

# Being Worthy or Deserving of Something

This New Testament word (Greek, *axios*) can be translated several ways, such as, *worthy*, *deserving*, *appropriate*, etc. To avoid confusion, it is underlined, when it occurs in the following outline.

## PART 1 - God / Jesus / the Word of God

### A. God

1. *God deserves to receive glory and honor and power* - Rev. 4:11. Why? Because he created all things, and he did so, simply because he wanted to. (There was nothing that forced him to do so.) It was an expression of his great power.

### B. Jesus Christ (described as the "Lamb")

1. *Jesus, the Lamb, was slain.*
  - He did not deserve to die - Luke 23:15 (also v. 13-14). Governor Pilate and King Herod both attested to this fact.
  - Yet he did die - Revelation 5:9-10. Why? So that he could purchase people for God (using his own blood as payment), so that they could serve God and rule over the earth. (This is why he is worthy to open the sealed scroll - see the next section.) [Note: This was *his* reason for dying. Those who killed him had different reasons, but God used their evil to accomplish good - Matthew 27:18; Acts 4:10-12; 5:30-31, etc.]
2. *Jesus, the Lamb, is worthy to open the sealed scroll*
  - (Comment) About this sealed scroll: By opening it (by breaking the seals), a series of events begins, which brings this present age to an end, with Jesus as the final victor.
  - "Who is worthy to open it?" - Revelation 5:2.
  - Nobody else is worthy - Revelation 5:4. [Nobody was found worthy, except the Lamb - see 5:9.]
  - The Lamb is worthy - Revelation 5:9. Why? Because he was slain (so that he could purchase people for God, etc. - see the previous section). [The *Lion* (verse 5) became victor by becoming a *Lamb* (verse 6)!]
3. *Jesus, the Lamb, has a greatness that exceeds all else.*
  - He is worthy to receive power / riches / wisdom / might / honor / glory / blessing - Revelation 5:12.

## C. The Word of God

1. ***A trustworthy statement that deserves full acceptance***: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - 1 Tim. 1:15. [Paul claimed to be the "number one sinner." This is probably because of how well he understood the greatness of God's holiness. The more we understand God's holiness, the more we become aware of our own sinfulness *apart from God*.]
2. ***Another trustworthy statement that deserves full acceptance***: We put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who put their trust in him - 1 Tim. 4:9. *All* - saved and unsaved - will someday admit he is the Savior, but only those who put their *trust* in him will understand that fact by personal experience. [Context - v. 8: Physical training has temporary value. In contrast, training in godliness has eternal value, so this is where we should place our focus.]
3. ***(Comment)*** In these two verses, the emphasis is on specific sayings that express spiritual truths in a clear and concise manner. There are several other "trustworthy statements" in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus. They aren't listed here because Paul didn't attach the phrase "*worthy of (deserving) full acceptance*" to them.
4. ***(Comment)*** *All* Scripture is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance; but Paul's emphasis here was on certain clear and concise statements that focused directly on various issues that Timothy and Titus had to deal with. Paul was instructing them on how to deal with false teachers and divisive, rebellious people. He was emphasizing the trustworthy and acceptable nature of these statements - a great contrast to what his opponents were promoting.

## PART 2 - Issues Related to Salvation

### A. We must produce *fruit (or deeds) worthy of repentance*. The way we live must be appropriate for the repentance we claim we have had.

1. ***(Definition)*** Repentance involves a change in *attitude and actions*. Godly repentance will result in godly conduct. It *deserves* changes in conduct (described as good *fruit, works* or *deeds*) which are compatible with it.
2. ***We must produce fruit that is appropriate for repentance*** (commanded by John the baptizer) - Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8. [John's main focus was to the Jews. He warned them against trying to rely on their Jewish heritage for salvation. They needed to repent and trust God, instead - just like we do today.]

3. *We must repent and turn to God, and produce deeds that are appropriate for repentance* - Acts 26:20. [This was Paul's message to both Jew and non-Jew.]

## B. Two parables related to salvation

1. *The wedding banquet:* Those who were initially invited proved (by their actions) that they did not deserve to be present - Matthew 22:8. Because of their conduct, they would be destroyed and others would be invited to take their place. *What this taught:* The Jews rejected and killed God's servants (and ignored their message). They would be punished with death - possibly referring to Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 - and non-Jews would be invited in their place.
2. *The prodigal son:* Because of what he had done, he did not deserve to be called a son - Luke 15:19, 21. Yet he was warmly received back by his father. (See also v. 28-32.) *What this taught:* God has great joy in welcoming a "sinner" back to himself - even though the self-righteous "brother" (here, representing the religious leaders) doesn't think he should be allowed back.

## C. About the godly

1. *Those who have "unpolluted garments" will be considered worthy to walk with Jesus* - Revelation 3:4. [A prophetic statement. Note that most of the "church goers" mentioned in this context will not qualify, for their garments (symbolizing righteousness) are polluted and dirty.]

## D. About the ungodly

1. *Those who love anyone else more than they love Jesus are not worthy of Jesus* - Matthew 10:37.
2. *Those who are not willing to take up their crosses and follow Jesus [follow his example] are not worthy of Jesus* - Matthew 10:38.
3. *Those who reject the good news about Jesus are proving that they are not worthy of eternal life* - Acts 13:46. Those who do this won't receive eternal life, unless they change.
4. *(Comment)* There is a sense in which *nobody* is worthy (deserving) of Jesus and eternal life. However, those who *repent* of their sins and *trust* Jesus for salvation will choose to become his *disciples* (followers). They will be willing to love Jesus more than anything else and to take up their crosses and follow him. Such people will say that they do *not* deserve salvation, but God will consider them worthy of salvation, because of what *Jesus* has done in their lives.

## **PART 3 - Justice and Injustice**

### **A. People have a concept of justice that they choose to *not* follow.**

1. ***People know something about God's righteous requirements (his "decrees"), and the punishment that disobedience deserves.*** They know that people who do things that are *contrary* to these requirements deserve the punishment of death. Yet they continue to do such things, and also approve of others who do the same - Romans 1:32. [This description characterizes *every* person who has the ability to make conscious decisions - even those who later repent, change their ways, and become followers of Jesus.]

### **B. Justice: It occurs when *evil* is punished (examples and principles)**

1. ***"Degrees of punishment" (a principle illustrated in a parable):*** Those who deserve flogging will be punished *based on the extent* that they knew the wrong they were committing - Luke 12:48.
2. ***The punishment of death - an example in which it was deserved:*** The two thieves on the crosses knew they were getting what their deeds deserved - Luke 23:41. [The one thief then repented and was saved - verses 42-43.]
3. ***Punishment that is appropriate for the sin committed (a future example):*** The water will be turned to blood. The people of the world will have blood to drink - and they will deserve it, because they poured out the blood of the righteous - Revelation 16:6.

### **C. Injustice: It occurs when *good* is punished (examples)**

1. ***Injustice committed by evil people*** - Jesus' actions did not deserve a punishment of death, in contrast to the two thieves, who were on the other two crosses - Luke 23:41. (They killed him, in spite of that fact.)
2. ***Injustice desired by evil people*** - The people wanted to punish Paul, even though he did nothing to deserve death or imprisonment - Acts 23:29.
3. ***Injustice avoided by what the righteous person did*** - Paul appealed to Caesar, to prevent injustice from happening. - Acts 25:11, 25; 26:31. He was willing to die (as punishment for wrongs), if he had done anything worthy of death, but he hadn't done any such thing, and the governor (and the king) knew it. (See 25:8-12.) [Governor Festus had suggested that Paul be sent back to Jerusalem for trial. This would have most likely meant injustice - death - for Paul.]

## **PART 4 - The Worth of God's People**

### **A. (Definition)**

1. *The term "God's people,"* as used here, refers only to those who are growing in Christ, not to those who merely *claim* to be God's people. It refers to those who demonstrate a trust in God and his Word - *a trust that results in obedience.*

### **B. Those who *reject* God's people (and their message of peace) do not even deserve the presence of Gods people!**

1. *God's people are better than the people of the world* - so much so, that the world does not even deserve their presence. In spite of this, the world mistreats them - Hebrews 11:38! 2. *Responding to those who reject their message of peace:* For those who do not deserve the proclaimer's message of peace: Take the blessing of peace back from them - Matthew 10:13b. [See the context.]

### **C. Those who *accept* God's people and their message of peace deserve their presence, as well as the peace that their message brings!**

1. *About those who accept God's people* (and prove it by their actions): Those who are willing to help (to receive and support) God's people deserve to have them in their presence - Matthew 10:11.
2. *Responding to those who accept their message of peace* (and prove it by their actions): For those who deserve the proclaimer's message of peace (and prove it by their actions): Let peace rest with them - Matthew 10:13a. [See the context.]

### **D. God's people - appreciating the value/worth of *each other*.**

1. *At times, it is necessary (an obligation)* - Paul thanked God for the Christians at Thessalonica; he thought that such thankfulness was deserved, because of the way their faith and love were growing - 1 Thessalonians 1:3.
2. *At times it may be optional* - The Christians at Corinth were to take their gifts for the Christian Jews to Jerusalem. If they thought Paul deserved to be present, they could accompany him, when he went there - 1 Corinthians 16:4.

### **E. When compared to Jesus, who is worthy above all else, our only proper attitude is humility (even though, as God's people, we ourselves have great worth).**

1. *The example of John the baptizer:* He considered himself not worthy to even untie Jesus' shoes - John 1:27; Acts 13:25. [Interestingly, Jesus described John as being the *greatest* among people- Luke 7:28! If John (the greatest among people) had this attitude, *how much more* should we!]

2. *The example of the centurion:* He loved the Jewish people and did wonderful things for them. So the Jewish people thought he deserved to have Jesus heal his dying servant - Luke 7:4. [Yet note the contrast in verse 6: The centurion did *not* consider himself to be important enough, that he should ask Jesus to come to him.]

## **PART 5 - Authority and Those Under Authority - What Each Deserves**

### **A. The *master* deserves honor.**

1. *Slaves should consider their masters worthy of all honor/respect.* Their attitudes toward their masters may even influence other people's attitudes toward God and the truth - 1 Timothy 6:1. [Note that other verses, such as Ephesians 6:9, describe the obligations that masters have toward their slaves.]

### **B. The *worker* deserves to be paid appropriately for what he does.**

1. *The one who proclaims the good news about the kingdom of God deserves to be supported by those who receive that good news* - Matthew 10:10.
2. *The laborer deserves his wages* (a general principle applied to those whose work is to proclaim the good news about God's kingdom) - Luke 10:7.
3. *The worker deserves his wages* (a general principle applied to the giving of honor to those who deserve it) - 1 Timothy 5:18.

### **C. (Comment)**

1. *The basic principles* found in these verses can be applied to *any* situation in which someone works for (or "serves") someone else.

## **PART 6 - The Worth of Our *Future* Glory (Compared to Our Present Sufferings)**

### **A. For God's people, our future glory is unspeakably great**

1. *Our present sufferings do not deserve to be compared to our future glory* - Romans 8:18. [Verses 19-21 - This glory will affect *all* of creation.]