : 10] Apart from Jesus Christ, we have no hope and we find ourselves helpless. So the first characteristic about Jesus that's different than any other leader in the, the, the, the span of human history is he knows the ultimate problem.

The ultimate problem is not, not enough money. The ultimate problem is not that we don't have affordable health care.

The only problem, the problem is not that we're not kind to each other. And, and, and the answer is live by the 10 commandments and be more, be more kind and live by the golden rule.

The problem is sin. The problem is sin. And Jesus knows that problem. That brings us to the second characteristic is that Jesus pays the ultimate price.

That's what sets him apart. Jesus pays the ultimate price. What about every other religious leader in, in, in human history? How many have died in the place of those that they want to, who worship them?

[18 : 25] None claim to have that ability to be able to take everyone else's problem upon themselves. Every other religious leader says, you come to me and you do what I want you to do.

And then you, you meet my standards and then you will be entered into, ushered into whatever eternal state that they believe in.

Jesus or God, the father, Jehovah God is the only one in the span of human history that says, I will come down to you and I will meet you where you are.

And I will take care of your problem. And all you have to do is take, receive what I'm offering you. And I want us to see what happens next. Let's look back in verse five, revelation chapter five, verse five.

And John said, it says, excuse me, but one of the elders said to me, do not weep. John is just weeping. He can't handle the hopelessness.

[19 : 24] And now we see, excuse me, we see the paradox. He says, behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.

So that brings us to a paradox here that John sees. The first is we see Jesus as a conquering lion. We see Jesus as a conquering lion.

I want to show us something pretty cool here. I tell you what, in view of time, we won't go back here, but in Genesis chapter 49, when you have time, go back and look at Genesis chapter 49, verses eight through 10.

And what we see is, we have hundreds of years, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years before this. What we have is, Judah is being told, is being prophesied about what is going to happen.

And it's through the line of Judah that Jesus is going to come. And he's referred to ultimately as the lion of Judah.

[20 : 36] And if we go into Isaiah 11, 1, 1, Isaiah 11, 10, talks about David, the root of Jesse. And ultimately in Revelation chapter 22, talks about Jesus, talks about David.

This was prophesied long before Revelation chapter 5, that Jesus would be the answer to our problem. And he would be a conquering lion.

Don't miss this as we see here. If you look at verse 5, don't weep.

Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah. The root of David has prevailed. Some versions have conquered. Excuse me.

But the verse, I want to give us a little Greek lesson here. The word that John used for what the angel, or for what he's saying here, for what the elders say to John, says, John don't cry, because the lion of the tribe of Judah, remember, was prophesied way back in Genesis chapter 49.

[21 : 50] He is also the root of David, talked about in Isaiah 11, 1, Isaiah 11, 10, has prevailed. The word that the elder used there is a very important word.

It's a word that all of you know, English anyway. Have any of you ever seen the tennis shoe that has a logo that's a swoosh?

On the front of the shoe, on the back of the shoe, it's got the word Nike, N-I-K-E. The word that the elder used when he's talking to John is, he says, is the word N-I-K-A-O in the Greek.

It means to conquer, to prevail, to win over, to beat. And you see, Nike didn't come up with the word.

God did. And he says, it's Jesus that is a conqueror. You know, I've worn Nike golf shoes before, and I've never conquered on the greens.

[22 : 56] It doesn't work that way. But Jesus did. And so what we see is, I want us to see this incredible picture.

No one could just sneak up to God on the throne and just kind of swipe the scroll. No, what you need is someone who has already conquered.

Someone who's already taken care of the sin problem and who can boldly walk up to God and say, I'll take that. And God says, like the elder says, he has conquered, he has prevailed over sin, he has prevailed over the devil, and he is able to loose its seven seals.

Jesus knows the problem. And Jesus pays the ultimate price. He's a conquering lion. But what we also see, excuse me, as we look here, Jesus is also seen as a suffering lamb.

Don't miss this. This is important. He could not have been the conquering lion if he were not the suffering lamb. So John looks out as we see in verse, excuse me, as we see here, verse six, he looks out, behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures in the midst of the elders stood a lamb.

[24 : 40] How? What did it look like? Looked like it had been through a meat grinder. As though it had been slain, but it's no longer dead. It's standing up.

It looks as though it had been slain, because what did the disciples see when they saw Jesus after the resurrection? They saw the scars. It was still there.

It was evident that he had been on the cross. It was evident that the nails had been driven through his hands. It was evident that the nails had been driven through his feet. It was evident that he had the scars from the crown of thorns that had been pressed upon his brow.

And so John sees the conquering lion, but he also sees evidence of a lamb that had been slain. But he is conquered and he is capable of taking care of our sin problem.

You see, Jesus had to go to the cross. It wasn't plan B. See, there are many religions that have differing opinions about Jesus. There are some who say, you know, he was a good person.

[25 : 49] No, he was meek. You know, he led around this little ragtag group. But, you know, he wasn't this conquering king.

You know, he was just a good, he was just a good religious leader. But there are also others that say, no, he was a king, he was powerful, but he didn't suffer and die.

Let's take Muslims today. Muslims don't believe that Jesus actually died on the cross. Many groups of people, religions, who don't believe that Jesus died on the cross because it doesn't fit with their theology.

And so we have to understand that what John sees here is important. Not only has he conquered, but he took care of our sin problem.

He's our mediator. He's the one that died on the cross in our place. This was the plan of God for the entire universe, for Jesus to become a human being, to walk upon the earth, pay the price for our sin, and to take them away.

[26 : 57] That's what's unique about Jesus. Jesus. He alone pays the ultimate price. So as we go into this Christmas season, think about this. What's the reason for the season? It's Jesus.

Because were it not for Jesus, as the Bible says, we would be, as of all other people, we would have no hope. There would be no hope for us. You know, when people say, well, what's the ultimate reason?

What's this world coming to? Well, if it were not for Jesus, having known the problem, and if it were not Jesus having paid the price, this world would be coming to a big, yeah, destruction, a big, big problem.

And so, Jesus knew the ultimate problem. Jesus pays the ultimate price because he was a suffering lamb. He was able to, to come to, in as a conquering lion.

Brings us to point number three. And what we're seeing here in Revelation, Jesus, by doing what he does, Jesus, by reaching out and grabbing that scroll, loosing the scrolls, thereby unleashing, in Revelation chapter 6, God's judgment upon the earth, he fulfills the ultimate purpose.

[28 : 12] Jesus fulfills the ultimate purpose. Now, this is where it gets really good and what Jesus has done because of what it says in verse 7, then he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

Get the picture. Jesus walks up to the throne of God, grabs a scroll, takes it, because he's worthy, and it's an incredible picture.

Picture when we know the setup to what we so far have seen. Now, think about it. Some have called this the saddest day in heaven because John is standing there, the elders are standing there, the angels, they're saying, who's worthy?

John's weeping because he's so sad. There's no one that's been found, not a single one of them. None of the angels, none of the prophets, not even John himself is able to take and receive that scroll from God to ultimately be able to unfold God's ultimate plan.

So here's the scroll. After God takes care of this, ultimately he is going to usher in, after certain other events, the eternal state, and we are going to be with him forever.

[29 : 29] So when we're standing before God, we've got our tickets in our hand, and God says, why should I let you into my heaven?

There's so many people on planet earth that one day are going to say, well, God, I'm really good at skee-ball. I've got 12,050 tickets.

And God says, no, heaven's like 151 gazillion tickets. We go, well, God, I could never, I could live my entire life at Chuck E. Cheese and never be able to get to heaven.

And God says, that's right. That's my point. Because of sin, you could never afford heaven. Because of our sin, there was no way that we could ever be good enough.

There's no way we could ever have enough brownie points to be able to come before God and say, God, I deserve to be here. God says, no, you don't have enough tickets to be here. But Jesus comes and says, hey, I got the tickets.

[30 : 36] Anybody ever been there before? There, I could imagine somebody waiting to go to say like, to see, I'm not a football fan, but let's say someone that, now, yesterday, means nothing to you guys, but for those, those of us who've lived there for so long, and I know for Brother Long who's from there, yesterday, Auburn played, Alabama played Auburn.

Alabama won, yes. No reaction, that's okay. I'll give you that one. But let's say, a diehard Auburn or diehard Alabama fan says, I want to go to the game.

I want to be there. And there's no way places sold out. And it's like, you know, the tickets are so out of this world expensive, I could never go to a, to a bowl game like that.

Or a Super Bowl game, let's say. So, someone is standing there, and maybe he's on the staff, or maybe, or they've got inside connections. And they go, and we go, you know, someone goes to the stadium and says, well, I want to go in so bad, but there's no way that I can get in there.

And somebody says, hey, I've got all the tickets. Who wants a ticket? Here, who wants a ticket? Come on in, let's go. Who wants a ticket? That's the way Jesus is. He's standing before the throne of God, and he says, I've conquered.

[31 : 55] I've taken care of it. I've got the problem covered. I've got the tickets in my hand, and all you need is to come to me and receive them from me. All we need to do is receive the free gift, the free offer of eternal life from Jesus Christ.

He has paid the ultimate price. He fulfills the ultimate purpose. And that's why we sing today. That's why we meet together today. Hey, that's our Savior is so, is worthy of so much more than our religious attendance.

He's worthy of so much more than our casual devotion, our mediocre commitments, or being this thing that, that some people, like on the side, well, I'll go to church on Sunday, and the rest of the week do not live for him.

He is worthy. He alone is worthy of our entire lives. And then that brings us to characteristic number four. For Jesus deserves the ultimate praise.

Jesus deserves the ultimate praise. He knows the ultimate problem. He's paid the ultimate price.

[33 : 02] He died on the cross in our place. He fulfills the ultimate purpose. He comes before the throne of grace, and he takes the scroll, and he's able to complete, he's able to culminate God's plan for his creation, unleash what is in the scrolls, because we know that had to take place in order for God to go forward from there.

He fulfills the ultimate purpose by dying on the cross, by being the suffering lamb, so he can become the conquering lion. But he deserves our ultimate praise.

Praise. And what I say is, God help us in this American religious subculture in the United States where people are so casual with this King of eternity, with this King Jesus.

He's our Savior. He's our Lord. He is worthy of more than us just getting dressed up and coming to a place and singing some songs and going home. He's worthy of everything.

He's worthy of our devotion. That's why Jesus says, He says, if you want to follow me, you've got to die to yourself. Take up your cross, which means public humiliation, following me and everything that goes along with that.

[34 : 21] And he says, die to yourself, take up your cross, and follow me. The disciples left everything, dropped everything in order to follow Jesus.

He became the center of their life. He became the center of their universe. And so what God is telling us is He deserves our ultimate praise. What happens after this passage unfolds, things get really intense.

Look at verse number 9. And they sang a new song, saying, you are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

You've made us kings and priests to our God. And we shall reign on the earth. Don't miss it. Verse 9, what does it say? One day our song will be new.

Our worship will be new. According to, excuse me, according to what He's saying here is they sang a new song.

[35 : 25] The song was that Jesus was worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals. They sang the new song saying, you are worthy to take, I don't know the melody, but we're not told.

You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain. What is that? Jesus, the suffering Lamb. You died. You paid the ultimate price.

And you have redeemed us to God by what? By your blood. Not by your teaching. Not by your good life. Not by your perfection. He redeemed us through His blood by dying on the cross out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

You have made us kings and priests to our God. And that's what the Apostle Paul preaches about when he talks about the Jews and the Gentiles being grafted together into the body of Christ. That was God's eternal plan from the beginning of time that Jew and Gentile, Jew and non-Jew, would become one together.

So there would be no more difference between us. No one would have any better access to God than anyone else. Our worship will be new.

[36 : 37] But don't miss this also. What does it say at the end of verse 14? Verse 13 rather.

I heard saying, Blessed and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. Verse 14. The four living creatures said Amen and the 24 elders fell down and worshipped Him who lives forever and ever.

So our worship will be never ending. Isn't that awesome? There's going to come a day in history where every human being that has ever lived at least momentarily will stand before God and pay homage to Him.

Every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess that Jesus is what? Lord. Lord. Now for some of them God will say get out of here depart from me and be cast into the lake of fire.

But one day every tongue is going to have to say okay Jesus okay I give you are Lord. You did it.

[37 : 56] Jesus knows. He's different. He's unique. He knows the ultimate problem. It's our sin. And Jesus paid the ultimate price. He says in verse 9 we were redeemed by His blood.

He fulfills the ultimate purpose. From the beginning of time God knew how we were going to be made right with Him. Dying on the cross wasn't plan B.

That was God's ultimate purpose. Jesus fulfilled that ultimate purpose. Therefore He was able to stand before God boldly come and grab the scroll loose the seals and thereby unleash what transpires in Revelation chapter 6 and following.

And there are some today that may be saying well I don't want what God offers. there will be coming a day where they will have to confess.

Every single one will have to bow their knee before Him and realize that Jesus was unique and set apart throughout the entire human history as God in the flesh the conquering lion made possible as the suffering lamb.

[39 : 21] Bow your heads and close your eyes this morning. I want us to just reflect on what we've seen here in this throne room of God as we enter this Christmas season.

Jesus is unique. He alone deserves our worship. He alone deserves our complete devotion.

And I believe the ultimate question is for every one of us is He the master of your life? and as we think about our next steps Father Lord God would you help us to realize that we are never to be casual with Jesus.

We are never to be flippant about coming into your presence but realizing how special it is and how sacred it is to just exist in your presence every moment of every day because we never leave your presence.

[40 : 32] We cannot as a follower of Jesus because your Holy Spirit resides within us and we are your temple. So Father I pray that you help us to give Jesus the worship he deserves with our lives with our tongues with our lips with our lives every single day.

Father we thank you for this and Lord God may we realize that we serve a unique Savior the God of the universe Father we pray this in Jesus name Amen