

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 28TH, 2024 // REVELATION

## MADE KNOWN (REVELATION 1:1-3) THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"Of" can mean "from, about, and belonging to." This revelation belongs to Jesus, and He is the One doing the revealing while also being the object revealed.

- If we grasp every symbol and prophecy in the book of Revelation, but we miss Jesus in the book, then we will have missed the point.

## HOW SOON?

God gave the book of Revelation so that "what must soon take place" might be shown to His servants, not hidden.

- To God, a thousand years is only a day (2 Peter 3:8), so "soon" and "near" are relative terms. This book was not given so that we could try to figure out the exact date of Jesus' return, but to be sure that we are ready when He does.

## READ, HEAR, AND KEEP

John knew that what he received and recorded was the Word of God and it was to be shared because of the special blessing for those who read and keep the message of this book.

- There are a lot of prophecies contained in this book, but God didn't say we would be blessed if we can "figure it all out." He said we would be blessed by reading and hearing.

## FOCUS (REVELATION 1:4-8)

### GRACE AND PEACE

As is typical for writings at this time, John starts with a formal greeting of grace and peace.

- John extends grace and peace toward the 7 churches in Asia but makes it clear that the Trinity is the source. Grace and peace from "the one who is, who was, and who is to come," "the seven spirits before his throne," and "Jesus Christ."

## SEVEN DIFFERENT SPIRITS OF GOD?

We have wonderful descriptive reminders that God is not confined to time and space and that Christ has conquered death and is sovereign over all things, including Rome, but what's the deal with the "seven spirits?"

- Isaiah 11:1-3, describes 7 characteristics of the Holy Spirit, so it's not that there are 7 spirits, but the Holy Spirit is complete and perfect.

## HE LOVES US AND HAS SET US FREE!

The revelation of Jesus reminds us of God's love for His people. Jesus died for us, for our salvation, and He has adopted us as heirs to His Kingdom.

- Our first prophecy is found in v. 7 and encompasses this book's narrative while echoing imagery found in Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10: Jesus' 2nd coming will differ greatly from His 1st.

## FIRST COMING

- Lowly and meek
- Private and few saw it
- Was judged and punished
- People rejoiced over His "defeat"

## SECOND COMING

- Glorious / Magnificent
- Public for all to see
- He will judge evil people
- People will mourn over His victory

## "SO IT IS TO BE. AMEN."

This revelation shows when the "Alpha and the Omega...the one who is, who was, and who is to come" returns there will be mourning.

- "All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him" indicates that those who rejected Christ will experience sorrow in the realization they were wrong and those who accepted Christ will mourn for those who were lost.

## YOUR BROTHER AND PARTNER (REVELATION 1:9-11)

### "PARTNER IN THE AFFLICTION"

John wanted the persecuted church to know that he was not above them in any way and was also in need of endurance to remain faithful.

- Here we see the first mention of persecution. The church was partners with John in their affliction—they were being persecuted for their faith and he was exiled to the island of Patmos because of persecution.

## GOD IS ALWAYS AT WORK!

God was at work in protecting John from Domitian and was also at work in allowing John to be exiled.

- To remove everything that happened to John is to remove this book. Though it is difficult sometimes to see God's plan, especially in affliction, we must trust that He knows exactly what He is doing!

## "IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY"

"On the Lord's day" means that, on the day set aside for worshipping, John experienced the supernatural. While "in the Spirit," John received the first spectacular vision beginning with hearing a loud voice, like a trumpet.

- The voice commands John to write on a scroll what he sees and send it to the 7 churches.

## SEEING GOD (REVELATION 1:12-16)

### JOHN TURNS TO SEE WHO IS SPEAKING

John looks to see Who is speaking and sees 7 golden lampstands. This would've been similar to the single golden lampstand in the temple that had 7 lamps on it, but here John sees 7 separate lampstands representing 7 churches.

- As the church, we are not called to produce the light, but we are to display the light in dark places (Matthew 5:14).

## JOHN SEES JESUS

Among the 7 churches was the Son of Man clothed in a garment signifying dignity and honor with a golden band greater than the threads worn by the high priest (Exodus 39:1-5).

- As the High Priest, Jesus was there in the midst of 7 lampstands, carefully inspecting and tending to the lamps so they would burn bright and not go out.

## JOHN DESCRIBES JESUS

- The hair of His head was white as snow, signifying great wisdom and purity.
- His eyes like a fiery flame show a righteous indignation for evil.
- Feet like fine bronze show the strength and stability of His Kingdom.
- A voice like cascading waters shows that He spoke with power and majesty.
- In His hand were the 7 stars referred to as the "angels of the seven churches" in v. 20. Some hold to the belief of guardian angels while others believe it is the church leaders.
  - The point here is that God is sovereign and is holding the entire church securely in His hand (Matthew 16:18), giving confidence to the persecuted churches.
- A sword came from his mouth, symbolizing His Word and ability to judge mankind.
- His face was shining like the sun at full strength. The glory of Jesus was so great, that it was as hard to look at Him as it is to look at the sun at high noon. John was seeing His glory at its brightest just as he had in His transfiguration (Matthew 17:2).

## THE MYSTERY OF THE SEVEN STARS (REVELATION 1:17-20)

### "I FELL AT HIS FEET LIKE A DEAD MAN"

Out of healthy fear and reverence, John fell at the feet of Jesus. John worshipped Him and his worship gave way to comfort and blessing as Jesus reached out to comfort John and told him, "Don't be afraid."

- We need a healthy fear and reverence for the Lord (Proverbs 1:7), but if we are honoring God we have no reason to be afraid of Him.

## A REASON TO NOT BE AFRAID

Jesus tells John, "I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades."

- Jesus has overcome death and because He lives, we can too. Through Christ, we are freed of fear, shame, and guilt and find joy in this life and for eternity.

## THE MYSTERY EXPLAINED

Jesus has comforted John and before beginning Revelation, He explains that the lampstands are the 7 churches and the stars in His hand are the "angels" or representatives of the churches.

- Though ch. 1-3 refer to the 7 churches, they are a warning to all churches to deal with internal problems.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- If we keep the words of this book (Revelation 1:3), it will change the way we live.
- As the church, we are to display the light of Christ, making Him visible to the world.
- If we are not displaying the light of Christ as dark as the world is now, what makes us think we will as the world grows darker?