



"When you go through a trial, the sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which you lay your head."

—Charles H. Spurgeon

06-Sep-19

Fearing God's Worthiness

Competition is everywhere in life. Whether warranted or not, it seems to be the natural order of things. Consider, for example, the plants in one's garden. Though the gardener has no real wish for one tomato to grow larger than the others, the fact remains that one will likely do so. Some fruits may die off from attacks by pests, while others thrive in the perfect amount of light, water, and nutrients to enlarge them beyond the gardener's expectations.

There is even a kind of competition when we shop for things we want. It happens without us really giving it much thought. When we decide what to purchase between choices, we have basically declared, "That item is good, but this one is *better*."

We can carry this thought into the pages of the Bible. Many biblical characters are worthy of emulation, of imitation, as [God](#) has included them in His Word for a reason. However, the deeper into Scripture we go, we realize that one character stands far above the rest. He literally outshines them all. He alone is truly worthy of not only honor and glory, but *all* honor and glory. So much so that the Bible says that these *belong* to Him ([Revelation 19:1](#)).

In last week's essay, we explored God's willingness to help us along our sanctifying walk toward the [Kingdom of God](#). We saw that realizing our need for His help leads to a sense of respectful fear, for we dare not make light of such a weighty gift so freely and continuously given. We will conclude by uncovering another aspect of fearing God: His worthiness.

Far above our trivial, everyday choices—such as what foods are worthy of our table—lies the reality of God's worthiness of our trust and respect. The Bible has a word for this level of awe: worship. *Worship* is "the act of reverent honor and homage paid," in this case, to God. Though we will not delve deeply into worship and its qualities, ultimately worship is produced when we understand these underlying principles of God's character. Realizing His willingness to help and knowing His worthiness begin to build in us the vital components of genuine, sincere worship.

Being independent and often rebellious humans, if someone commands us to worship him, we balk. "Why?" we exclaim, and "Who do you think you are?" comes to mind. God knows this, and He has gone through the lengthy process of creation and history to prove His credibility to us.

At the same time, He thoroughly annihilates the notion that anyone or anything else is worthy of our worship. The willingness of an individual, no matter how genuine or enthusiastic, can be quite destructive without worthiness or competence. None of us would care to be in the hands of a willing but incompetent doctor, one unworthy of his title.

Perhaps the most complete declaration of God's worthiness of our trust is expounded in the final chapters of Job. In Job 38-42, God Himself speaks to Job. The storm clouds had been gathering throughout the book, and at its end, the Almighty arrives on the scene, clothed in a whirlwind, booming across the land, "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" ([Job 38:2](#)).

Those who have witnessed tornados agree that the roar of the wind cannot be compared to anything, though "freight train" seems to be a frequent choice of comparison. However, above this impressive din, the Lord's voice roars in great power. God mentions this in [Job 40:9](#), "Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?" What an awesome display!

God challenges Job, "Then adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, and array yourself with glory and beauty" (verse 10). God is the author and rightful owner of all these things, and to contend with Him is plain folly! The great God of heaven demands that, if we want to challenge Him, we had better prepare to fight on His level.

What level is He on? He is the One who laid the foundation of the earth ([Job 38:4](#)), who holds back the sea and commands the waves (verses 8-11). He calls forth the morning (verse 12) and keeps vast treasuries of snow and hail ready for the time of trouble (verses 22-23). He binds the Pleiades, sets Orion loose, and directs the constellations (verses 31-33). He guides the path of the lightning and has numbered the clouds (verses 35-37). On and on He goes, declaring His absolute worthiness in managing His creation—and our complete incompetence to even grasp the smallest part of it!

God is clearly in control of His creation, but why did He go to such great lengths to display this to Job and thus to us? He wants us to know and trust that just as He can call forth the dawn, He has the power to make the Morning Star rise in our hearts ([II Peter 1:19](#)). He is not only capable of commanding and managing His physical creation, but He can do the same within His spiritual creation.

Combining His willing heart and loving character with His power is an invincible recipe for success. Nothing is too hard for Him ([Matthew 19:26](#)). Nothing takes Him by surprise ([Isaiah 46:9-10](#)). We can take great comfort in knowing how aware God is of everything happening in our lives. Therefore, when we must take a great leap of [faith](#), we can be assured that God has already evaluated everything, and if we suffer or die for upholding the faith, we can know that it is for the best—for us and for His plan.

In [Acts 20:22-24](#), the apostle Paul exemplifies the attitude we should display in the face of trials:

And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with [joy](#), and the ministry which I received from the Lord [Jesus](#), to testify to [the gospel](#) of the grace of God.

He knew that tribulation awaited him, yet he would not let it deter him. He marched forward, fully expecting that it may cost him his life. Paul understood that God was willing to help him and that He was worthy of his trust, but he also knew that God is still working out a purpose much more extensive and important than any of us individually. To accomplish His purpose, God may have to subject His people to severe pain and suffering from unjust persecutors.

Paul often refers to our journey as a race. A race is a predetermined course or track that has a definite end. Foot, car, and horse races are by their nature defined by the fact that they have an end, a finish line. Paul looked to this end of all his labor and pain to help endure the present sufferings, not permitting them to draw him off course. Notice [Hebrews 4:1-3](#), comparing Christians walking toward God's Kingdom with the Israelites trekking to the Promised Land:

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter that rest.

May we all, by the power of our willing and worthy Creator, "run with endurance the race that is set before us" ([Hebrews 12:1](#)) and not be dissuaded by present trial. The Author of our salvation has blazed the trail before us ([Hebrews 2:10](#)), the saints have died to bring this message to us ([Hebrews 11](#)), and nothing can break the love that God has for us ([Romans 8:38-39](#)).

- Levi W. Graham

World News Highlights

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=4k2caSG>

OZY 02-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=UFOXnuk>

Prophecy News Watch/Clarion Project 03-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=JUfz0fn>

The Atlantic 03-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=uBGgNCI>

The Hill 01-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=PTpI6hH>

CBS Philadelphia 02-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=W6g7AOU>

Study Finds 06-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=xuP5y2c>

StudyFinds 03-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=6jieDKk>

The Hill 31-Aug-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=PWGU6Lr>

The Wall Street Journal 01-Sep-19

<https://c.cgg.org/index.cfm/r/?s=dJ6kkaK>

BBC News 29-Aug-19

Church News & Special Announcements

We are sorry to report that *John Reiss's father Henry*, has died. Thank you for all of your prayers on behalf of **Henry** during his illness.

05-Sep-19

New Transcripts

[1504c: America Is Being Destroyed From Within](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 31-Aug-19

Prayer Requests

New prayer request updates have been posted for the following people:

[Jack and Melissa Chandler](#)

[Jack and Melissa Chandler](#)

[Jane Clinton](#)

[Delicious DeBlair](#)

[Liwayway Hensell](#)

[Henry Reiss](#)

[Michael Stites](#)

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[A Trustworthy Relationship](#)

by Mark Schindler

Mark Schindler, asking us to ponder the incredible privilege we have been given to be placed within the Body of Christ, called when we were dead in trespasses, reminds us that this same privilege applies to our fellow saints as well. He warns us not to selfishly protect our turf, building walls of separation from our brethren. Each of us has been called by God, imbued with a measure of His power, perfectly fitted and placed into the body to edify one another. Consequently, it behooves us to develop a sense of trust (a metaphorical two-way street with our Heavenly Father directing the traffic) with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Sometimes we will be in need, other times we will be called upon to supply the need; both positions have a high degree of vulnerability, requiring iron-clad trust.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Worthy to Take the Scroll](#)

by David C. Grabbe

When reading the book of Revelation, we often pass quickly through chapters 4 and 5, perhaps because very little of significance seems to happen in them. To many, they contain just a fantastic description of God's throne room. David Grabbe, however, explains that chapter 5, especially, narrates an event of tremendous magnitude for those whom God has chosen.

Featured Audio Schedule

Friday Night Bible Study

The next Bible Study will be **Matthew (Part 19)**, given by **John W. Ritenbaugh** on **Friday 06-Sep-19**. The Bible Study will be continuously available from **6:00 pm Friday** until **12:00 pm Saturday (EST)**.

Daily Audio Programs

Hear previous sermons, sermonettes, and Feast of Tabernacles messages, **Sunday through Friday**. [Available from the homepage.](#)

Date	Title
Sunday 08-Sep-19	Planning and Preparation
Monday 09-Sep-19	Faith and the Christian Fight (Part 9)
Tuesday 10-Sep-19	Letters to Seven Churches (Part Seven): Repentance
Wednesday 11-Sep-19	Are You a Victim?

Thursday 12-
Sep-19 For the Love of the Truth
Friday 13-
Sep-19 Pentecost, Consistency, and
 Honesty

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