

Gaining a Vision of Christ: Through His Revelation

Revelation 1:9-20

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Introduction: Opening Illustration: John Bunyan. We have previously considered verses 1-8 of this chapter, summarized as: Gaining a vision of Christ through His Word (:1-3) & through His love (:4-8). We come this morning to verses 9-20, which I note: Gaining a vision of Christ through His revelation. Verses 9-10 give us John's identification, his location, & his situation. John identifies himself as "*your brother, & companion in tribulation* (sore trouble, persecution), & *in the kingdom* (the kingdom of God & part of God's family –cf. verse 5), "*& patience of Jesus Christ* (endurance because of the hope of faith)." These are 3 things that all believers share ("*companion*"). John is located in exile, where he is shut off from family, friends, & fellowship. He gives 2 reasons for his exile: "*for the Word of God* (his preaching of the Word), & *for the testimony of Jesus Christ* (his proclaiming of the Lord – Jesus is Lord)." His exile is upon "*the isle that is called Patmos.*" This was a small rocky island, ten miles long & six miles wide; southwest of Ephesus. He had been sent by Domitian, the Roman emperor, to labor in the mines. John explains his situation as "*in the Spirit*" (in a spiritual state, where supernatural revelation given to him). He is there "*on the Lord's day* (the day belonging to the Lord, an "imperial day.") The day of the Lord can refer to the future day giving the future times & events recorded in this book (John has been conveyed by the Spirit to the Day of the Lord?). But it is best interpreted as the first day of the week, or Sunday. In the following verses John describes the command (to write), the churches (to whom to write), & the Christ (about Whom to write). Might we gain a vision of Christ here through His revelation in order to love Him more, serve Him better, & praise Him always!

I. The **Command** - to write (:11 & see :19)

A. "*Write in a book.*"

B. A command which is found 12 times in Revelation, after each vision (except 10:4).

II. The **Churches** - to whom to write (:11)

A. The message of the entire book is sent to each of these seven churches.

B. These churches are representative of all churches of that day, down to today.

III. The **Christ** - about Whom to write (:10-20)

A. His **Deity** (:10-11) [He is God - able to defend it?]
clear as a trumpet (:10).

1. His voice - great & loud,

2. His name -

a. "*Alpha & Omega*" (cf. :8) - first & last letters of the Greek alphabet.

b. "*The first & the last*" - cf. Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12 - Christ is God.

B. His **Sovereignty** (:12-18) [He is King - able to declare it?]

1. Over the church(es) (:12-13) >

- a. The picture: seven "*candlesticks*" (lampstands) (:20).
- b. The purpose: lampstands are to give light.
- c. The principle: Christ is in the midst (Matthew 18:20).
- d. The Person: "*the Son of man*" - used by Christ of Himself over 80 times in N.T.

(1) First used in Psalm 8:4 - Christ's coming in humility.

(2) Last used in Revelation 14:14 - Christ's coming in power.

- e. The portrayal - His clothing ("garment" – robe; cf. Isa. 6:1-2, "*train*" – robe of majesty).

(1) Fully clothed (only time stripped of His garments was on the cross).

(2) "*Golden girdle*" - belt or sash used by the high priest to bind up the garments.

3. Over all (:14-15) > (cf. the description of Christ in Daniel 7:9)

- a. His white hair (:14) ("*like wool*"; "*as white as snow*") – Illustrate: White wigs of old.

(1) Speaks of His eternity - He is timeless.

(2) Speaks of His purity - He is sinless.

(3) Speaks of His sagacity (wisdom) - He is peerless.

- b. His eyes (:14).

(1) Searching righteousness - Proverbs 15:3 & Hebrews 4:13.

(2) Divine judgment upon all that is impure - Hebrews 12:29.

- c. His feet (:15) [previously on earth His feet carried the Gospel – Rom. 10:15; Isa. 52:7].

(1) Like brass (bronze) purified in the furnace (cf. Exodus 38:30, "*brazen altar*").

(2) Feet, once scarred with the wounds of nails; now shall trample His enemies.

- d. His voice (:15).

(1) Broad and deep as the sea.

(2) Thundering sound of the breakers on Patmos' coastline.

4. Over individuals (:16-17a) >

- a. The relationship to Christ (:16) - seven stars in His right hand (cf. :12). [place of authority & control – “All church authority & spiritual rule is in Christ. The Church is not the work of man. The Church is an absolute monarchy & Christ is the absolute Head. An understanding of this truth would eliminate many of the human dictators that have usurped divine authority in many churches” (Barrett).]

(1) Angels - messenger (or pastor) of the church.

(2) What is true of these angels is true of every believer (in His hand - John 10:28).

(3) Speaks of possession, protection, & purpose.

- b. The recognition of Christ (:16).

- (1) His mouth - came a two-edged sword (principle offensive weapon of Rome).
- (2) His face - as *"the sun shineth in his strength"* (cf. His transfiguration, Mt. 17:2).
 - c. The response to Christ (:17a).
- (2) John fell at His feet as if dead.
- (3) Compare the response of others who saw God [Abraham (Gen 17:1-3); Moses (Ex. 3:5), Moses & Aaron (Num. 16:20-22), Joshua in 5:13-15; Job in 42:1-6; Isaiah in 6:1-5; Ezekiel in 1:28; Daniel in 8:17; & Paul (Acts 9:4).]

Conclusion: What is your response when confronted with the glory & majesty of Christ? Will you fall at His feet spiritually & proclaim with Paul, *"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"* Based on our study thus far, can you defend His Deity? Will you declare His Sovereignty? Are you demonstrating His Lordship? Recall how John identified himself as *"companion in tribulation"* (:9). Consider the trial & tribulation in the life of John Bunyan. If he had not gone to prison, would we have "Pilgrim's Progress"? If John had not been exiled to Patmos, would we have Revelation? Obviously, we know that was in God's plan.

But what about our trials & should persecution come to us? Will it cause us to be discouraged, even leading to despair? Or will it cause us to be more devoted & lead us to a greater dedication to Christ? Illustrate with the hymn story of "Turn your eyes upon Jesus." In the midst of trials & tribulations, we need to turn our eyes upon Jesus (the fruit of affliction?). Why? Because in the good times we often have our eyes upon self; but in the hard times we are caused to look to Christ. It has been said, "There is divine purpose & design in suffering for the good of God's children & for the glory of God's name." May we gain this proper vision of Christ, through His Word, His love, & His revelation, that we might love Him more, serve Him better, & praise Him always!