

## 1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ

In this topic, we are beginning a new series of topics on the future from the book of Revelation. Our desire is to help you learn to explain to your physical and spiritual children what the book of Revelation teaches about the future. In the first two chapters of Genesis, we see what life was like before there was sin on the earth. In the last two chapters of Revelation, we will see what life is like when there is no more sin.

Revelation 1:1-2 says, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.” The word translated “revelation” means *to reveal something that has previously been unknown or hidden*. This means that in this book God has chosen to show followers of Christ things that were previously unknown. We also see that God has chosen to reveal these things to His servants and not to every person. As a result, many people cannot understand what this book teaches because they are not followers of Christ and many become fearful instead of seeing the glory of Christ. Christ came the first time to die for sin. He will come the second time to rule over the earth for one thousand years in all of His glory.

We see that the things that are revealed about Christ and future events will be fulfilled soon. Christ said, in Revelation 22:12-13, “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.*” We see that Christ is coming quickly so that He can reward everyone according to his work. The Lord sent an angel to bring this message to John. The angel was to explain what would happen in the future so that John could write these things in a book. We see that John was to give witness of three things as He wrote this book.

First, John was to bear witness to the Word of God. When John wrote the book of John he was an eyewitness of most of the things that are written in that book. In contrast, the things written in the book of Revelation were revealed to him by the angel because he did not see these things because most of them are still future. The word translated “bear witness” means *to be a witness or to know because it was taught by divine revelation or inspiration*. 2 Peter 1:19-21 says, “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.” In this case, John was given revelation from God revealed to John through the ministry of the angel.

Second, John was to bear witness to the testimony of Jesus Christ. John had spent most of his life telling others about the teaching, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, we see that John was given a picture of Christ as He moves among the churches in all of His glory. Third, John was to bear witness of the things that he saw. The things that John saw are defined in Revelation 1:19, where we read: “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” The things that John had seen and which are, he

wrote in chapters one through three. The things which will be in the future are the things that John wrote about in the rest of the book of Revelation.

John went on to talk about those who will be blessed. Revelation 1:3 says, “Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.” In this verse, we see how all Christians including ourselves can be blessed. First, we see that we will be blessed as we read the words of this prophecy. Acts 15:21 says, “For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.” The people had heard the books written by Moses and also the prophets but they had not understood. In 2 Corinthians 3:14-16, we read, “But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.” Most of the people could not understand the Scriptures, because they lacked spiritual life. In contrast, the Holy Spirit can give understanding to every true Christian.

Second, we see that those who hear of the words of this prophecy will be blessed. The word translated “hear” means *to hear so that there is understanding*. 2 John 1:6 says, “This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.” In this verse, we see that God wants us to hear so that there is understanding and obedience to this command. Third, the word translated “keep” means *to attend to carefully and to keep or obey*. Paul illustrated the meaning of this word when he said in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” Paul could look forward to the reward because he had carefully obeyed the Lord.

Revelation 1:4-6 goes on to say, “John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Instead, we see the prayer of John for the readers of this book. We see that the original readers were the seven churches which are in Asia (today this would be the western part of the country of Turkey).

The word translated “grace” means *the kindness shown to us by God that brings us joy because of the salvation that has been given to us as a free gift*. The word translated “peace” speaks of the inner peace that we have because of the right relationship that we have with the Lord and with others. First, this peace comes from the Father (the One who is and was and is to come. Second, this peace comes from the Holy Spirit. His sevenfold ministry is described in Isaiah 11:2, where we read: “The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” Third, this peace comes from Jesus Christ. Christ said, in John 14:26-27, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit,

whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” This peace is a peace that passes all human understanding. In this verse, we see that this peace comes from all three members of the Trinity.

We also see that these verses tell us five things about Christ. First, Christ is the faithful witness. Hebrews 2:1-3 says, “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.” Christ is the faithful witness to the Father. Second, Christ is the firstborn from the dead. Christ was the first to receive a resurrection body that will last for eternity. Because Christ has defeated death He will also give us new bodies that will last for eternity. 1 Corinthians 15:54 says, “So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

Third, Christ is the ruler over the kings of the earth. In Matthew 28:18, we read, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. This authority includes authority over all of the kings of the earth. Fourth, Christ is the One who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. Revelation 5:9 says, “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. We see that it is the blood of Christ that has redeemed to God so that we become His children. Fifth, Christ made us kings and priests to His God and Father. Revelation 5:10 says, “And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” We will one day rule with Christ. In addition, as priests we can enter into the presence of the Father through Christ to bring our requests to Him.

We see that all glory and dominion belong to Christ forever and ever. Glory is the honor resulting from a good opinion. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” As Christians, we are called to do all that we do in a way that will bring glory to the Lord. Dominion speaks of the strength or power with which one rules. In Matthew 28:18, we read, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” Here, in Revelation, we see that the authority that has been given to Christ will last forever. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to bring glory to Christ and recognize His authority in all that they say and do. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children by your example how to bring glory to Christ.