

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Worthy of Worship!

"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve" (Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8). Jesus responded to Satan's temptation in this manner, making it clear that only Jehovah is worthy of worship (Jehovah is the name of the God of the Hebrews -- See Ex. 3:1-18; Deut. 6:13).

Why Jehovah God alone is deserving of this level of respect and adoration is clearly announced in John's vision of the heavenly throne (Rev. 4). In that spectacular scene the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders gave glory, honor, and thanks to Almighty God (vs. 9) while they cast their crowns before Him "who lives forever and ever" in humble recognition of God's superiority and grace (vs. 10). These worshipers declared that God was worthy of this worship because He created all things and all things exist by His will (vs. 11).

Likewise it is clear that created beings are not worthy of the kind of worship that is to be directed toward God. There are some notable examples of this preserved for us. When Peter (by divine order) came to Cornelius, the

centurion "fell down at [Peter's] feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up saying, 'Stand up; I myself am also a man'" (Acts 10:25, 26).

None can forget Herod's failure to restrain the people "who kept shouting, 'The voice of a god and not of a man'" (Acts 12:22). He was punished "because he did not give glory to God" (vs. 23).

Even angels who are higher than men (Heb. 2:7) are not worthy of worship. Twice John fell down to worship the angel which spoke to him. Both times the angel stopped him and bluntly said, "Worship God" (Rev. 19:10; 22:9). Neither the human nor spiritual messenger is worthy of worship -- only God.

The exclusivity of worshiping Jehovah as God has prompted some to question whether "Jesus of Nazareth, a man..." (Acts 2:22) is worthy of the kind of worship reserved for God.

In answering this, keep in mind why Jehovah is worthy of worship (Rev. 4:11) and then read the introduction to John's account of Jesus' life (John 1:1-3). The Word was in the beginning with God and was Himself God. Every created thing was made by the Word. The twenty-four elders cast their crowns before Him who sat on the throne because He created all things; it is therefore reasonable and right to worship the Word for the same reason.

The fact that the Word became flesh (vs. 14) in no way changes the fact that He created all things. That the Word emptied Himself, came in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself to the point of dying on the cross does not in any sense diminish His worthiness to be worshiped then or now. Indeed, "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phil. 2:7-10).

Scripture testifies to the worthiness of Jesus to receive the worship of men both while in the flesh and after His exaltation. Consider the response of Jesus' disciples after He came to them walking on the water. He had just saved Peter from the consequences of his little faith. This all took place just after they had witnessed the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. They had previously heard demons that Jesus had cast out declare Him to be the Son of God (Matt. 8:29). Already the people had surmised that Jesus was the Prophet and tried to anoint Him king -- Messiah (John 6:14, 15). "Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying,

"Truly You are the Son of God!" (Matt. 14:33). They are not just bowing down to Him to be nice or because they want something from Him. They are not merely paying homage to His power. They have connected the dots and have come to the awesome conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of God. It is with this awe that they worship Him.

If Jesus was not worthy of the kind of worship reserved for God, then why didn't He rebuke His disciples as Peter did to Cornelius or the angel did to John? If Jesus is inappropriately taking glory that belongs only to God, why is He not struck as Herod was? The only conclusion is that Jesus is worthy of the kind of worship reserved for God because He was (and is) deity. He, too, wears the name of Jehovah. (Consider comparisons of Heb. 1:10 with Psa. 102:1,25; Joel 2:32 with Acts 2:21,22 and Rom. 10:9-13; and Isa. 40:3 with John 10:22-36).

The worthiness of Jesus to receive our worship is confirmed by returning to the throne scene in Revelation 5 and observing that the four creatures and twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb (vs. 8) just as they had before "Him who sits on the throne"(4:9,10). If it was worship to Lord God Almighty, it was worship to the Lamb. The Lamb was worthy to receive, among other things, honor and glory (5:12). Indeed the hosts of heaven and earth worshiped the Lamb as they worshiped "Him who sits on the throne" (vss. 13,14). Therefore, let us who hope and wait for the "glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"(Titus 2:13) give glory and honor to Him who is worthy of our worship.

- Andy Diestelkamp

Young People . . .

Why Should You Remember God In Your Youth?

- He is your creator — He knows more about you than you will ever know about yourself (Jer. 10:23).
- It will increase your chances of a long life (Eph. 6:3; Deut. 5:16).

- Those who remember God in their youth seldom forget Him in their old age (Eccl. 12:1; Prov. 22:6).
- Your life will be happier (Prov. 3:24-26).
- Through your good example, others will be brought to Christ (1 Tim. 4:12-16).

- David A. Padfield

John 12:46-50 -- I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

⁴⁷ "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

⁴⁸ "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

⁴⁹ "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to* what to say and what to speak.

⁵⁰ "I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

- > The person who believes he will live forever, lives best!
- > If we had no failings ourselves we should not take so much pleasure in finding out those of others.
- > Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it

with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.

> The man with but one idea in his head is sure to exaggerate that to top heaviness, and thus he loses his equilibrium.

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Practicing Discernment!"* (text: Heb. 5:12-14); Sunday evening: *"Numbers: Census Report in the Wilderness!"*

SCHEDULE: Our Fall Gospel Meeting will be July 29-Aug. 3, with Aaron Andrews.