

I. The Awe of Worship Part I.

Revelation 4:11

You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being."

Story:

After attending church with his father one Sunday morning, before getting into bed that evening a little boy kneeled at his bedside and prayed, "Dear God, we had a good time at church today, but I wish you had been there."

Quote:

Lynn Malone (Facebook post regarding two pictures. One of the The Revival at Asbury Seminary in Kentucky, and the other of Sam Bush singing Unholy with all of its Satanic relics at the Grammys this year.)

Two photos. Both the same, and yet not. The first picture is of the revival happening at Asbury University in Wilmore, KY. The second is a snapshot of Sam Smith performing his satanic "Unholy" at the Grammy's.

One applauded by culture. One derided by culture. Both can change the world: one for the better, one for the worse. Both occurring in the same week. A contemporary juxtaposition of the on-going battle between good and evil. Some (even in the church) will caution us not to make too much out of either. I think we better make much out of both, and acknowledge the reality they both represent.

Ephesians 6:12

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

¹ [*The Holy Bible: New International Version*](#) (Re 4:11). (1984). Zondervan.

A. The Reverence of Respect

*The Greek puts it, “Worthy you are...”

Reverence

■ noun

- 1 deep respect.
- 2 archaic a bow or curtsy.

Respect

■ noun

- 1 a feeling of deep admiration for someone elicited by their qualities or achievements

1. God alone is worthy of Worship

Revelation 22:8-9

⁸I, John, am the one who heard and saw all these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me.

⁹But he said, “No, don’t worship me. I am a servant of God, just like you and your brothers the prophets, as well as all who obey what is written in this book. Worship only God!”

2. Sadly, we have created false idols that hold our attention. We have ceased in our country and culture to worship the living God, but reduced worship to animals, ideologies, and the self.

Romans 1:21-23

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

3. God, alone, is the single place of value. All things of value, or worth, come from Him or through Him.
4. When we say, “You are worthy...” we are, by definition, pushing away attention from ourselves onto Him.

5. He is worthy of worship because the Lord is the source of all that is sacred and holy which gives life meaning and purpose.
6. When we worship the Lord, our minds, our hearts, and strength should be trained on the wonder that is God and living in the presence of God.
7. Because God alone is worthy, He should not have to compete for our lives, attention, and affection.

Story:

Many years ago, Thomas K. Beecher once substituted for his famous brother, Henry Ward Beecher, at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. Many curiosity seekers had come to hear the renowned Henry Beecher speak. Therefore, when Thomas Beecher appeared in the pulpit instead, some people got up and started for the doors. Sensing that they were disappointed because he was substituting for his brother, Thomas raised his hand for silence and announced, “All those who came here this morning to worship Henry Ward Beecher may withdraw from the church; all who came to worship God may remain.”

B. The Reception

The word in the Greek text is “*lambein*” – which means to receive or to take. So, what we need to see in these three elements of glory, honor, and power is that they are offerings to God. We enter a two-way street in that we, the worshipper, are saying to God, “You are to take these from me because you alone are worthy.” As well as saying, “I will freely give them to you because you alone are worthy.”

1. *Glory* - Sacred

This term is a term that gets tossed about so much in church vernacular that it loses its meaning. The word “glory,” or *δόξαν*, we get the word doxology, means ‘glory’ and sometimes can mean ‘honor’ such as in Luke 14:10.

Luke 14:10 ESV

But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted²

Luke 14:10 NKJV

¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”³

Christ was glorified when he took his place by the Ancient of Days because the seat at the right hand of God is sacred.

Matthew 25:31

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.”⁴

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament:

In the NT, however, the word is used for the most part in a sense for which there is no Greek analogy whatever and of which there is only an isolated example in Philo. That is to say, it denotes “divine and heavenly radiance,” the “loftiness and majesty” of God, and even the “being of God” and His world. ⁵

Daniel 7:9-14

The Ancient of Days Reigns

⁹ “As I looked,

thrones were placed,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Lk 14:10–11). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

³ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Lk 14:10–11). (1982). Thomas Nelson.

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Mt 25:31). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

⁵ Kittel, G. (1964–). [δοκέω, δόξα, δοξάζω, συνδοξάζω, ἔνδοξος, ἐνδοξάζω, παράδοξος](#). In G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 2, p. 237). Eerdmans.

his throne was fiery flames;
its wheels were burning fire.

- ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued
and came out from before him;
a thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
the court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened.

¹¹ “I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

The Son of Man Is Given Dominion

- ¹³ “I saw in the night visions,

and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed. ⁶

N.T. Wright Video – “What Does John Mean by Glory?”

2. **Honor** – Satisfaction of heart in that all our needs are found in Him. It literally can mean how we place our value on something or someone.

τιμὴν = honor

The OT requirement to honour parents (Ex. 20:12), and more broadly to act morally in accordance with Yahweh’s commandments (Gn. 38:23; 1 S. 15:30; 2 S. 6:20), is not unlike the Gk. concept of τιμή⁷

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Da 7:9–14). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

⁷ Schneider, J. (1964–). [τιμή, τιμάω](#). In G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 8, p. 171). Eerdmans.

- ***What does this mean?***

It means to say God is worthy of honor then to show that honor God, I need to live according to his commandments.

John 14:23-24 ESV

“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me. ⁸

This is the point I make regularly in that we cannot live like we want in the world and then come in here, sing a few songs, listen to a sermon, and expect God to recognize any worship from us because we are living disobedient lives. Do we really think we can fake God out?

- “Esteem,” “dignity,” “recognition”: In Jn. 4:44 the Evangelist refers to a saying which Jesus once pronounced: A prophet finds no recognition in his own country.⁹
- In 1 Pt. 2:7 Christians are said to possess “honour.” They get a share in the honour of Christ because they are fitted as living stones into the holy house whose foundation is Christ, the elect whom God holds in honour¹⁰

3. ***Power*** – Submission of our will, control, and ability to try and compete against God’s sovereignty

The word translated as ‘power’ comes from the Greek word “δύναμιν” which is where we get the word dynamite.

⁸ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Jn 14:23–24). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

⁹ Schneider, J. (1964–). [τιμή, τιμάω](#). In G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 8, p. 174). Eerdmans.

¹⁰ Schneider, J. (1964–). [τιμή, τιμάω](#). In G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 8, p. 175). Eerdmans.

Exposition of the book of Revelation

a. “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power.” Three successive songs in the Apocalypse have the adjective *worthy* as their opening word, which because of its position receives emphasis (4:11; 5:9, 12). No one in the entire universe is worthy of glory, honor, and power but God and the Lamb. God is worthy because of creation, and the Lamb is worthy because of his sacrificial death. Hence, the Lamb alone is worthy to execute God’s plan of salvation and to fill the role of king in his kingdom.

There is a difference between the song of the four living creatures (v. 8) and the song of the twenty-four elders. The angelic beings glorify God’s holiness, exclusive power, and eternity, while the elders glorify God for his work of creation. Further, instead of the word *thanks* (v. 9), the song has the expression *power*.

b. “Because you created all things.” God’s power is revealed in creating all things in this vast universe. We as human beings are unable to absorb everything that exists, for we are limited by time and space. The universe that God created is so boundless that we marvel at God’s power. The Creator has made all things from the smallest particle to the largest star. Thus, the work of creation is the reason for the elders expressing their praise to the Lord God. Notice that they call him “our Lord and God.” In a succeeding song they praise the Lord Christ for purchasing them for God (5:9).

c. “And because of your will they existed, that is, they were created.” The work of creation depends entirely on God’s will; without his will nothing happens. In other words, this world did not come into being by evolving on its own, but God exercised his will (Heb. 11:3). Thus, humanity, the animal and plant worlds, and inanimate matter exist only because of the will of God. This means that everything created by God must serve him.¹¹

C. The Recognition of Responsibility

1. Notice a part of what it means to honor God is in recognition. The back part of this little song is all about recognizing.
2. God is responsible for our existence; at the end of the day, we can know that God wants us.
3. God willed, or desired, our existence
4. God’s will for our existence implies he sees value in our lives that at times may be unseen to us.
5. God willed this world to be, or it wouldn’t be, but it is because God desires for it to exist which is why anything exists. Science should be the

¹¹ Kistemaker, S. J., & Hendriksen, W. (1953–2001). [*Exposition of the Book of Revelation*](#) (Vol. 20, p. 194). Baker Book House.

observation of the wonder of God in His creation not trying to set up a case as to why there is no God.

Psalm 56:8-11

- ⁸ You keep track of all my sorrows.
You have collected all my tears in your bottle.
You have recorded each one in your book.
- ⁹ My enemies will retreat when I call to you for help.
This I know: God is on my side!
- ¹⁰ I praise God for what he has promised;
Yes, I praise the LORD for what he has promised.
- ¹¹ I trust in God, so why should I be afraid?
What can mere mortals do to me? ¹²

Conclusion:

Story:

When Handel's *Messiah* was first performed in London in 1743 in the presence of King George II, the king rose from his seat when he heard the Hallelujah chorus. By rising with bowed head, he indicated that not he but Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. The Messiah reigns forever and ever. They twenty-four elders cast their crowns before God's throne and render him the highest accolades in heaven and on earth. They had received these crowns from God for being overcomers, but they respectfully return them to God to assign to him all the glory and honor. They pay him obeisance, because he alone lives and rules forever.¹³

¹² Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [*Holy Bible: New Living Translation*](#) (Ps 56:8–11). Tyndale House Publishers.

¹³ Kistemaker, S. J., & Hendriksen, W. (1953–2001). [*Exposition of the Book of Revelation*](#) (Vol. 20, p. 193). Baker Book House.