

“He is Worthy, what about us?” Lesson 2

“Axios” - a fuller definition from the Greek lexicon

The root word - means “to draw down the scale”. Hence imagine a balance scale. The picture is that of having the weight of another thing of like value (weighing as much as); to be worth as much as what one thing is compared to another. (That thing may be extremely valuable or worth nothing at all. “This world is a vain thing. Remember Madam Bubble?”)

So we have in view a likeness of what it means to exercise “discernment”. Proverbs 3:15 - She (Wisdom) is more precious than rubies; all things you may desire cannot compare with her.” (Romans 8:18 or 2 Cor. 4:17) - “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are *not worthy* to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Acts 5:41 - “So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were *counted worthy* to suffer shame for His Name.”

When we looked briefly at Revelation 5 last week, I left you with a simple diagram depicting the comparison of POSITION and PERSON. I asked, “Does the scale reveal equivalent weights?”

Then by extension of that idea, **axios** is used to mean “to be befitting”; congruous, to rightly correspond to something else; to be appropriate. Do the two things fit together? “It is *meet*” (Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20; 2 Thess. 1:3; Luke 7:4). It is suitable. It is in accord with. To a mathematician what is an “axiom”? What does it mean for a statement to be “axiomatic”? In the UCMJ there is a change that can be made for “Conduct Unbecoming an Officer.”

At times the word refers to someone who has merited something - either good or bad. “He has done nothing *worthy* of death.” Consider: “But those who are *counted worthy* to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection” (Luke 20:35-36).

The practical applications, the laws of conduct for the Christian, are numerous and valuable as introduced in Ephesians 4:1 and following. “*I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called...*” As a matter of study and interest, make a list of Christ’s commands that follow to the end of the epistle. How many do you find?

With that concept of definition let’s go to Matthew chapter 10. The word we are investigating is discovered in verses 10, 11, 13, 37, 38 - seven times.

Some questions:

Do these instructions for gospel carriers apply to us today? If so, in what ways?

What does it mean that the worker is worthy of his food?

When choosing a place to reside how would you determine who is worthy to stay with?

What does it mean for “your peace to rest upon a household” or to “return to you”?

In verses 37 and 38 decrees, not suggestions, are declared. How would you summarize in your own words Jesus’ requirements about the cost of discipleship?

Three months before the year 2020 commenced: I was leading a prayer retreat with the theme: "Preparing for the Challenges of a Threatening Future" when I fenced the communion table with this illustration.

Mary and I read a devotional last week after supper about an American medical missionary named Paul Carlson. He labored with his wife and 2 children in a hospital in the Belgian Congo from 1963 to 1964. Communist rebels calling themselves "Simbas" infiltrated the country in 1964 and captured and later murdered Dr. Carlson. At a church conference months before his capture the missionaries knew they were facing a threatening future, and as Paul Carlson led a communion service not knowing what would happen in the year to come he said to those assembled, "My friends, if today you are not willing to suffer for Jesus, do not partake of this communion... **To follow Jesus means to be willing to suffer for him.**"

Some attending said, "We know Dr. Carlson's widow. She lives among us in our community (Penny Farms)."

One church lady told me the next morning, "I was not willing to take communion last night when you said that." Another woman, one who the previous day had prayed to receive Christ, DID participate. I can only hope that her conversion was genuine.

Jonathan Edwards: [A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections](#) concerning a Christians' profession of faith when joining with the people of God -

"They ought to profess a willingness of heart to embrace religion with all its difficulties, and to walk in a way of obedience to God universally and perseveringly... They ought to profess, that all their hearts and souls are in these engagements to be the Lord's and forever to serve Him... to give themselves to Him as their King; that they give Him their hearts and their whole man; and are willing and resolved to have God for their whole and everlasting portion; and in a dependence on His promises of a future eternal enjoyment of Him in heaven, to renounce all the enjoyments of this vain world, selling all for this great treasure and future inheritance, and to comply with every command of God, even the most difficult and self-denying, and devote their whole lives to God's service; and that in forgiveness of those that have injured them, and a general benevolence to mankind, their hearts are united to the people of Jesus Christ as their people, to cleave to them and love them as their brethren, and worship and serve God, and follow Christ in union and fellowship with them, being willing and resolved to perform all those duties that belong to them, as members of the same family of God and mystical body of Christ. I say, for persons solemnly to profess such things as these, as in the presence of God, is the same thing as to profess that they are conscious to, or do experience such things in their hearts." (page 406 - 409, Canon Press)

But Edwards' major point, is that even though people should profess these things with their mouths, the primary and only reliable proof that they are truly converted is the conduct of their lives lived out. "Passing affections easily produce words; and words are cheap; and godliness is more easily feigned in words than in actions. Christian practice is a costly, laborious thing. The self-denial that is required of Christians, and the narrowness of the way that leads to life, does not consist in words, but in practice. Hypocrites may much more easily be brought to talk like saints, than to act like saints" (page 402).

Is Christ Jesus so worthy to you that you can without hesitation affirm these covenant commitments?