

REVELATION – SERMON 4

THE GLORIFIED CHRIST

Revelation 1:12-18

INTRODUCTION

- Some have become awestruck in the presence of famous people, even to the point of fainting.
- Think how profound an effect the mere presence of an esteemed man or woman can have upon us.
- How much more effect, then, will the presence of God Almighty have upon mankind?
- John on Patmos wheeled around to behold the source of this voice behind him, and upon doing so, he collapsed to the ground in awe and amazement.
- There is a day coming when all people will behold that same sight, and every knee shall bow before that same Lord.
- In these verses we are presented with the first vision in the book of the Revelation, and significantly, it is a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ in His glorious and majestic splendour.
- John's experience parallels that of many other prophets who were given a revelation of the glory of God, often early in their ministry (Exodus 33:22-23; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Isaiah 6:1-4; Acts 9:3;22:6)
- There are two main elements to John's vision here: the Lord Jesus Christ, and the seven golden candlesticks.
- Today we will focus on John's vision of Jesus Christ in His glory

I. HIS REGAL VESTMENTS (13)

A. Like unto the Son of Man

1. This is a clear allusion to Daniel 7:13
2. The Lord Jesus used this title of Himself in the gospels over 80 times
3. It emphasises His humanity

B. His robe

1. The long robe is associated with the honour and dignity of kings
2. The robe also indicates Christ's priestly office (Exodus 28:4)

C. His girdle

1. This corresponds to the girdle worn by the high priest (Exodus 28:6-8)

II. HIS RESPLENDENT VISAGE (14-16)

A. A sevenfold description of Christ's appearance

B. This is the only place in the New Testament that describes His appearance

C. The gospels never make reference to Christ's physical features

D. His hair – white like wool and snow (cf. Daniel 7:9-10)

1. There may be reference here to His eternal nature (Daniel 7:9; Micah 5:2)
2. More likely this represents His sinless purity (Isaiah 1:18)

E. His eyes – as a flame of fire (cf. Revelation 19:12; Daniel 10:6)

1. This speaks of Christ's omniscience, omnipresence and judgment (Proverbs 15:3; Jeremiah 17:10; 23:24)
2. No thing and no one is hidden from His sight (Hebrews 4:13)
3. To the church at Thyatira, the omniscience of Christ is emphasised (Revelation 2:18-19,23)
4. *Are we willing to pray, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."* (Psalm 139:23-24)

F. Feet – like burning brass (cf. Revelation 2:18)

1. Christ's feet are apparently bare, as were the priests' in their ministering in the tabernacle
2. Brass signifies strength
3. Brass signifies judgment (Exodus 27:1-2)
4. Christ will trample the winepress of God's wrath (Isaiah 63:2-3; Revelation 19:15)
5. His enemies will be made His footstool (Hebrews 10:12-13)

G. Voice – as the sound of many waters (cf. Ezekiel 43:2)

1. This signifies the power and majesty of God's word
 - a. His word spake the universe into being (Hebrews 11:3)
 - b. His word raises the dead (John 11:43)
 - c. He sustains and upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3)
 2. When God's word is proclaimed it should be with authority and power; it should be thundered to all the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)
 3. Those who do not heed the mighty Word of God in this life will be judged by it in the next (John 12:48)
- H. Hand – holding seven stars
1. These stars are the seven angels of the churches (1:20)
 2. They could be either literal angels, or human messengers (*angelos*) such as pastors of the churches
 3. The right hand is the hand of strength and blessing, and speaks of the protective hand of Christ over His churches (John 10:28)
- I. Mouth – sharp two-edged sword (cf. Isaiah 11:4)
1. This is the word of Christ, call the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17)
 2. This symbol of the power of Christ's word is used throughout Revelation (2:12,16;19:15,21)
 3. The two-edged sword of God's word brings salvation to the humble, but judgment to the proud
 - a. It cuts to the heart, bringing conviction of sin and creating faith in the repentant by the gospel (Hebrews 4:12-13)
 - b. It is the weapon by which Jesus Christ will judge and slay His enemies (John 12:48; 2 Thessalonians 2:8)
- J. Countenance – shining like the sun
1. John had a glimpse of this sight sixty years prior at the mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:2)
 2. Paul was blinded by this light on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 26:13)
 3. The light of the candlesticks and of the stars in His hand fade to insignificance in comparison to His matchless light (1 Timothy 6:16)

III. HIS REASSURING VOICE (17-18)

A. John's response to this vision

1. He fell at His feet as dead
2. This is the identical response of all those who beheld the glory of God (Isaiah 6:4; Ezekiel 1:28; 3:23; 43:3; 44:4; Daniel 8:17; 10:8; Matthew 17:6; Acts 9:4)
3. This same apostle had previously leaned on Jesus' breast (John 21:20)
4. His relationship with the glorified Christ was different to that of His state of humiliation (2 Corinthians 5:16)

B. The Lord's words of comfort

1. The right hand is used to strengthen and uplift the fallen (Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 17:7)
2. Fear not (John 6:20; 14:27)
3. I am the first and the last (cf. 1:11)
4. I am he that liveth, and was dead
5. Behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen
6. And have the keys of hell and of death (John 5:28-29)

CONCLUSION

1. The world, and many professing believers, have a flawed view of the Lord Jesus Christ
2. John's vision presents Him as the almighty King of the universe before whom all must bow.
3. Many people live in fear today – of troubles, finances, sickness and death
4. Yet they do not fear the One whom they ought to fear
5. Those who fear God need fear nothing else
6. Have you come to Him for righteousness, salvation and peace?
7. If you have yielded yourself to Him, there is nothing more to fear in this life, or the next
8. Though there are many things that might discourage us in this life, the assurance that Jesus Christ is alive for ever more will sustain us through them all (Job 19:25; Hebrews 12:1-3)