

I love that line: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.” That is exactly what we are going to be talking about today: The Lamb of God; the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who takes away the sins of the world. If you are a guest with us for the first time today, I want you to know that we are so glad that you are here; that you have joined us. My name is Rick and I serve as lead pastor here. We believe that you are not here by accident. We believe you have been brought here by a providential act of God, because God wants to speak into your life, and He always does that through His Word, which we are so devoted to at Christ Fellowship. I also want to take a moment to welcome all of our campuses across Dade County, as well as all of you who are joining us online. You can take a seat, everybody, and if you have your Bibles with you, open them to the gospel of John. We, as a church, for the past year have been moving through the gospel of John rather slowly in this first chapter because there is so much that God has to say to us in this opening chapter. Also, we are in a series in this part of John that we have entitled “I AM”, the great I AM determines who I am, determines who you are: John, chapter one.

I want to begin this weekend by telling you a story. It is a parable of a sort about three people seeking to enter heaven. Now follow the story, because the first was a very distinguished looking man. As he approached heaven’s gate, an angel asked him, “What is the password?” The finely dressed man responded: “I am a member of the church. I have been baptized by the church, and I have given money to the church. Everywhere I go I am a well-respected man. Certainly, I deserve a place in heaven.” The angel responded, “That is not the password. You may not enter.” Stay in the story because as that man was turned away, another man of prominent appearance approached heaven’s gate, and was challenged by the angel to give the password. This man said, “I am a man of the cloth. I have performed sacred rights. Renowned institutions have honored me with their highest degrees. Certainly, I have earned heaven’s favor.” The angel said, “This is not the password. You do not know the King of Kings.” No sooner was that man turned away than an old lady approached heaven’s gate. Her body was bowed down from years of age, and toil, and labor. When asked by the angel to give the password, the little old lady raised her hands and began to sing that song: “This is all my hope and plea; nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

Immediately heaven's gates were flung open, and as this little woman walked through that heavenly city, all the choirs of heaven joined her in singing her song, which goes like this:

“What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again, nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Oh, precious is the flow, that makes me white as snow;

No other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

Now folks, I realize that little parable is probably over simplified, but not too much. In fact, I want you to listen to the scene that we read about in the book of Revelation. This, when you die, Child of God, will be one of the first sights you will see when you enter heaven. Look at what it looks like. Revelation 5:6: “Then I saw a lamb looking like it had been slain.” Who is that? It is Jesus. Do you realize that when we get to heaven, Jesus will bear in His body, the visible marks of His gory sacrifice on Calvary's cross? “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 – that is the Lamb – took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. 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 God's people. (9) And they sang a new song. Here is the song:

“You are worthy.” It is like that song we sang earlier: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain. Holy, holy, holy is He.” Can you imagine when we sing that song around the throne of God, to the Lamb of God. “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood – nothing but the blood of Jesus – you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. Sounds like Christ Fellowship, doesn't it? Eighty-one different nationalities of people at Christ Fellowship, across Dade County. Verse 10: “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on

the earth.” Eternity for the Child of God is not going to be spent in heaven, contrary to what people think. Heaven is only temporary. Heaven is where your spirit goes when you die. When you die, your body goes to the grave. Your spirit comes out of your body and God takes it to heaven to be with Him. But in the end, in the consummation, God will create a new earth, a new planet. You will be given a new body, a body that will never know disease; a body that will never know sorrow; that will never know tears; that will never know pain; that will never know death, and in that new body, you are not going to be a ghost; you are not going to be a spirit; in that new body you will live forever on that new earth. Child of God, that is your destiny.

Here is my proposition today. This is what I want you to walk out the door with. There is only one way to live forever. Put another way, there is only one power that can overpower death and give you eternal life. That power is the power of the blood of the Lamb of God. Now, you might be saying, “Rick, what do you mean, the blood? How does that give me everlasting life? How does that keep me from dying eternally, and who is this Lamb of God? Who is that?” Well, we are going to find out as we go back to the gospel of John today. I want to give you two thoughts as we make our way through this narrative. How many of you have your listening guides? Hold those in the air. At Christ Fellowship, if you are new with us, we like to take notes, because we like to remember what we talked about. Two thoughts I want to give you today as we look at this narrative.

Number one: Jesus is the Lamb of God. Jesus is the Lamb of God. With that in mind, let’s pick up the narrative beginning in John 1:29. You follow as I read. “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward Him, and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” Move down to verse 35. “The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and when he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God.” Now, stop right there, because every Hebrew person who heard John define Jesus as the Lamb of God, listen, that title, Lamb of God, immediately, when they heard it, took their minds back in time to a night in Jewish history, a night that was called Passover. So what we are going to do for the next few moments is to go backward in time to that night long, long ago.

Listen to Exodus, chapter 12, verse 12. God is speaking to Moses, and here is what God says. God said, “On that same night, I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I AM the Lord. That is God’s name, Yahveh. God said, “I am the Lord”. Stop right there and let me set the stage for this scene. You know the story: The Pharaoh of Egypt had hardened his heart against Yahveh, against God, and refused to let God’s people go, in spite of the fact that God had pleaded with him over and over and over, to the point that God finally said, Fine. I’m going to bring a judgment on all the nation of Egypt, the likes of which will bring Pharaoh and all Egypt to their knees. Then God said, “Here is the judgment that is to come. The angel of death will pass through Egypt and as he does, he will strike down the first born person of every household; and God said the judgment will be indiscriminate. In other words, God said, “I will visit every house in Egypt, whether that household is Egyptian or Jewish, it doesn’t matter. I’ll visit every household, and I’m going to strike down with death every first born person in those houses.”

Mind you folks: the Jewish people lived in Egypt. They had their houses there as well. So God said to His people, the Hebrew people, “Look, I’m going to give you a way to be saved from the judgment. I’m not going to give you ten ways. I’m not going to give you five ways. I’m not going to give you three ways. I’m going to give you one way to live and to be saved from the judgment. Here was that way. Listen to it.

Exodus 12:1: “The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt: (3) “Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. (5) The animals you choose must be year old males, without defect. (6) Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. (7) Then, they are to take some of the blood and put it on the tops and sides of the doorframes of the houses.”

Folks, stop there and don’t miss this, because God’s instructions to be saved were very specific, weren’t they? Here is what God said: First, you are to select a lamb. That lamb must be a male

and it must be without defect. Secondly, you are to slaughter this lamb. You are not to just kill them. You are to slaughter that lamb, and I'm going to tell you why that is so important in a moment, as well. Then God said, "You are to take some of the blood of that lamb and you are to strike it, you are to mark it on the sides of the doorframe and you are to mark the top of the doorframe with that blood. Now, you might be saying, "Rick, what does all of that mean?" Folks, it is very simple. All of that was pointing to the coming, not of a lamb of God, but is pointing to the coming of the Lamb of God whose blood would take away our sins and give us everlasting life.

Back to Egypt: Verse 21: "Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel, and said to them. "Go at once and select the animals for your families, and slaughter the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning. (23) When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over –this is where the word "Passover" comes from – will pass over that doorway and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down. (24) Obey these instructions."

Now folks, let's go back over the instructions, because they are very basic. Instruction number one: Select a lamb. The lamb has to be male and has to be without any defects. That pointed to the coming of the Lamb of God who would be the Son of God and who would be without the defects of sin. Secondly, God said to slaughter the lamb. Don't just kill it. Slaughter it. All of that pointed to the crucifixion, the cross on which Christ would die. Crucifixion was the slaughtering of the physiological person who was on the cross. Number three: God said you are to put some of the blood on the top and on the sides of that doorframe in the form of a cross. Then God said, "I am then going to pass through Egypt, and then if I see the blood of the lamb in the form of a cross; if I see that blood, I will pass over that house and will hold judgment and give life to that person." God made it clear. He said, "I'm only going to be looking for one thing, and one thing only: the blood of the lamb in the form of a cross.

Now, folks: All of that was a typology of the coming of the final Lamb of God. Now with that in mind, let's go to the gospel of John and read it again. "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said: 'Look, the Lamb of God.'" Now folks, let's add it up one more time. Jesus is the sinless Lamb of God. Number two: He was slaughtered on an old Roman cross. Number three: His blood marked that cross, just like the passover lamb's blood marked the doorway; and folks, don't miss this. It is so important. There is a sense in which when you receive Christ as your Savior, God marks you with the blood of His Son, just like the Passover lamb marked the doorframe; and folks, just as the blood of the lamb on the doorframe withheld the judgment of God from the person behind that door, and allowed that person to live, listen, there is a sense in which God sees the blood of the Lamb on your life. That blood withholds God's judgment against you and allows you to live forever. That is why Romans 8, verse one says this: "Therefore because of this – because of the blood of Christ on your life – therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Listen, when a believer stands before God, all God sees of the believer is the blood of the Lamb that marks you and that withholds the judgment of God against you and gives you everlasting life.

Folks, here is what that makes you – you who have received Christ as Savior, here is what that makes you. "I am sinless." Let's all say that together, even though you may not believe it yet. "I am sinless". Remember we said that the title of this series: I AM, God, determines who I am. Let's say it again: "I am sinless." Listen to verse 29. "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.'" Now, stop there, because here is what you need to know. You see, it is our sin that separates us from God. Isaiah 59:2 puts it this way. "But your iniquities –that is your sins –have separated you from your God." Now folks, hang with me on this, because there is something in all of us in here today that longs to be close to our Creator. There is something in all of us in here today that longs to have a relationship with our God. Now, you might be saying, "No, not me Rick. I don't care about that thing of being close to God." Listen, it is in you. It is in me. God has wired it into the very DNA of our soul; to long for Him, to want to be close to Him, to want to have a relationship with Him. But listen, it is our sin that contaminates us. It is our sin that puts this barrier between us and

God. Not only that, but it is our sin that brings on our death. God warned Adam in the Garden of Eden. He said, ‘Adam, if you sin, you are going to die. Adam, not only are you going to die, you are going to pass the disease to everyone who comes after you. They are going to be born in sin and every one of them is going to be doomed to death.’ At the same time, there is also something in us, in you, in me, that does not want to die; that wants to live forever. In fact, God says this in the book of Ecclesiastes, God has put eternity in our hearts. In other words, God has hard wired into your heart this desire to live forever. Yet, it is our sins that are killing us. So, here is what God did to remove the barrier and to take away the death. Here is what He did. God himself, the Son of God, came to earth and shed His blood. Here is what the shedding of the Lamb of God’s blood did for us. Listen to this again: “He said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.’” First John puts it like this. I love this verse. He said, And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.’

You say, “What does that mean?” Well, let me give you an image of it, a picture of it. How many of you remember a couple of years back the BP oil spill. How many of you remember that – in the Gulf of Mexico. How many of you recall the image of all of those little birds who were just soaked in that oil, and because they were covered in that oil, they were dying. The oil was literally breaking down their skin, breaking down their feathers, and they were due to death. There was nothing to be done to save them. There was nothing to get all of that oil off of them. I take that back! There was one way that they could be saved. There was one solution that could cleanse them of the oil. How many of you remember what that solution was? What was it called? Dawn! Dawn dishwashing solution. Remember the old ad? Dawn takes away the grease, takes away the oil? It is true. What an image of what Christ does for us. What a picture of us just covered, contaminated with sin. Then, the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sins.

What an image of what His love does for us. It doesn’t just cleanse you of your past sins. It also cleanses you of your present sins. You see, for me it is not the sins that I did before I met Jesus that give me my problem. I kinda get it. Those are clean. Those are washed away. I can kind of understand that, but the sins that give me the problem, and the sins that Satan accuses me of are

the sins that I keep committing after I met Christ. How many of you can relate to that? Yeah! Satan is the accuser. God gave him the name Satan, and it literally means the accuser. In fact, listen to Revelation 12:10. The Bible says, “Then I heard a voice in heaven say, ‘The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Messiah have now come, because the accuser – who is that? –Satan, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown out. The one who accuses them – it goes on to say night and day Satan is an accuser. Folks, Satan loves to accuse the people of God through our conscience. Here is what the accusation sounds like: “You call yourself a Christian. You lusted again. You call yourself a Christian. You hated again. You call yourself a Child of God. You were jealous again. You call yourself a Child of the King, and you were stupid again. You call yourself a Christian and you failed God again. Look what you did.

Folks, you’ve got to hand it to Satan. He is pretty slick, isn’t he? I mean, He tempts us to sin. He almost begs you to sin. “Please come and sin. It is going to be so great.” When you finally say, “Okay, Satan.” Then he says, ‘Look what you did. Look what you did.’ Then he accuses you. But he doesn’t stop there. He then goes from accusing you to condemning you, by saying: “Look what you are, because of what you do.” It sounds like this: “You don’t just lust. You are lustful. You are hateful. You are bitter. You are a failure. You are a sinner.” Then here is what he thinks is his trump card: “You are not really a Christian. You are not really a Child of God, because look what you do.” Folks, let me give you a warning here. Satan can confuse you into thinking his voice is the voice of God. He can confuse you into thinking those accusations and that condemnation is actually coming from God. It is God condemning you.” You say, “Well, Rick, how in the world do I know if it is God or Satan? I can’t make it out. Which one is it? How do I know the difference?” It is very simple. In fact, I want to give this to you so that you never forget it. Here is how you know the difference. God’s spirit, or God’s voice convicts us when we sin. Everybody say “conviction”. Here is what conviction is. Conviction is that discomfort that you feel when you sin. What it is, it is really a brake pedal in your soul that God uses to stop you from going toward that sin. You feel that discomfort. But here is what conviction will always do. Conviction will always pull you away from the sin, and it will pull you toward your relationship

with God. Let me say that again. You are being convicted – here is how you will know. It will always put the brake pedal on and the angst will always pull you away from that sin and it will pull you back to your relationship with God. That is conviction. That is what God gives.

Satan on the other hand, his spirit condemns us when we sin. He condemns us, and this is how he does it. First John 3:20: “Even if our conscience condemns us.” Get it. The first thing Satan does when you sin is he accuses you. “Look what you did.” And he follows it up by condemning you and saying, “Look what you are. You are not really a child of God. You didn’t really mean that. You didn’t really get saved.” Here is what condemnation does. Here is what Satan does. Satan will always do the reverse. He will try to pull you away from God, and pull you toward the sin. Here is how it works. He will say, “Look what you are. You are not really a Christian. You are not really a Child of God. You are a sinner. So, you may as well walk away from God. He doesn’t want to see you anyway. He despises you because of your sin, so you may as well walk away from God and just go and embrace the sin, because that is what you are. You are just a sinner. You are not a Child of God.” How many of you have ever heard that in your head. Many of us. Here is what you need to remind yourself of when you hear that in your conscience, pulling you away from God and toward sin. Here is what you need to remember.

“I am forgiven.” I am forgiven. I am forgiven. Say it again, Child of God. “I am forgiven.” “I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘The salvation, the power, the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah had come because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown out. The one who accuses them night and day, Satan, It’s like he is throwing these cards at you. It’s like king, queen, jack – he is throwing these cards, and every one of them is sin. Look what you are. You are just a sinner. You are no good.’” Child of God, here is your trump card that you drop over the top of every accusation and every condemnation that Satan makes against you. Here is the trump card that conquers every accusation. The verse says, “The accuser of our brothers has been thrown out. The one who accuses them night and day, - then verse 11 – they conquer the accuser.” How do we conquer the accuser? By the blood of the Lamb. Listen, you trump every accusation of Satan by saying, “I have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. My sins have been

all washed away. Past, present, and future. Do you realize Child of God that God never calls you a sinner? The Bible never calls a Christian a sinner. You are the son of God, or you are a daughter of God. You may struggle with sin but you are not a sinner. You have been forgiven of every sin. That's why John 1:7 says again, "That is why the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us of all sins." You have been marked in your body with the blood of Christ like the blood of the Passover Lamb, and your sins, past, present, and future have all been forgiven. And all of God's people said, "Amen." Do you believe that? Do you believe with all your heart?

I want to close with this. I want to go back to the night of the Passover. You remember God said this. He said, "Obey these instructions." I want you to imagine two men living behind these two doors. Let's imagine that this guy hears the instructions and he says to himself: "I don't think I'm going to do all of that. I don't think I want to sacrifice a lamb and do this and that and put the blood on the door. I'm not going to do that because I'm a pretty good guy. I go to church; I try to keep the commandments; I'm a hard worker; I'm an honest guy; I don't cheat anybody; I don't beat my wife; I don't kick the dog; I'm a pretty good guy. I just don't see why I need to do that. I'm just going to trust my own self-righteousness." Just remember, God didn't say, "I'm going to be looking for righteousness." God said, "When I pass over, I'm only going to be looking for one thing. The blood of the lamb in the form of a cross." But imagine the guy behind the other door saying, "I'm such a sinner. I have nothing to offer God. I just struggle with sin after sin. I've got to do what God said. I'm going to put the blood on the door just like God said. I'm going to mark my door, because the blood is my only hope of ever escaping. I cannot save myself. The blood of the Lamb is going to have to save me."

That night as darkness falls and the death angel begins to move through Egypt, he comes to this door, a door where a man is trusting in his own self-righteousness. Let me tell you something. We cannot survive a judgment before a Holy God on our own self-righteousness, so when God passes by and all He sees is a blank door with no blood. He strikes this man dead. Then God comes over to the other door, where the man is a sinner and he knows he is a sinner; a man who said "I cannot save myself. I need to do what God said to do. I need the blood of the Lamb."

When God passes over this doorway, He sees the blood in the form of a cross and He withholds His judgment and gives that man life. Listen folks, let me bring that over to us. When you die and stand before God, if you try to face a holy God based on your self-righteousness, if you try to survive the judgment, the tribunal of a holy God on your self-righteousness, let me tell you, you will not survive that judgment. Your self-righteousness, you have none. None of us do. We are all sinners. If you try to survive on your own self-righteousness, you will be condemned. You will die. But if you will do what God said and receive the Lamb of God and let Him mark you with His blood to withhold the judgment of God by washing away all of your sins, I'm telling you, even though you struggle with sin, even though you have problems with this life, I'm telling you, you are marked with the blood of the Lamb of God and your sins have been washed away. When you stand before God, His judgment will pass right over you and He will give you everlasting life. That is the gospel.

“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” Let me tell you; that is what He wants to do for everybody in here. He loves you. I don't care who you are, what you did, or what you have become. It doesn't matter how far you are away from God you may imagine yourself to be, God loves you. He doesn't just love you, the Bible says “He so loves you.” That yearning in your heart that you may be feeling right now, that is Him. It is Him knocking at the door of your heart, because if you want Him, multiply that by a trillion times and you will still come up short of how much He wants you, and loves you. He wants to save you today, and give you everlasting life.

Let's bow our heads for prayer. Christ Fellowship, while every head is bowed and every eye is closed, I want to ask you a question. If you died today, and you left this earth, do you know that you have eternal life, and you would go now to heaven and in the end you will go into the new earth. You know that because you have received Christ as your Savior. You know your sins have been cleansed. You know you have been marked like the Passover blood, by the blood of Christ. You know that if you died, you know that you are going to be with God. If you know that beyond any shadow of a doubt, while nobody is looking around, would you raise your hand as a

testimony to that fact? You can say, "Rick, if I died right now, I'm headed for eternity with God." God bless you. You can put your hands down.

I always notice when I ask that question that there are people who can't raise their hand. Maybe that was you, and you say, "Rick, the reason I didn't raise my hand is I'm just being honest, I don't know that. If I died today, I don't know that I have eternal life. I don't know that my sins have been cleansed. I don't know that I am marked by the blood of the Lamb." Maybe at the same time as I have been talking about this today, you have been wishing you did. God has been dealing with you in your heart and you are thinking "I wish I had that. I wish I had a relationship with my Creator. I wish I knew my sins had all been cleansed and washed away. I wish I knew that I was marked by the blood of the Lamb and am saved from judgment. I wish I knew that." Listen, if that is what you are feeling right now, I want to pray for you. You are facing the most critical moment of your existence. But if you would say, "Rick, pray for me. I need what you are talking about. I need Christ. I need God in my life." If you say, "Rick, pray for me; I need that." While nobody is looking around, nobody is going to come to you. Nobody is going to bother you. But if you say, "Rick, pray for me. I need Christ. I need God." Would you just slip up your hand, while nobody is looking around, all over the building, many hands are going up. Just raise your hand. Nobody is going to bother you. Nobody is looking. This is just between you and God; all over the building and balcony. If you have your hand up, you need to know, you've got your hand up with a bunch of people right now. You can put your hands down.

Listen, I've got great news for you. If you raised your hand and that is the desire of your heart, here is the great news. You can receive eternal life today. You can be marked by Christ today. Your sins can be cleansed today. You say, "Rick, how do I do that." Listen, it is so simple. Religion complicates this, but God made it so simple. Here is what the Bible says. It says, "Everyone". Who does that mean? It means everyone. It means you. "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord, will be saved." John puts it like this: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Listen, to be saved you don't have to join this church, you don't have to sign anything; you don't have to become a member of anything; you

don't have to get sprinkled or baptized. None of that. It is personal and it is between you and God. All you have to do is invite Him into your life, and He will come in today. He will mark you and cleanse you of all of your sins, and He gives you today everlasting life. You came in those doors today lost and you can go out found. You came in on your way to death; you can go out on your way to life everlasting.

Why don't you receive Him into your heart right there where you are seated. Why don't you ask Him to come into your life. You say, "Rick, I'm not sure how to do that. I don't know what to say." Well, let me do this. Let me lead you in a prayer, and you pray this prayer. I'm just going to lead you in it and you pray it not to me but you pray it to God, and He is listening. Pray it with all of your heart. He is listening with all of His heart. Pray this prayer quietly there in your seat.

"Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for loving me. Thank you for caring about me. Thank you for having a plan for my life. Thank you for giving the life of your Son that I might have everlasting life. Lord, right now in this moment, I open the door to my heart, to my life, and I invite you to come in. I ask you to cleanse all of my sins, my past sins, the sins that I am struggling with as I came in here today, and even the sins I haven't even committed yet. Lord, wash them clean through the blood of Christ. I ask you to give me everlasting life. Thank you, Father, for saving me today. Thank you for the gift of everlasting life. Help me to spend the rest of my time on this earth loving you, following you, serving you, and being loved by you. In your precious name I pray. Amen."