

Worthy Is the Lamb

Composer unknown; Arr. Christopher Miner

Worthy is the Lamb (3 X)

Holy is the Lamb (3 X)

Precious is the Lamb (3 X)

Praises to the Lamb (3 X)

Glory to the Lamb (3 X)

Jesus is our Lamb (3 X)



Song: Arr. © 1997 Christopher Miner All rights reserved. CCLI # 188763

Cover art: Jennifer Brown (c. 1990s).

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Old Orchard Church

June 17, 2012 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.



*For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign Lord will make
righteousness and praise
spring up before all nations.*

—Isaiah 61:11

Celebrating the Great Commissions of God

Praises be to God
Who made the world and commanded us to fill it,
And as stewards of what belongs to Another,
To subdue and care for and develop it.

Yet our guilt plunged the good world into ruin;
Now broken, and its present form is passing away.

But blessed be Christ,
The First Man of a New Creation,
Who by his Cross and Resurrection
Has begun a New Humanity in the Holy Spirit,
Restored to the image of its Creator.
In due time the New will swallow up the Old,
And the ancient harmony of the world will return.

For now, the Lord calls us to give ourselves
To his two Great Commissions:
“Go, care for the world and develop it;
Go, preach to the world and make disciples,
Baptizing them into my triune Name.”

Sing praise to the Lord,
To him who created the world and redeems it!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Genesis 1:26-31

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:16-20

Christians in Ephesus, Christians in St. Louis Series

“If Jesus Is Lord...Something Else Is Not”
Acts 18 & 19

Ron Lutjens, pastor, preaching

Two Creations, One Reality

Today, we are celebrating the two Great Commissions of God. Recorded in Genesis 1 is the Great Commissioning of *the human race* that took place at the beginning of creation. When God made the world he commanded man and woman to people it and take care of it, and by implication, to develop it wisely. Recorded in Matthew 28 is the Great Commissioning of *the redeemed human race*, the church, that took place at the ascension of Jesus Christ. When the Son was about to be exalted to the supreme place of power over the universe, he commanded his followers to go everywhere with the Good News of the grace of his cross and empty tomb so that others might hear it, believe it, be baptized, and swell the ranks of a New Humanity.

Too many Christians act as if the Great Evangelistic Commission of Matthew 28 simply cancels out and replaces the Great Cultural Commission of Genesis 1. It doesn't. It gets superimposed *over* it. To be sure, this creates a certain tension between the two, a tension expressed so poetically—and to our ears, so strangely—by Paul in I Corinthians 7:29-31 (“**let those who have wives be as though they had none....!!**”). But this is because the Great Cultural Commission applies to the old-order creation while the Great Evangelistic Commission applies to the new-order creation. Yet there is overlap between the two and God expects us to keep creating families and subduing the earth, even though the New Creation has broken in on a world doomed to become obsolete under His judgment.

So what? So some Christians need to go to other cultures as missionaries and others need to go into the marketplaces of their own culture without a bad conscience about their jobs. God has purposes for the world that are not saving purposes. A job or career or project is not to be judged worthy or unworthy by a Christian on the basis of whether it is the kind of job that contributes directly to people's eternal salvation. If our Father in heaven, wanting to do good to unbelievers even in their rebellion against him, sends his sun to shine on crops so that they can eat, then there is purpose in our building their houses, or painting them a picture, or investing their money for them, or selling them cameras. We are providing for them a good service, even though many are on their way to everlasting destruction away from the presence of the Lord. But we also have golden opportunities in our jobs to testify to the New Creation that has burst in on the world in Jesus Christ. Selling computers, or playing the violin, or raising children, or being an air-conditioner repairman is all part of what it means to subdue the earth until Christ returns. And telling our friends about Christ and supporting missionaries and helping with Summer Narnia are part of what it means to go into all the world and make disciples of the nations.

A purpose is good not because it's a saving purpose of God, but just because it's a purpose of God. No one gets saved eternally because you hung the wallpaper straight in their bedroom. Still, it's an honorable thing to be a paper-hanger; and if you're going to be one, God expects you, for the sake of the person who hired you, to hang it straight—and to take pleasure in doing something good when you do it. But pray for those who live in that house, too!

—Ron Lutjens