

2017 WCCC

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The Eternal Lamb of God (1)

We thank the Lord for giving us another opportunity to gather before His feet. I believe many brothers and sisters may be tired from today's journey, travelling from various places. May the Lord uphold us with His resurrection power, so we can have a quiet heart to sit before Him.

Please read some of the Lord's words with me.

Revelation 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

We all know the middle phrase of this passage is the theme of this conference -
“*These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.*”

Revelation 13:8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

Revelation 22:3 And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”

John 1:35-36 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.

We will take a look at some passages from the Old Testament.

Genesis 4:1-2 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord." And again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Genesis 46:34 that you shall say, "Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers, that you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."

Genesis 47:3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" So they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers."

Exodus 12:1-3 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be the beginning of the months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household."

Exodus 12:11 "Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste – it is the Lord's Passover."

We will end our Scripture reading for now.

My burden for this time is to fellowship on the eternal Lamb of God. I will first share on the meaning of the Lamb of God. From the Bible, we can clearly see the Lamb of God is a divine thought of God. This is a very important thought in God's

eternal purpose and it is from eternity to eternity. This thought was not formed through the passage of time. Revelation chapter 13 tells us the Lamb has been slain from the foundation of the world. Before time began, prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth, the thought of the Lamb was already in God and it will continue into the eternal future. When we come to Revelation chapters 5 and 22, the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. But in the midst of the throne, He is still the Lamb who has been slain. In chapter 22, it again mentions the throne of the Lamb. So this thought, from eternity to eternity, is extremely important. This thought is also a central theme in the Bible. We thank God for revealing this thought to us.

At the time of John the Baptist, when he saw the Lord Jesus Christ, he realized the Lord is the Lamb of God. Therefore, he said, “*Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*”, meaning the Lamb of God is God’s only method and solution to deal with every issue in the whole universe. Again, we can see the importance of this thought. We understand from the Bible only the Lamb of God can settle all the issues, as He is able to resolve all matters concerning God’s purpose. No one can reach nor accomplish God’s ultimate goal. Only the Lamb can fulfill God’s will. The Lamb has also eradicated all the works and authority of the enemy. As a result, John the Baptist said, “*He takes away the sin of the world.*” In the original text, the word “sin” is in singular form, meaning the enemy has brought destruction into God’s creation and only the Lamb can undo the damage.

Using his power and authority, the enemy’s goal is to destroy God’s purpose. Satan clearly knows God’s will is to be accomplished through man. Therefore, he first destroys man, plunging mankind into a fallen state. We know the meaning behind this is significant. Because of what the enemy did to man, causing sin to enter into humanity, God was posed with a tremendous challenge. The enemy wants to destroy the purpose of God because he truly understands God’s nature. He knows God is compassionate, but he also knows God is righteous and holy. He brought sin into the human race, causing a major conflict in God’s character. Because according to God’s love, He cannot forsake man. But according to His righteousness and holiness, He cannot accept a sinner. So this caused a grievous conflict in God’s nature, a great contradiction.

The fall of man is a serious matter. Yet beyond the enemy's expectation, God's wisdom solved this problem by using the Lamb, the slain Lamb, to settle this issue. Through the Lamb's death, God utterly defeated the works of the enemy. We can regain God's favor and be blessed. God can love and accept us in His righteousness and holiness because of the Lamb. On that day, John the Baptist cried out loudly, *"Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* The Lamb not only satisfied the requirement of God's will, He also obliterated all the works and power of the enemy.

At the same time, the Lamb has also dealt with all the inward and outward problems of the fallen man. After we are saved, we realize we are the ones with problems, inside and out. How can God make us whole? The Lamb is the answer, as He can solve our inward and outward issues - an absolute resolution. Therefore, the Bible has this wonderful proclamation: *"As He is, so also are we."* This is God's glorious thought resulting in a glorious outcome. Not only could He resolve the inward and outward problems of the fallen man, the future will be glorious. He will usher in the beautiful order of the new heaven and the new earth. The Book of Second Peter tells us that righteousness will dwell in the new heaven and the new earth. Revelation clearly shows us that in the future, the Lamb will reign, over all that is brought in by Him, in the whole universe.

We know the earth in which we dwell today is full of chaos, completely out of the natural order. Satan has made a total mess of the earth, dark, void and empty. But thank God, through the Lamb, God can restore the order. The Lamb of God is God's only solution, the answer to all these issues. Besides this, there is no other way to solve the enormous problems which we mentioned. Thank God this precious thought was in Him before the foundation of the world.

Today, we are very clear the Lamb is the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is our magnificent Lord taking on a meek image. We are amazed because our Lord is so majestic, yet He came and took on an earthly image of a little lamb. The Lord is superior but the lamb is so insignificant; this is an extremely important thought. When our Lord came to this earth, He humbled Himself. In the New Testament, the word "lamb" is actually two different words in Greek. One is *amnos*; the other is *arnion*. In the New Testament, both words are used for the "lamb." The word *amnos*

is used in the Books of the Gospel and the Epistles. The word *arnion* is used once in the Gospel According to John chapter 21, when the Lord said to Peter, “*Tend My lambs.*” The word “lambs” in this passage is actually *arnion*. When it comes to Revelation, only *arnion* is used. We know the word *annos* means a little lamb but the word *arnion* puts emphasis on its meekness.

We truly see God’s thought is different from our thought. When our Lord Jesus rose and ascended, seated on the throne, holding authority over all, He is the Lord of lords and King of kings, and yet His image is still a meek one. This is a very important indicator from the Bible. Why is that? Because the enemy likes to be grand, man also. Today on earth, everyone wants to be great. But very amazingly our Lord, the Most High, humbled Himself. He used a little lamb to be His representation. It would not be proper for you to elevate yourselves if you want to be followers of the Lamb. For example, if one follows behind a lion, one can be mighty. But if one follows after a little lamb and one is pompous, what image would that portray? Yet today, very few people have this insight. Those who follow the Lamb ought to humble themselves. If we truly have the vision of the Lamb from within, then we would humble ourselves, avoiding many problems in our personal life and church life. The issue is that we often think too highly of ourselves. Actually, we are insignificant but we have a big ego, bringing in many difficulties. When our Lord came to earth, He took on the image of the Lamb of God. If we want to follow the Lord, we need to learn to humble ourselves and see that the Lamb of God is the Lord’s image. In addition, we need to recognize the Lamb is actually a sign of spiritual life. True spiritual life is to possess the Lamb’s character, which is humble and pure. We are very familiar with the words recorded in the Gospel According to John 10:10. The Lord said, “*I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.*” As Christians, we should pursue the abundant life of the Lamb all our lives. The Lamb of God is God’s divine thought. It is also the thought of our Lord Jesus Christ and that is why He took on the image of a lamb.

Actually, if we turn to the Old Testament, we can see God initially placed this divine thought in His chosen people. He chose the nation of Israel to be a people of shepherds. Now we have a general understanding as to why God made the nation of Israel into a people of shepherds. It was because God had this thought of the Lamb. He wanted His people to understand this thought but it was beyond man’s

comprehension. God is so great; heaven and earth cannot contain Him. How could He take on an image of a meek lamb to be His sign? God wanted to establish this thought in His people, so He led them through a way of life. It is very interesting how God formed the concept of the Lamb into His people, through their daily lives. When we look back at the Old Testament, we now understand why the Lord led the Israelites and their ancestors to be shepherds. Later on, the nation of Israel became a people of shepherds. They offered lambs and ate lambs. They did not fully understand the meaning. They only knew it was God's command and they complied. As a result, this became a very solid tradition for the people of Israel.

If we look at how this was established in the beginning, we will find it very meaningful. We see after the fall of Adam and Eve, they gave birth to Cain and Abel. Immediately, the Bible said "*Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*" We know later Abel offered the firstlings of his flock to God. God accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept that of Cain's. Why did Abel shepherd flocks? It was God who initiated the thought in Abel. Because at the time, man was not permitted to eat meat and there was no economic value to shepherd flocks. It cannot be compared to the practicality of being a tiller of the ground, yet Abel had the thought of being a keeper of flocks. It wasn't until after Genesis chapter 9 when man was allowed to eat meat. Now we are clear God wanted to put this thought in man. Therefore, God called Abel to be a keeper of flocks.

After a long period of time, this thought was still not evident to their forefathers until Abraham's time. We know the climax of Abraham's spiritual life is recorded in Genesis chapter 22. God said to him, "*Take your beloved son and offer him as an offering on Mount Moriah.*" Abraham obeyed and brought his son to Mount Moriah. He built the altar, bound his son, laid him on the altar and took the knife to slay his son. At this time, an angel of the Lord came to stop him. Then he saw a ram caught in the thicket. God used this ram to take Isaac's place. We can only imagine the deep impression this ram left in Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah. Jehovah-jireh became such a tremendous grace to them. On that day, the meaning of "lamb substitution" came forth. This speaks of a crucial spiritual experience of Christians to come, that His death is counted as my death. God used a lamb to substitute for Isaac's life. God continued to instill the thought of the Lamb in His people.

Now we come to Jacob and the story of how he stole sheep. Jacob was very cunning; he stole all the sheep from his Uncle Laban for his own possession. We see a close tie between Jacob and the sheep. Actually, behind the scene, God's thought was in control. Jacob gave birth to twelve sons; he and his sons were all shepherds. At the end, the nation of Israel became a people of shepherds. When Jacob and his entire household went to Egypt, standing before Pharaoh, Pharaoh asked Joseph's brothers, "*what is your occupation?*" They said, "*we are shepherds, both we and our fathers.*" What do these words represent? The thought of the Lamb had been deeply rooted in the house of Israel. The entire house of Israel became a people of shepherds. The Bible tells us all shepherds were loathsome to the Egyptians. Both the enemy and the world hate it.

God's work did not end here. Later on, God led His people out of Egypt through Moses. The evening before they left Egypt, God sent an angel of destruction to Egypt and killed all the firstborn. At that time, God told Moses to speak to all the congregation of Israel to inform them that each household should take a lamb. If a lamb was too much for one household, they could share it with another household and use the blood of the lamb to put on the doorposts and the lintel. God instructed them to eat the lamb in haste, then leave. God established the Passover for Israel. We know Passover means a lamb is slain and God's judgement passes over His people. Therefore, Passover is an important festival for the people of Israel. The Lamb became so deeply engraved in them that it cannot be removed. Today, perhaps there are very few shepherds among the people of Israel, but the thought of the Lamb is still in them. So each year at the Jewish Passover, though they no longer shepherd flocks but because of their practice and tradition, many would still go to the market and purchase some lamb to consume. The thought of the Lamb entered into the Jewish people. We see later when the tabernacle was completed and the temple built, the lamb was the primary cattle used for offerings. To the people of Israel, this became a strong mindset in their way of life and service. But regrettably, throughout the Old Testament, even through long periods of God's leading, they only had the earthly lamb in their thoughts and minds. They did not fully understand the meaning of the Lamb of God.

So when we come to the beginning of the New Testament, God was then able to take this revelation a step further, when His Son became flesh and came to this world.

Before this, the Jewish people only lived under a concept, a way of life. They had no understanding of the Lamb of God and what it meant. Until the time came when the Lord Jesus was thirty years old, He appeared before John the Baptist. Suddenly, the eyes of John the Baptist were opened and he saw a glorious scene. In an instant, he came to understand their way of life and the concept established by their ancestors the past four thousand years actually pointed the Lamb of God to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, he cried out loudly, *“Behold, the Lamb of God!”* We know he did not actually see a lamb; he saw Jesus. Yet he said, *“Behold, the Lamb of God!”* Through thousands of years, the Jewish way of life, their habits, and thoughts shaped by their traditions, all became reality in a flash. The next day, he saw the Lord walking. Again, he cried out, *“Behold, the Lamb of God!”* These two proclamations confirmed what he saw was true. This was such an important experience. The same is true for us today. In the New Testament, God uses revelation to lead us into reality. As Christians, we have our spiritual life and many activities. But in order for our activities to turn from a mere concept into reality, we must receive revelation from God. Only under the light of revelation could he recognize the Lord Jesus is the true Lamb of God. We know it was not enough for the Jewish people to have the concept. Only through revelation can our concept become reality. The eyes of John the Baptist were suddenly opened. This was the first major revelation in the New Testament.

On that day, the Apostle John was also there. When John the Baptist cried out in this fashion, the Holy Spirit also opened the eyes of the Apostle John. As a result, the Apostle John gained greater insight. He wrote the Gospel According to John and Revelation. He continued to develop the meaning of the Lamb of God to the fullest. This was indeed an important insight because he saw the life of our Lord on earth - each expression, thought, and deed expressed the Lamb. He stated that Christians should have an abundant life, the life of the Lamb. As we come to Revelation chapter 5 and beyond, we see the Lamb is the center of the universe and reigns over all. The Apostle John brought the concept of the Lamb of God into the entire universe.

Our Lord Jesus Christ became flesh and came to this world. He came to be that Lamb of God, which was in the very heart of God. Therefore, His life and deeds on earth fully expressed God’s heart and thought. Now we know the Lamb became the important image of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was our Lord who expressed the Lamb of God. The important thought that was in God’s heart before the foundation of the

world. He gave us His life and desires for us to also become lambs of God. Oftentimes, we say the house of God is a fold. We have returned to the fold because the good Shepherd brought us back. We are the Lord's sheep, but we must become the lambs of God.

In the Old Testament, not all of the sheep tended by the Israelites could be lambs of God. Only those that could be laid on the altar as offerings could be lambs of God. God's requirement of His people was very strict. The lamb to be offered must be without blemish. When we come to the New Testament, we know only our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is without any blemish. A sheep with blemishes cannot be a lamb of God. That is why God works in us. He rids us of our blemishes through all kinds of dealings. In the end, the entire church will become holy and without blemish because this is the thought of the Lamb of God. Why do Christians pursue a holy life? Simply put, you ought to become a lamb, God's unblemished lamb. Also, the lamb must be a year old. An old or sick sheep cannot be a lamb of God. Of course, this does not refer to older brothers and sisters. The spiritual meaning is life is at its prime.

Among His church today, the Lord does not want weakness but desires to gain a strong and vibrant life. This is the spiritual meaning. No wonder why our Lord Jesus went to the cross at the age of thirty-three and a half, a time of full strength and vigor, as the principle requirement of being the Lamb of God must be fulfilled. In the past, we did not understand why our Lord Jesus went to the cross at such a young age. Why didn't He live to be one hundred twenty years old like Moses and then be crucified? Because He had to fulfill the principle of being the Lamb of God, as God wants a strong and refreshing life. Our Lord Jesus is the firstborn Son and His salvation positions us as firstborns. In the entire creation, the children of God are the first fruits. This is what God is after and the Lamb of God must have these qualifications. Therefore we ought to be mindful of His heart.

Today, we are sought out and brought back by the Lord, but are we truly the lambs of God? In order to be lambs of God, we must fulfill these principles. Therefore, the Holy Spirit continues to work in us, ridding us of some blemishes through each dealing. As a result, we will closer resemble the Lamb of God. Standing in the position of a firstborn, we can live out a vibrant spiritual life, to its full

strength, before our Lord. The Lord wants us to have the life of the Lamb, and more abundantly. When the nature of the Lamb becomes abundant in our lives, God's pleasure will be manifested in us. So for Christians, we must have this insight. We need to see that the Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God. Thank God for placing this very simple picture before us. What does it mean to follow the Lamb wherever He goes? If we don't have the image of the Lamb in us, how can we follow? So, no matter what we encounter, no matter how many difficulties we face, no matter how rough our path, or even in good times, we must have the Lamb before us. We must also see to it that we are following the Lamb. This means we only exhibit the Lamb, no matter what circumstances we may encounter.

It's not easy being a Christian. When we listen to messages or read the Bible, we seem to have a good grasp of spiritual principles, but as soon as we enter into our daily life, into service, we often focus solely on difficulties and man's shortcomings. Our problem is that it is not easy for us to see the Lamb. At this time, we look to the Lord for mercy and for Him to deeply imprint the image of the Lamb of God in us. When we come across difficulties in our life and in our service, express the Lamb. In fact, in all our experiences, express the Lamb. This is what it means to follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Wherever He is, we are there also. Revelation chapter 14 mentions only these people can stand on Mount Zion with the Lamb. We know Mount Zion represents the kingdom of God, the glorious eternal purpose of God. That picture clearly shows us the Lamb can stand on Mount Zion.

Today, we want to be a good testimony for our Lord and we desire for the church on earth to glorify God, to manifest His kingdom. Brothers and sisters, with what kind of life and under what condition can we manifest God's kingdom? In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John showed us a great revelation of the end. This picture is simple and clear. When the Lamb stands on Mount Zion, that group of people who are followers of the Lamb will stand with Him. Only the Lamb can fulfill the will of God and only those who have the life of the Lamb can accomplish the will of God, together with the Lamb. We know the Book of Revelation clearly reveals that in the end time, the enemy's power is represented by an image of a beast on earth. We know this is cruel and horrific. Today, we deeply feel we live in a world of the beast. Satan exercises his power to control the world. The Book of Revelation specifically shows us only the Lamb can fulfill God's purpose. The Apostle John, at his old age,

revealed this important thought to inform us the Lamb is the only solution to resolve all problems.

This time, the Lord brought us to this topic. I feel the church should loudly sound the trumpet at this end time. Our Lord is already the Lamb of God. He has accomplished the purpose of God. Now He desires for us to be His companions, to be followers of the Lamb. I feel this is not just doctrine but practical truth. We must remember God wants us to follow the Lamb. Regardless of our circumstances, express the Lamb. No matter what, let the image of the Lamb be manifested in our life. Our Lord is the Lamb of God and He wants us to become lambs of God. May the Lord bless His own words. Let us bow our heads for a word of prayer.

Lord, we want to thank You with all our hearts. It is You who gathered us here and here You desire to speak into our hearts. Lord, we pray that You plant this divine thought, the Lamb of God, in us. Open our eyes so we can truly see You are the Lamb of God. Only You can take away the sin of the world. Only You can fulfill all the demands of God. Only You can do away with all the enemy's works. Only You can resolve all our issues. Lord, how we need You! We pray that through this meeting, we have a clear insight so in our remaining days we can truly become followers of the Lamb. We desire to stand on Mount Zion with You to manifest the glory of God's kingdom, to truly be God's testimony. Lord, we pray that You do Your work. When man's words end, the Holy Spirit will continue to do His work of revelation in us. We thank and praise You because You are the Lamb of God. You first completed all that God has entrusted to You. Today, You also entrusted to us. If we cannot live out the life of the Lamb, we will not be able to fulfill this commission. We look to You for mercy. Do Your work in each brother and sister. We thank You for being with each one of us this evening. Again, we offer worship to You. Hear our prayer. In Jesus' precious name. Amen.