

## John's Response to Christ's Revelation - Part 1

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AM Service

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### Text:

Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10: I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11: Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12: And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13: And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14: His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15: And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16: And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17: And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. 19: Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; 20: The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

### Introduction

The title of this book is *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ."* The word "**revelation**" in Greek is "**Apokalypsis**" which means **revealing, uncovering, unveiling, disclosing**. The purpose of this book is to reveal Jesus Christ and His purposes. **Jesus Christ is both the source and the object of revelation.** The very title of this book tells us it is not God's intention conceal but to reveal Himself. He delights to make known, not to obscure nor to confuse.

Bishop Williams wrote, *"If there be no revelation, we have no hope, and can have no comfort in our death, and no assurance of immortality after it. If there be no revelation, we are in a perpetual maze, as if we were at sea without star or compass and knew not what course to take to gain our harbor."*

And I will add – **if there be no revelation, there will be no true worship.** As we have learned in our past sermons, worship *"is a spontaneous and natural response to the revelation of God*

*and His greatness.*” And we have seen examples of that in our past sermons. We have looked at **Moses**, **Isaiah**, and **Peter** and how they responded when they saw a supernatural vision of God’s greatness and holiness. This morning I want us to consider another man who had a life-changing vision of God, namely, the apostle John.

### **Who was John?**

Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

John is one of the twelve apostles. He is the author of several books of the New Testament, namely, **the Gospel of John**, the **three Epistles of John**, and **the book of Revelation**. He is known as “*John the beloved*” and also identified as “*the disciple whom Jesus loved.*”

John, along with his brother James, were first known as the “*sons of thunder.*” Our Lord called them as “*sons of thunder*” for a reason. In the gospels we find John **debating** with the other apostles about **who was the greatest**. On one occasion, when the people in a village of Samaria were not responsive to the message of Jesus, John with his brother James wanted to **call down fire** from heaven on the people.

Luke 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

They asked the Lord, if they can call fire down from heaven to destroy the people in a village of Samaria. This response of James and John to the Samaritans reveals their “*thunderous nature.*”

So, John started out a self-seeking, self-promoting, hasty, rough, quick temper, and reckless disciple. But God transformed him and his brother. At the end of his life, John, who was known as of one of the “*sons of thunder,*” became known as the “*apostle of love.*” The theme of love runs throughout his writings. **John greatly mellowed** as he grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **No, he did not compromise truth** as he grew older. He did not tolerate error and sin. If you read his writings, specially his epistles, you will see how **tender and loving he is and yet he stood firm** when it came to revealed truth. You will see in his letters, **he is a man of grace and truth**. This is a quality and characteristic **he learned from our Saviour, who Himself is full of grace and truth.**

Now, in this book of Revelation, John refers himself as “*a brother and companion of believers in tribulation.*” Because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, John at this time was exiled in the isle of Patmos. The church of Jesus Christ is under severe persecution and great opposition. The enemies of the cross banished him in the isle of Patmos to deny him the opportunity to teach and preach the Word to his congregation. They had taken him away from his family and from the ministry that he loved. And all this was designed to stop the spread true Christianity. And yet despite the attempts of these persecutors John refused to be silenced concerning the gospel. He had remained faithful under trial.

Even with this exile, separated from his family and his congregation, John doesn't harbor bitterness. Many times, when we go through trials and hardships we become bitter, but not so with John. He doesn't question God's providence and wisdom. He doesn't complain about his lot in life as if his entire world has collapse around him. Rather during this trial, the Apostle John maintains a faithful walk with God.

And something happened while John was exiled at Patmos. **This banishment turned out to be the most glorious event in John's Christian life.** This time of exile for John was owned and blessed of God and gave John a glorious vision of Christ.

There are three thoughts from this text that I want us to consider, namely: **The Revelation of the Person and Purpose of Christ, the Response to the Person and Purpose of Christ, and the Reassurance in the Person and Purpose of Christ.** Today, we will cover the Revelation, then next Sunday, God willing, we will talk about the Response and the Reassurance.

### **I – The Revelation of the Person and Purpose of Christ**

Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

What was John doing while exiled in the isle of Patmos?

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

John though in the midst of trial and persecution, though exiled in an isolated island separated from family and friends and congregation, and yet John is in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. **John is still spiritually minded despite all his troubles.** He is cut off from many things, yet his heart and mind are still under the gracious influences of the Spirit of God. **He is still worshiping God.** By the way, that's the way we all should spend the Lord's Day—be in the Spirit seeking to worship the Lord God who is worthy of worship. In that act of worship, new sight of the glory of Christ was unveiled for him.

While he was in the Spirit worshiping on the Lord's Day, John experienced one of the greatest times in his Christian life. For while he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day that he was given a glorious vision of Jesus Christ.

First John heard a voice like a trumpet. **A voice like a trumpet.** The trumpet is a very significant instrument in ancient times. They were blown at special events, to herald the arrival of special seasons, to give alarm of war, a call to assembly, or a command to march. Trumpets also attend significant events in this book. But here, we do not have a trumpet, but a voice as of a trumpet, signifying its power and the attention it commands. **The voice is like a trumpet loud and clear announcing who Christ is and His eternal plan and purposes.**

When John heard the voice, he turned around and what he saw affected him as never before.

Revelation 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

Upon hearing the loud piercing voice John turned and the first thing that caught his attention was **the seven golden candlesticks**. The candlesticks, Jesus makes it clear in verse 20, **represent the seven churches in Asia Minor**.

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the **seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches**.

Understand that these churches are also representatives of churches today. But then his attention moved from the seven golden candlesticks to the One standing in the middle of the candlesticks.

Revelation 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

There is One who is standing in the middle of the candlesticks spoke saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last ..." Revelation 1:11.

Jesus stands in the middle of His church and reveals Himself. He shows Himself in all of His beauty and all of His glory and in all His majesty. Now John's mind and his heart are now taken up with Christ. He is gripped by what he sees. His eyes are fixed on the Lord of glory. **He is completely focused on Christ. And we need to be the same.**

### **What kind of Jesus John sees?**

John sees a vision of Christ he had never seen before. What he sees is without a doubt difficult for John to describe.

Revelation 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14: His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15: And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16: And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

There was a **survey made** years ago, asking **why many do not like going to church**. Why do many dislike the organized church? The common answer that was given was that many men found **the Jesus that was proclaimed in churches is too frail and too weak**.

Oh, may we never give that impression to those who visit our church that we have a weak and helpless Jesus, for that's not the Jesus we believe and that's not the Jesus of the Bible. That's not the Jesus that John saw. So, what kind of Jesus did John see? The Jesus that John saw was standing in the midst of the candlesticks wearing a long robe with a golden sash wrapped around His chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, like a blazing fire. His feet are like fine bronze, as having been refined in a furnace; and His voice is like the voice of many waters; like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand He held seven stars, and coming out of His mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword.

His face was like the blinding bright sun shining in full strength. Does that sound like a helpless and weak Jesus? Absolutely not! The Jesus that John see first of all is ...

### **1. The One who is the beginning and end of all things ...**

The Jesus that John sees is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. There are people who say Jesus never claimed to be God. But clearly, they are mistaken for we read here in [Revelation 1:11](#) Jesus saying, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last ...”

This description **refers to His eternal existence**. Jesus has always existed and will always exist. This is an attribute that God alone possesses, so when Jesus says, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last ([Revelation 22:13](#)), He is claiming equality with the eternal God the Father. He is the One who created and owns the universe; the One who has all the power and authority; the One who rules and reigns.

Jesus claimed to be equal with the Father in His earthly ministry as well, telling the religious leaders, “before Abraham was [born], I am” ([John 8:58](#)). No wonder they crucified Him because they understood His statement as a claim to be the Lord, the great “I AM” of [Exodus 3:14](#).

If you are still not convinced that Jesus Christ is God, please turn to ... [Isaiah 44:6](#) says, “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

Jesus is not a weak and helpless man from Galilee, Jesus is the eternal One and the Almighty who will one day return to be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords! This is the Jesus that John saw in the isle of Patmos.

Secondly, the Jesus that John sees is ...

### **2. The One who has a plan and purpose for the church ...**

[Revelation 1:11](#) Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, **What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia;** unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

The Jesus that John sees is the One who has a plan and purpose for the church. The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last is in the midst of the seven candlesticks. As I have mentioned a while ago, the candlesticks are the seven churches in Asia Minor and Jesus will write letters to these churches. These churches are also representatives of churches today.

As Jesus stands in the middle of the church and He has something today to the church. **Jesus has a plan and that plan is the Church.** The Church is central in His plan. The Church is **not something peripheral** to Jesus. It is **not something extra** to Jesus. It is **not something in addition** to discipleship or in addition to some other aspect of Christian lives. It is central to His plan. He has only one plan—that’s the Church!

There are those who say that Christianity in America is dying. We are becoming more and more a secular society, and churches are emptying out and they have statistics to prove it. Others say that the Church age is over. Church is irrelevant. They say that Christians should abandon the visible local churches because the Spirit of God is no longer in the church. But listen to what our Lord says in [Matthew 16:18](#), “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

I love this statement from our Lord. Because I can sense confidence, strength and certainty in these words. This statement is what gave me confidence and still does, when we set out to plant GTBBC here in Murrieta. This verse is my confidence, my mission, my goal, and my prayer. These words of Jesus Christ are tremendous words of comfort and encouragement. To those who love the church and know what the church represents on earth and who are aware of all that is against it, we need to hear these words of Jesus.

Going back to our text, John goes on to say in ...

[Revelation 1:13](#) And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Notice that He is clothed with a robe down to the feet, with a golden sash around His chest, which draw the attention to the fact that **He is a King and a Priest** but then **He also speaks**.

[Revelation 1:16](#) And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

Out of His mouth comes a sharp two-edged sword. The sword of the Word of God. This points to the truth that He is also a Prophet. He is **the King** who rules over us, He is a **Priest** who forgives us our sins and intercedes for us and He is a **Prophet** who speaks to us.

This is the Jesus Christ that John saw. This is the Jesus Christ that was revealed to John. How did John respond to this revelation of Jesus Christ?

[Revelation 1:17](#) And when I saw him, **I fell at his feet as dead**. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

As soon as John saw Jesus in all His glory and majesty, **all John can do is fall on his face** in worship. **The sight of Christ overwhelmed John**. Can you blame John? He is face to face with the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the Sovereign King, Ruler and Judge of all creation and all eternity. He responded in **humility**, **fear**, and **submission**. We will talk more of John's response next Sunday.

### **Closing Exhortations**

Understand that this glorious revelation was initiated by Christ. While it is true that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, it is also true that the Lord drew near to him first of all. In other words, the Lord revealed Himself to John. He came to His servant and by speaking to him got his attention.

[Revelation 1:10](#) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

John heard a voice and when he heard the voice he turned around and saw seven golden candlesticks and the Lord in the midst of them. John heard the voice of Jesus and he responded. I

hope you see **the importance of hearing and responding to the Word of the Lord**. If John had been inattentive and had preoccupied with something else, he would have never heard the Lord and if he had never heard the Lord, he would never have the privilege to see the Lord and to know Him as he did.

Inattention and preoccupation with other things would have robbed him of tremendous blessing. Sad to say, inattention and preoccupation with other things is causing many Christians miss out on what the Lord has for them. May we never fall into that state where we don't take time to let the Lord speak to us. Do you want to hear the voice of Almighty God? Do you want a greater revelation of God in your life? Brothers and sisters read the Bible! Spend time in His Word and in prayer. God speaks and reveals Himself through His Word, the Bible!

**AMEN!**