

A Glorious Vision Of Jesus

Intro

This morning is the first Sunday after Christmas and the last Sunday of the year.

- want to preach the glory and beauty of Christ, namely seen in 2nd coming
- Christmas/advent = first coming — should point us to his work of salvation & 2nd coming
- Christmas grabs our attention w/ all its delights - let us finish year w/ attention grabbed by Christ

WHY?? B/c WE NEED IT!! We need a GLORIOUS PICTURE OF CHRIST!!

1) we need it b/c the glory of Christ gets lost compared to the many pleasures that fight for our affection and love (i'm HORRIBLE at Christmas time). How easy it is to let the comforts of life crowd out Christ

2) we need it b/c life is hard - full of pain, death, loneliness, natural disasters, evil - perhaps looking back on this year, it has been one of the hardest periods of your life or you are in a real season of pain or loneliness or temptation - you NEED a glorious picture of Christ!

All of this is why we need a glorious picture of Christ!

This is the heart of Christianity - to see the glory of Christ and respond w/ repentance and faith - to see and savor and worship Christ - WORSHIP CHRIST WITH ME THIS MORNING!

Context of the letter of Revelation to the churches during the first century - they were facing several trials, trials that are similar to us today -

- facing persecution from religious world and secular world
- wars, famines, sickness, death
- facing pressure to conform to society - tempted by worldly pleasures
- false teachers polluting the scriptures
- and a great and terrible evil was against them, namely Satan

And Revelation teaches that these scenarios will continue throughout all of history — — — —

we face them today - false religions, pressures of conforming to culture, persecutions, wars, natural disasters and the same terrible evil and the same terrible enemy of God, who is out to destroy God's creation and his people

And in this situation - John gives us Rev 1:1!

Rev 1:1 the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show his servants...

- the Revelation = apocalypse (grk: apokálypsis) original meaning the unveiling of
- Christ revealing the unseen heavenly realities
- given to the people of God to comfort us, strengthen us, warn us, enable us to persevere in purity

LOTR: 2 Towers - Gandalf (Ride of Rohirim) - soldiers fighting, loosing, the ride to meet enemy, way outnumbered, then Gandalf the WHITE shows up, his glory inspires soldiers, dazzles enemies - they win!

God knows what they need, God knows what we need, and in this letter he revealed to them the great spiritual realities that were true then and the great spiritual realities of the future - namely the glory of the risen and victorious Christ!

MAIN BODY

So let's look, big picture, of what Christ reveals to the church in this first chapter thru John:

vs 4

- + "7 churches in Asia" - 7 means completeness, referring to all the churches there -
- + "Grace and peace" coming to you from the triune God - God in his complete fullness as The eternal Father; The Holy Spirit, and Jesus the Son of God - Grace needed to persevere in their faith, and they can have peace despite the chaos that rages in the world.

**(Me and Kim holding Mason - can be in chaos, yet he can have peace b/c he is held)
yet it is triune God who holds us, who is sovereign and strong to save)**

vs 5:

- + the faithful witness - he was faithful to his task of coming to earth, living the perfect life we could not live and dying the death that we deserved, paying the ransom we couldn't pay - he persevered to death
- + firstborn of the dead - conquered death! sovereign over it - (refrain in letter: Lamb that was slain)
- + ruler of kings of earth - b/c of these ^, he is reigning king over all kings (namely his enemies), even kings of earth now (and ones to come!)

Doxology - John breaking into praise after describing Christ - meditation leads to worship!

- + a loving savior (not a selfish tyrant or dictator), his blood freed us - paid for our sin - again, a theme of the letter - it was the Cross that was the decisive victory over Satan. Now we are simply carrying out the victory, through struggle (picture of Christ's work - victory through pain), and we await final battle. But we FIGHT FROM A STANCE OF VICTORY NOT UNCERTAINTY (why our pain doesn't define us)

vs 6

- + "made us a kingdom, priests to God" from one of main promises of OT: Ex 19:6 - this king has put us in his kingdom where we reign with him, and worship & serve him, and extend his kingdom! (ministering to one another's needs...spiritual gifts...and to the world — evangelizing, acts of love

- 1 Peter 2:9 - royal priesthood - also in context of persecution & suffering - you are God's special people! Special people proclaiming excellencies of Christ who called you from darkness to light!

- + do you proclaim excellencies of Christ?! **(our men's DNA group)**

- + all this for the glory of God!

vs 7

- + his second coming!

(Just went to Star Wars - LOVED IT - mesmerized by this world of lightsabers and epic battles of good vs evil. The movies we go to can amaze and awe us w/ it's special affects - it awakens our imaginations, we see things on a screen that we barely can imagine. Star

Wars amazed the world, millions of people went to see the movie - highest grossing film in history so far)

Who didn't see it yet? Exactly, billions haven't seen it. Guess what...Star Wars is a cheap, 2-bit trick compared the second coming of Christ - EVERY EYE WILL SEE HIS COMING!!

The clouds he'll be riding on wont be special affects! The heavens will be ripped open, and there will be awe and wonder and wailing and mourning: ambiguity here - allusions from a few different OT verses - can mean tears of repentance for those who have mourned over their sin already, and (2) can mean tears of sadness and regret over the impending judgment by the Savior they have rejected

- which one are you?

vs 8

+ Alpha and Omega who was/is/to come - Jesus is the creator of history and he is the goal of all history - all history is advancing with its chief end as the recognition and celebration of Christ as king to the glory of the triune God

Now John is given a vision of Christ now, in his present reality, and it is breathtaking!

vs 9-11 - John being given this vision of Jesus that he is suppose to send out to all the churches

vs 12

- Son of Man amidst the lamp stands (v20 lamp stands = churches) (2:1 walking amongst)
- Christ is not far off from his people, but with them, in the middle of them
- he is "not an absentee land lord" (Osborne 87).
- he is the king of kinds sovereignly involved in supporting them during trials and persecutions

vs 13-16

Next have 8 descriptions of Jesus drawn from OT - carried throughout the rest of the book

- not a literal description, but metaphorical - they dont necessarily describe what he'll look like, but more who he is in all of his power and glory! This is meant to awaken our imaginations that fill our hearts with awe and wonder - saying "THAT'S MY SAVIOR!"

+ Long robe and golden sash - priestly! exalted! dignified! royal!

+ White hair - infinite wisdom, total knowledge

+ Eyes like flame of fire - penetrating divine insight into our hearts to know and to judge
(mom's eyes, parents' eyes when they catch their kid in sin, perhaps lying - the look)

+ Bronze feet - strength of Christ over all (like RB/Cam! that cant be taken down -Boomer voice)

+ Voice like roar of many waters - the awesome voice of God (see v10 a trumpet) (a Dad's voice)

+ Right hand holding seven stars - he controls the angelic realm

+ Mouth 2-edged sword - He is the supreme judge - pronouncing and executing justice/judgmt

+ Face like sun shining in full strength - almost sums up the others - Jesus in all his
OVERWHELMING GLORY!

CONCLUSION

This is your Savior - now! He is no longer a humble babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, but a glorious king wrapped in light and infinite power and wisdom.

Now stand him up next to your greatest earthly treasure - stand him up against your greatest problem and temptation

Let me remind you of two things again about this glorious savior of ours:

1) He is with us now, he is in the midst of us now - in our problems and pain, in our joys and triumphs.

- so let your imagination run wild today by seeing with our spiritual eyes the REALITY of who Christ is now, ruling over the world, and with us now

2) He is coming again!

- are you ready? are you excited?! Let us persevere until the end, and let us be risk-taking in our lives as we testify to the excellencies of Christ to a world in desperate need of something real, and beautiful and glorious!