

Messages to the Churches #1

Revelation 1

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He is risen; He is risen indeed! Do we even think about the reality of this? Jesus suffered, was crucified, died, buried, and rose again on the 3rd day: what a glorious day!

We read all of Revelation 1 for our reading today which leads us into the next season, Eastertide. We will go through a series on the Seven Churches in Revelation in Chapters 2 and 3. Today we will focus on Chapter 1 of the Revelation of Jesus Christ: Jesus revealing himself to John at a particular time with a particular purpose. We are going to read Revelation Chapter 1 again.

This is a kind of Bible literature with symbolism and pictures which often refer to passages in Daniel and other OT books. We will get to these in the coming weeks. Today, let's focus on three ideas:

1. The book of Revelation is a picture given to John in a moment of time.

We can get a broad idea of something by seeing it at a particular time. For example, in the desert right now, you will see colorful flowers. However, in a month, it will be hot and dry and you will see the color brown. But then, in the rain of July, you will see green again and it's amazing. You have to hit it at different moments in time. Another example: is me: if you saw me last summer, I would look different from today because I lost 40 pounds due to being diagnosed with diabetes. Different pictures at different times.

We also have different pictures of Jesus in our minds: Jesus with the kids, Jesus being baptized by John, Jesus walking on water, Jesus with the woman at the well. But then during Holy week, we see him riding on a colt, debating, healing people, cleaning out the temple, sitting at the Passover meal with his disciples reclining at the table offering bread and wine, and then in the garden on Thursday night, then his arrest when he is asked if he Jesus, he says "I am" and the soldiers fall backwards, then his body bloody and beaten carrying the cross, his hands pierced by nails, Jesus dying on the cross, and then Mary discovering him alive in the garden and recognizing him. And now we have come to Easter morning when he is alive and then he is lifted to heaven, and then he appears as a loud voice talking to Saul. We have these pictures in our minds: What is he doing in your mind? We don't often think of Revelation 1: Jesus Revealed to John on Patmos.

2. Jesus revealed in all his glory. Let's take a moment and I will read this again so you can picture it in your mind.

Rev 1:12-16

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, **13** and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. **14** The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, **15** his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. **16** In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

What images stand out to you? The hair, the feet, the sword, the eyes? His face shining in all his brilliance looking into the sun? How did John even notice the other things after looking into something as bright as the sun? This is KING Jesus, revealed to John in all his glory, shining like the sun. You can think about the scenes with Jesus in it and reflect on those images but we forget that now Jesus has been resurrected and he shines like the sun.

3. Jesus has a message, something to say to John, the churches, and we need to be listening. Jesus is speaking in a particular time and place to the seven churches. In the next few weeks as you hear his words to the seven churches, hold on to this image. Are we willing to listen?