

Diverse Excellencies
Series: The Glory of Christ

Text: Revelation 5.1-6

<i>Lion-like Qualities</i>	<i>Lamb-like Qualities</i>
Infinite Highness Ps 2.1-9; Heb 1.6; Rom 11.33-34	Infinite Condescension 1 Cor 1.28; children, beggars, outcasts, sinners
Infinite Justice 2 Cor 5.10; 2 Tim 4.1	Infinite Grace Rom 5.15-17
Infinite Glory Jn 5.22-23; Heb 1.8	Infinite Humility Mt 11.29
Infinite Majesty Ps 45.3	Transcendent Meekness Mt 21.4 (Mt 11.29)
Equality With God Jn 14.8-10; Jn 10.30	Reverence Toward God Lk 22.41; Jn 8.29
Worthiness of Good Heb 4.15; Heb 7.26-28	Patience Under Evil Heb 12.2; Is 53.7
Supreme Dominion Eph 1.19b-23	Spirit of Obedience Jn 14.31; Jn 15.10; Heb 5.8; Phil 2.8
Absolute Sovereignty Col 1.16-17	Perfect Resignation Mt 26.39, 42; 1 Pet 2.23
Self-sufficiency Col 1.15-17	Entire Reliance on God Mt 27.43

I. Text

A. **Revelation 5:1–6 (ESV) —**

1. 1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.
2. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”
3. 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it,
4. 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.
5. 5 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”
6. 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

II. **Jonathan Edwards:** The Admirable Conjunction of Diverse Excellences in Christ Jesus

A. Edwards: He is called a Lion. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He seems to be called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, in allusion to what Jacob said in his blessing of the tribe on his death-bed; who, when he came to bless Judah, compares him to a lion, Gen. 49:9. "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" And also to the standard of the camp of Judah in the wilderness on which was displayed a lion, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews. It is much on account of the valiant acts of David that the tribe of Judah, of which David was, is in Jacob's prophetic blessing compared to a lion; but more especially with an eye to Jesus Christ, who also was of that tribe, and was descended of David, and is in our text called "the Root of David"; and therefore Christ is here called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah."

B. Edwards: He is called a Lamb. John was told of a Lion that had prevailed to open the book, and probably expected to see a lion in his vision; but while he is expecting, behold a Lamb appears to open the book, an exceeding diverse kind of creature from a lion. A lion is a devourer, one that is wont to make terrible slaughter of others; and no creature more easily falls a prey to him than a lamb. And Christ is here represented not only as a Lamb, a creature very liable to be slain, but a "Lamb as it had been slain," that is, with the marks of its deadly wounds appearing on it.

C. Edwards: The lion and the lamb, though very diverse kinds of creatures, yet have each their peculiar excellencies. The lion excels in strength, and in the majesty of his appearance and voice: the lamb excels in meekness and patience, besides the excellent nature of the creature as good for food, and yielding that which is fit for our clothing and being suitable to be offered in sacrifice to God.

III. Infinite Highness and Infinite Condescension

A. Infinite Highness

1. **Psalm 2:1–9** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?
 - b. 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,
 - c. 3 “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”
 - d. 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.
 - e. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying,
 - f. 6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”
 - g. 7 I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.
 - h. 8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.
 - i. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

2. **Hebrews 1:6** (ESV) —

- a. 6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

B. Infinite Condescension

1. **1 Corinthians 1:28** (ESV) —

- a. 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are...

C. Edwards: Such a conjunction of infinite highness and low condescension, in the same person, is admirable. We see, by manifold instances, what a tendency a high station has in men, to make them to be of a quite contrary disposition. If one worm is a little exalted above another by having more dust or a bigger dunghill, how much does he make of himself! What a distance does he keep from those that are below him! And a little condescension is what he expects should be made much of and greatly acknowledged. Christ condescends to wash our feet; but how would great men (or rather bigger worms) account themselves debased by acts of far less condescension.

IV. Infinite Justice and Infinite Grace

A. Infinite Justice

1. **2 Corinthians 5:10** (ESV) —

- a. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

2. **2 Timothy 4:1** (ESV) —

- a. 1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his

kingdom...

B. Infinite Grace

1. **Romans 5:15–17** (ESV) —

- a. 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.
- b. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.
- c. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

C. Edwards: Though his justice be so strict with respect to all sin, and every breach of the law, yet he has grace sufficient for every sinner, and even the chief of sinners. And it is not only sufficient for the most unworthy to show them mercy, and bestow some good upon them, but to bestow the greatest good; yea, it is sufficient to bestow all good upon them, and to do all things for them. There is no benefit or blessing that they can receive, so great but the grace of Christ is sufficient to bestow it on the greatest sinner that ever lived. And not only so, but so great is his grace, that nothing is too much as the means of this good. It is sufficient not only to do great things, but also to suffer in order to do it, and not only to suffer, but to suffer most extremely even unto death, the most terrible of natural evils; and not only death, but the most ignominious and tormenting, and every way the most terrible that men could inflict; yea, and greater sufferings than men could inflict, who could only torment the body. He had sufferings in his soul, that were the more immediate fruits of the wrath of God against the sins of those he undertakes for.

V. **Infinite Glory and Infinite Humility**

A. Infinite Glory

1. **John 5:22–23** (ESV) —

- a. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,
- b. 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

2. **Hebrews 1:8** (ESV) —

- a. 8 But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."

B. Infinite Humility

1. **Matthew 11:29** (ESV) —

- a. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

VI. Infinite Majesty and Transcendent Meekness

A. Infinite Majesty

1. **Psalm 45:3** (ESV) —

- a. 3 Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your splendor and majesty!

B. Transcendent Meekness

1. **Matthew 21:4–5** (ESV) —

- a. 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,
- b. 5 “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’ ”

2. **Matthew 11:29** (ESV) —

- a. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

C. Edwards: It is he that is mighty, that rideth on the heavens, and his excellency on the sky. It is he that is terrible out of his holy places; who is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea: before whom a fire goeth, and burneth up his enemies round about; at whose presence the earth quakes, and the hills melt; who sitteth on the circle of the earth, and all the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, who rebukes the sea, and maketh it dry and drieth up the rivers, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, from whose presence, and from the glory of whose power, the wicked shall be punished with everlasting destruction; who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who hath heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footstool, and is the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of whose dominion there is no end.

D. Edwards: And agreeable to what was manifest in his behavior: for there never was such an instance seen on earth, of a meek behavior, under injuries and reproaches, and towards enemies; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. He had a wonderful spirit of forgiveness, was ready to forgive his worst enemies, and prayed for them with fervent and effectual prayers. With what meekness did he appear in the ring of soldiers that were contemning and mocking him; he was silent, and opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter. Thus is Christ a Lion in majesty and a Lamb in meekness.

VII. Equality with God and Reverence Toward God

A. Equality with God

1. **John 14:8–10** (ESV) —

- a. 8 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”
- b. 9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?
- c. 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own

authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

2. **John 10:30** (ESV) —

a. 30 I and the Father are one.”

B. Reverence Toward God

1. **Luke 22:41** (ESV) —

a. 41 And he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed...

2. **John 8:29** (ESV) —

a. 29 And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.”

C. Edwards: This became Christ, as one who had taken on him the human nature, but at the same time he existed in the divine nature; whereby his person was in all respects equal to the person of the Father. God the Father hath no attribute or perfection that the Son hath not, in equal degree, and equal glory. These things meet in no other person but Jesus Christ.

VIII. **Worthiness of Good and Patience under Evil**

A. Worthiness of Good

1. **Hebrews 4:15** (ESV) —

a. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

2. **Hebrews 7:26–28** (ESV) —

a. 26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

b. 27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

c. 28 For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

B. Patience under Evil

1. **Hebrews 12:2** (ESV) —

a. 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

2. **Isaiah 53:7** (ESV) —

a. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

C. Edwards: He was perfectly innocent, and deserved no suffering. He deserved nothing from God by any guilt of his own, and he deserved no ill from men. Yea, he was not only harmless and undeserving of suffering, but he was infinitely worthy; worthy of the infinite love of the Father, worthy of infinite and eternal

happiness, and infinitely worthy of all possible esteem, love, and service from all men. And yet he was perfectly patient under the greatest sufferings that ever were endured in this world.

D. Edwards: There is no such conjunction of innocence, worthiness, and patience under sufferings, as in the person of Christ.

IX. Supreme Dominion and Spirit of Obedience

A. Supreme Dominion

1. **Ephesians 1:19–23** (ESV) — 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

B. Spirit of Obedience

1. **John 14:31** (ESV) —
 - a. 31 but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father....
2. **John 15:10** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
3. **Hebrews 5:8** (ESV) —
 - a. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.
4. **Philippians 2:8** (ESV) —
 - a. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

C. Edwards: Christ is the Lord of all things in two respects: he is so, as God-man and Mediator, and thus his dominion is appointed, and given him of the Father. Having it by delegation from God, he is as it were the Father's vicegerent. But he is Lord of all things in another respect, namely, as he is (by his original nature) God; and so he is by natural right the Lord of all, and supreme over all as much as the Father. Thus, he has dominion over the world, not by delegation, but in his own right. He is not an under God, as the Arians suppose, but to all intents and purposes supreme God. And yet in the same person is found the greatest spirit of obedience to the commands and laws of God that ever was in the universe; which was manifest in his obedience here in this world.

X. Absolute Sovereignty and Perfect Resignation

A. Absolute Sovereignty

1. **Colossians 1:16–17** (ESV) —
 - a. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or

authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

b. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

B. Perfect Resignation

1. **Matthew 26:39 (ESV)** —
 - a. 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”
2. **Matthew 26:42 (ESV)** —
 - a. 42 Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.”
3. **1 Peter 2:23 (ESV)** —
 - a. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

C. Edwards: Christ, as he is God, is the absolute sovereign of the world, the sovereign disposer of all events. The decrees of God are all his sovereign decrees; and the work of creation, and all God's works of providence, are his sovereign works. It is he that worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will.

D. Edwards: But yet Christ was the most wonderful instance of resignation that ever appeared in the world. He was absolutely and perfectly resigned when he had a near and immediate prospect of his terrible sufferings, and the dreadful cup that he was to drink. The idea and expectation of this made his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and put him into such an agony, that his sweat was as it were great drops or clots of blood, falling down to the ground. But in such circumstances he was wholly resigned to the will of God.

XI. **Self-sufficiency and Entire Reliance on God**

A. Self-sufficiency

1. **Colossians 1:15–17 (ESV)** —
 - a. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
 - b. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
 - c. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

B. Entire Reliance on God

1. **Matthew 27:43 (ESV)** —
 - a. 43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ”

C. Edwards: As he is a divine person, he is self-sufficient, standing in need of nothing. All creatures are dependent on him, but he is dependent on none, but is absolutely independent. His proceeding from the Father, in his eternal generation, argues no proper dependence on the will of the Father; for that proceeding was natural and necessary, and not arbitrary. But yet Christ entirely trusted in God: -- his enemies say that of him...