

TEXT

Revelation 4:7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

REVIEW

We studied the concept of being a man from some OT scriptures.

When David charged Solomon to be a man, it had to do with being a grown-up man instead of a child. David's charge to Solomon, to be a man, had to do with being strongly determined to obey what the Bible says.

When Isaiah told Israel to be men, it had to do with rejecting foolish notions that a child or animal might have, or pretend playing that a child might do, in favor of having mature ways of understanding and acting.

So, the meaning is: use your mind to understand the truth about God.

It indicates the qualities of wisdom, understanding,

It indicates thinking, reason, logic, wit, sense, intelligence.

LESSON

This evening, look at this in some of the NT scriptures.

1 Corinthians 14:18-20 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: 19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. 20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

Geneva: be of ripe age

NKJV, ESV: be mature

G546 *telios* complete, perfect, of full age

We know that children like to show what they can do. A child often will want someone's attention, "Look what I can do" or "Watch this." But often children don't understand what they're saying or doing.

I remember that when I was a child, I learned a song from the radio, "Delta Dawn." I used to love to get someone's attention and sing it. But I had no idea what the lyrics of the song meant.

A small child may repeat words he has heard, creating a mangled version because he doesn't understand what he's hearing.

Those things are understandable in children, but not in adults. So the apostle tells us not to be like children in understanding, but to be men in understanding.

1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

Geneva, KJV: quit you like men

NKJV: be brave

ESV: act like men

G407 *andrizomai* literally "to man"

RWP: Play the man...show yourselves men

This saying seems to exhort Christians to courage.

A child might get scared of something he really need not be afraid of.

-a loud noise; the dark; imaginary beings

But a man would not be afraid of such things.

The Martyrdom of Polycarp purports to give an eye-witness history of the martyrdom of Polycarp. According to that account, when Polycarp was being led into the arena, he and others heard a voice say, “Be strong, Polycarp and play the man!”

Oxford martyrs October 16, 1555 - Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley

Hugh Latimer: “Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle by God’s grace in England as shall never be put out.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the prime example of someone who did exactly this: to be the man!

Our pastors: Our Lord Jesus works in our pastors to make them able to “play the man.”

Every Christian: Our Lord Jesus works in all of His disciples to make us able to “play the man.”

This is how God will take us through whatever times are coming:

Our Lord Jesus became a man, and set the example for all to follow of playing the man.

- He does not flit from one thing to another as a child might, but keeps his attention on the word of God.
- He does not childishly think or pretend that anything else has the powers that only God has, but...
- He does not delight in getting men’s applause, or in doing or saying things he does not understand, as a child might. Instead, He has a mature, grown-up understanding.
- He does not get afraid of things that cannot harm him, like a child would. Instead, he faces dangers in the confidence that if he fears God, he has nothing else to fear.

He, by the Holy Spirit, sets pastors in front of His congregations, and gives them strength to quit themselves like men, both following the example of Jesus and setting an example for the believers.

Every Christian, then, trusting in the Lord, plays the man.