

March 14/15, 2009
"Conquering Lamb!"

Revelation 5:1-14 - Pastor Mark Burch

Revelation 5:9 "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!"

To the TEXT:

Open the book! I've got to know what it says....

There is ONE who can open it!

Worthy! Worthy! Worthy!

To our LIVES:

Conquering Lamb – The Way of Jesus – Some Stories...

"The cross is the culmination of all that the empire had to offer, where all the wrath of the world was poured out on God. And it is on the cross that we can see the ultimate power standoff. On the cross we see what love looks like when it stares evil in the face." (Shane Claiborne – Jesus for President)

Home Group Discussion Questions

History (Making it Personal)

1. Describe the emotions you felt as you watched Aslan being killed. Lucy & Susan must have felt much like the disciples felt when Jesus Christ was crucified. How do you make sense of your leader dying?
2. List all the historical and contemporary characters you know of who have applied Jesus' non-violent path of resistance. How many of them ended up dying for their stance? What was the long-range result of their lives?
3. Share a time when you were able to love an enemy into a friend? What did you have to suffer or endure to win them over? Talk about a time you tried this and failed. How did you respond?

Digging Deeper (Looking to the Bible)

4. Read Revelation 5:1-14
5. Talk about the curiosity and desire that would be stirred in seeing this scroll in the hand of God. Read Isaiah 29:11-12 and talk about the emotion of not being able to read or understand the revelation of God. John weeps. How hungry are we for God's revelation?
6. Talk about the conquering lamb! (5:5) The "Nike little lamb"! What mental gymnastics do you have to do in your mind to put those concepts together? Contrast this with our world's view of conquering.
7. Think of the upside-down stories of the kingdom that Jesus told.
 - a. The weeds – (let evil grow – Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43)
 - b. The Mustard Seed – (small yet powerful – Matthew 13:31-32)
 - c. Vineyard workers - (unfair generosity?) Matthew 20:1-6
8. Talk for a few moments about this multi-ethnic congregation (5:9-10) Is there a remnant of racism in your heart? A people group you struggle with accepting? How can you exercise the servant heart of Jesus toward these people to break the barriers that exist in your heart?
9. Our denominational heritage comes from the "Anabaptist" tradition that is sometimes called the "radical reformation." Google it and read up on the early Anabaptists. Read Article 13 from our confession of faith on the issue of love and non-resistance. Why does our world today find this kind of love so hard to comprehend? ...so hard to exercise?
10. Some groups might want to spend some time on the 3 "sevens" in the text. Remember that 7 is the apocalyptic number for wholeness, completeness & perfection. What do these images of power & sight tell us about the Lamb's identity? - eyes – horns - spirit
11. Others may want to pick up the imagery of prayer as incense rising before the Lord – Read also Psalm 141:2. How does our intercession bring glory to the Lamb?

Taking It Home (Application)

12. A text like this requires a response of worship. John stops weeping and heaven breaks into praise. You may want to take some time alone or as a group to put on some worship music and join in praise to God, but certainly take some time in prayer to honor the sacrifice the conquering lamb made for you and me!
13. Think about the role of peace-making God has called us to. Is there a person that you need to lay your life down for?