

Title: **REVELATION**
 “The Revelation of Jesus Christ”

Text: Revelation 1:1-3

Date: Tuesday Evening—September 28, 2003

Tape # Y-42b

Readings: *Bobbie Estes and Larry Brown*

Introduction:

(Revelation 1:1-3) "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John: (2) Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. (3) Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand."

It has been my singular object in these surveys of the Bible to show clearly that the singular subject, theme, and message of the entire Book of God, the Old Testament and the New, is the Person, work and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. As in creation, providence and redemption, so in the Holy Scriptures, it is the purpose of God "*that in all things he might have the preeminence*" (Col. 1:18).

HIM BOOK

The Book of God is a book all about Christ (Luke 24:27, 44-48). The Bible is a Him Book. It is all about Him.

- All the promises and blessings of God given to sinful men and women are in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Apart from Christ, God promises nothing but wrath; and every supposed blessing will prove to be a curse.
- All the love, mercy and grace of God is in Christ.
- All the revelation and knowledge of the triune God is in Christ.

Christ is not only the central message of Holy Scripture, he is the message of Holy Scripture. To understand that is to have the key that opens the Word of God and reveals its treasures.

That which is true of the whole Volume of Inspiration is especially and gloriously true of the last, closing chapters of the Volume, the Book of Revelation. This last book of the Bible is Christ's revelation of himself to his servants. This Book is “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*” (1:1). It is not the revelation of St. John, but “*the Revelation of Jesus Christ*” given to and recorded by John. It is not the book of revelations (plural). It does not contain many revelations. It contains one revelation seen in many things. It is “*the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

TWO POINTS

In his book, “More Than Conquerors,” William Hendriksen made two points that are crucial to a proper understanding of the Book of Revelation. *First*, “the theme of this book is: the Victory of Christ and of his Church over the Dragon (Satan) and his helpers.” The

Apocalypse intends to show you, dear believer, that things are not what they seem!” God's purpose is not in jeopardy. Christ, his church, and his truth will be triumphant at last.

The second point Hendriksen made is about the visions John describes. **Each vision, or section of this book, must be interpreted as a vision covering the entire gospel age.** “Each section,” Hendriksen wrote, “gives us a description of the entire Gospel Age, from the first to the second coming of Christ, and is rooted in Israel's history under the old dispensation to which there are frequent references.” Confusion comes when men try to mix the visions together and make them form a prophetic history of world events. Each vision is a picture of the Person and work of Christ in redemption, grace and judgment throughout the gospel age.

Follow that basic, simple guide and you will not greatly err in interpreting the Book of Revelation, and your heart will be comforted and thrilled in reading what God has determined to do for you and with you in Christ. A general survey of these twenty-two chapters of Inspiration will give the reader a clear understanding of the fact that the revelation given to John and recorded in this Book is “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

FAITHFUL WITNESS

1. Christ is “*the faithful witness*” (Rev. 1:5).

This title refers to our Savior's prophetic office. He is that Prophet of whom Moses spoke (Deut. 18:15; John 6:14), both faithful and true. He is the faithful witness of God to his people (John 1:14,1 8), and our faithful witness before the holy Lord God, as our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:12).

FIRST BEGOTTEN

2. Our Savior is “*the first begotten of the dead*” (Rev. 1:5).

This refers to our Redeemer's priestly office. If he is “*the first begotten of the dead,*” then he must have once died. He died for the sins of his people and rose again for their justification. When he arose as our Head and Representative, “*he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us*” (Heb. 9:12). With his own precious blood, our great High Priest has opened for us a way of free access to God (Heb. 10:19-22).

PRINCE OF KINGS

3. Our Redeemer is “*the prince of the kings of the earth*” (Rev. 1:5).

By virtue of his finished work of redemption, the God-man, our Mediator, has been made the sovereign Monarch of the universe (John 17:2; Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:9-11). He is Lord and King even over his enemies. The

kings of the earth have their crowns and kingdoms from him; they rule by his decree, doing his will (Prov. 21:1); and one day soon they will all bow before his throne and glorify him as King.

HIM THAT LOVED US

4. The Lord Jesus is “*him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God*” (Rev. 1:5-6).

He “*loved us*” particularly and distinctively, with an everlasting, immutable love. Because he loved us, he chose us in eternal election, became our Surety in the covenant of grace, and with his Father, predestinated us unto heavenly glory.

Therefore, he “*washed us from our sins in his own blood.*” By the shedding of his blood, the Lord Jesus Christ effectually washed away the sins of God's elect. He washed our sins from the record of heaven, from the memory of God, and washed us from our sins, making us holy and righteous in the sight of God! That is the work of Christ in redemption.

All whom he loved, he washed, and in the fulness of time, he makes them “*kings and priests unto God.*” That speaks of regeneration and conversion. Christ, sending his Spirit to redeem sinners, gives us a new, holy nature by which we are made to reign over the lusts of our flesh, so that we are no longer under the dominion of sin.

And as priests, consecrated to God, we have direct access to God through his blood.

HIM THAT LIVETH

5. The Son of God says, “*I am he that liveth*” (Rev. 1:18).

He lives forever because he is Life! Apart from him there is no life. He lives forever because he is the living God. But here he is talking about himself as the God-man, our Mediator, who once was dead, having died as our Substitute for the satisfaction of divine justice. He died! We thank God for that; but he is now alive for evermore. Christ Jesus lives forever on behalf of his elect, those for whom he died.

- He lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).
- He lives to give eternal life to all his redeemed ones (John 17:2).
- Because He lives we live also. We live in him, by the virtue of his death and by the power of his life.

HOLDS THE KEYS

6. Our all-glorious Lord Jesus Christ holds “*the keys of hell and of death*” (Rev. 1:18).

Hell, in this place, simply refers to the grave. The Lord Jesus Christ, by the virtue of his resurrection, has power, authority and dominion over death and the grave (Ps. 68:18-20; 1 Cor. 15:51-58).

(Psalms 68:18-20) "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*. (19) Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, even the God of our salvation. Selah. (20) *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death."

(1 Corinthians 15:51-58) "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (55) O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? (56) The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. (57) But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

He conquered death, hell, and the grave when he died for us and rose again. Therefore, these great terrors have

no power over us to do us harm, and should cause us no fear (Heb. 2:14-15). Christ has delivered us from spiritual death in regeneration, the first resurrection (John 5:25), and shall deliver us from death and the grave in the resurrection of our bodies at the last day. It is written, “*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power*” (Rev. 20:6).

HOLDS THE STARS

7. He who is the Head of the church is “*he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*” (Rev. 2:1).

These seven golden candlesticks are the churches of Christ in this world. How blessed are those people who are privileged to gather with God's saints in public worship (Matt. 18:20). The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, walks in the midst of his churches!

The seven stars are gospel preachers, God's appointed pastors, who are the angels, messengers of God, to his churches. The Lord Jesus Christ holds them in his right hand, puts them where he wants them, gives them the messages they are responsible to deliver, uses them as he sees fit, and protects them as they go about his business. Let every true gospel preacher be esteemed by God's saints as an angel of God sent with a message from God for their souls (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

LION OF JUDAH

8. He who is our Savior is “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah*” (Rev. 5:5).

Our Savior sprang from the tribe of Judah and is comparable to a lion. Like a lion, he is strong and courageous. Like a lion, he devours his enemies. Like a lion, he always prevails. He prevailed over our enemies. He prevailed with God as our Surety and Substitute. And he prevails over the hearts of chosen sinners in saving grace.

ROOT OF DAVID

9. Our Savior is called “*the Root of David*” (Rev. 5:5).

Later, he is called “*the Root and offspring of David*” (22:16). He is both the God from whom David obtained his life and the Man who came from the root of David's house. As a Man, our Savior arose “*as a root out of a dry ground*” (Isa. 53:2). Yet, he is the Root from which all his people draw their life. The Root of our family tree is Jesus Christ himself!

THE LAMB ON THE THRONE

10. “*In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb*” (Rev. 5:6).

That Lamb standing in the midst of the throne of God is Christ our Savior, who was slain for us.

- He is seen standing in the midst of the throne because he is the center of God's decrees and works and the One who executes all God's purposes.
- He alone is worthy and able to open the book of divine predestination and fulfil it.
- Christ stands in the midst of the throne and of the twenty-four elders (the church of God) and the four beasts (the preachers of the gospel) as the Savior of all his people and the One of whom all his servants speak.
- The throne John saw represents the glory of God as well as the dominion of God; and Christ, as the Lamb of God, is the revelation and accomplishment of God's glory.

THE MIGHTY ANGEL

11. In chapter 10 we see our Lord Jesus Christ as the “*the mighty Angel come down from heaven*” (10:1-3).

Our blessed Savior is the Angel of the Covenant (Mal. 3:1), the Angel of the Lord’s Presence (Isa. 63:9), the Archangel (Jude 9), and the mighty Angel of the Lord who rules the universe, fulfilling the book of God’s decrees. To the wicked and unbelieving, he is the Angel of Judgment. But on behalf of his covenant people, he is seen as the Angel of Providence. He is the Messenger

sent by God to reveal his will, accomplish his purpose, and redeem his people.

(Revelation 10:1-3) "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (2) And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth, (3) And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."

In the 20th chapter we see our Savior as the mighty Angel again, binding Satan and casting him into the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3; John 12:31).

(Revelation 20:1-3) "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. (2) And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, (3) And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

This great and mighty Angel is God our Savior (18:1). He alone has the keys of death and hell (1:18). No creature could ever bind the devil, or even hinder his influence. He was the greatest, most powerful creature of the Almighty. None but Christ, the Creator, could

bind him. In order to accomplish our salvation Satan had to be bound. And here we see Christ coming with the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He came to shackle a treasonous rebel and lock him away. The Scriptures plainly tell us that one purpose of our Lord's incarnation and birth was to make war with, conquer, and bind the prince of darkness (Gen. 3:15; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 12:5-11). And he has won the war!

THE LAMB SLAIN

12. The Lamb we saw standing in the midst of the throne (5:6) is "*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*" (Rev. 13:8).

In the purpose and decree of God, in anticipation of the fall, for the fulfilling of God's covenant, Christ was looked upon by God the Father as our all-sufficient, sin-atoning sacrifice before ever the world was made. God's elect were looked upon in him as being saved from eternity (Rom. 8:28-31; Eph. 1:3-6; 2 Tim. 1:9).

All that we experience in time of God's redeeming grace was done for us in eternity in God's decrees. Before the world was made, in the mind and purpose of almighty God, Christ was the Lamb slain. That means that in the mind of God, from all eternity, the covenant of grace was fulfilled, the ransom price was paid, the Surety was exalted, and God's elect were saved.

FAITHFUL AND TRUE

13. The Lord Jesus Christ is called “*Faithful and True*” (Rev. 19:11).

What a name for the Son of God! He well deserves it for he is faithful and true in all things. He is Faithful to his people, to his covenant, to his promises, and to himself. He is True. He is both the Truth and the True One. Jesus Christ is a true Friend and Brother (Prov. 17:17), a true Savior (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2), and a true Husband (Song. 5:1-9). So true is this Husband to his bride that he will never leave her and will never let her leave him.

THE WORD OF GOD

14. He is “*The Word of God*” (Rev. 19:13).

“*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*” (John 1:1). Christ is the Word by which God reveals himself and through which the triune God performs all his works.

- He is the eternal, creating Word, by whom all things were made (John 1:3; Heb. 11:2).
- He is the incarnate, revealing Word, by whom God is revealed to man (John 1:14, 18).
- And he is the almighty, saving Word (Heb. 4:12-13), by whom God calls out and saves his people in regenerating grace.

KING OF KINGS

15. Our Savior is the “*King of kings and Lord of lords*” (Rev. 19:16).

As we saw in chapter 1, verse 5, the Lord Jesus Christ is the absolute, singular, rightful, sovereign Monarch of heaven and earth (Acts 2:32-36).

(Acts 2:32-36) "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. (33) Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (34) For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, (35) Until I make thy foes thy footstool. (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

MAKES ALL THINGS NEW

16. The Lord Jesus Christ is that one who declares, “*behold, I make all things new*” (Rev. 21:5-6).

In grace, he makes all things new. “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*” (2 Cor. 5:17). In heavenly glory, he makes all things new, granting to his people a new name and a new life, without the possibility of sin, sorrow, or death. And in the last days,

he will create “*a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*” (2 Pet. 3:13).

ALPHA AND OMEGA

17. So great and glorious, so full and perfect is our Lord Jesus that he is declared to be the “*Alpha and Omega*” (Rev. 22:13).

He is the “a” and the “z,” the first and the last, the beginning and the end of all things. The covenant of grace begins and ends with Christ. The whole of creation has its origin in Christ and shall find its consummation in Christ. Every event of providence comes from Christ and shall glorify Christ. The entire Volume of Holy Scripture, from beginning to end, speaks of Christ. And in the salvation of God's elect Jesus Christ is the beginning, the end, and everything between (1 Cor. 1:30-31).

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR

18. Our Redeemer is “*The Bright and Morning Star*” (Rev. 22:16).

He is the Light that shines in darkness, that shines in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. He is the Day Star of grace, the Sun of Righteousness, risen over this sin-cursed earth, with healing in his wings. And he is the Star of that great eternal day yet to come.

COMES QUICKLY

19. Our dear Savior, the lord Jesus Christ, declares, “*Surely, I come quickly*” (Rev. 22:20).

Soon he shall appear! Suddenly, without warning, the King of glory shall come again to destroy his enemies, save his people, restore his creation, and glorify his Father. “*Then cometh the end,*” when the God-man Mediator will perform his last mediatorial work. He shall deliver up the kingdom, all the hosts of his elect unto God the Father, saying, “*Behold I and the children which God hath given me!*” And God shall be “*all in all*” (Heb. 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

NO MORE TEARS

Then, we shall see his face, “*and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away*” (Re 21:4).

Impossible as it is for us to imagine, there is a time coming when we shall weep no more, when we shall have no cause to weep!

- Heaven is a place of sure, eternal, ever-increasing bliss; and the cause of that bliss is our God!
- Heaven is a place of joy without sorrow, laughter without weeping, pleasantness without pain!
- In heaven there are no regrets, no remorseful tears, no second thoughts, no lost causes, no sorrows of any kind!

If God did not wipe away all tears from our eyes, there would be much weeping in heaven. We would surely weep much over our past sins, unconverted loved ones forever lost in hell, wasted opportunities while we were upon the earth, our many acts of unkindness toward our brethren here, and the terrible price of our redemption! But God will wipe away all tears from our eyes — all of them!

- In heaven's glory there will be no more death to part loving hearts.
- There will be no more sorrow of any kind. There will be no more crying for any reason.
- There will be no more pain of any sort.
- Why? How can these things be? — *“The former things are passed away!”*

Our great God shall, in heaven's glory, remove us from all sin, remove all sin from us, and remove us from all the evil consequences of sin. He will remove

us from every cause of grief. He will bring us at last into the perfection of complete salvation and every desire of our hearts will be completely gratified. Then we will be like Christ. We will be with Christ. We will see Christ. We will love Christ perfectly. We will serve Christ unceasingly. We will worship Christ without sin. We will rest in Christ completely. We will enjoy Christ fully. We will have Christ entirely. These things shall be our everlasting experience, without interruption!

FACE TO FACE

We are told in Revelation 22:4, “*And they shall see his face.*” What a blessed, glorious prospect this is! This is the great object of our hope, the great desire of our hearts, the great joy of heaven and the great fulness of our heavenly reward. The very Christ who died in our place at Calvary, fully satisfying the wrath and justice of God for us, will be seen by us.

We shall literally see his face. It is delightfully true that we shall see and enjoy many things in heaven. But that which is now desired, and will then be enjoyed, above all else is the sight of Christ himself.

It seems to me that our text also implies a spiritual sight of Christ, which is far sweeter. In the next world we shall have a greater ability to see Christ than we now possess. We shall see him perfectly and know him fully. And our vision of him will be uninterrupted. The paradise of God is a heaven of pure, intense, eternal,

perfect, spiritual fellowship with Christ.

In that future estate of glory and bliss we shall have a clear, undimmed vision of Christ, because **everything that now hinders our sight of him will be removed.** Our many sins, our earthly cares and our sorrows in this world now prevent us from seeing our Lord as we desire. But then there will be nothing between us and our Savior. In glory there will be nothing in our hearts to rival Christ. We will love him as he ought to be loved, perfectly. Christ will not only be supreme, he will be all.

Why do we consider this vision of Christ the greatest bliss of heaven? Why do we place such importance upon this one aspect of our heavenly inheritance? The reason is just this: when we see the Lord's face our salvation will be complete.

- Every evil thing will be completely eradicated from us.
- When we see his face we shall be forever conscious of his favor.
- And when these eyes see his face a complete transformation will take place. — “*We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*”
- We shall see things as he sees them. We shall think as he thinks.
- Our will will be one with his will.
- Our hearts will be one with his heart.
- Then, when we see his face, we shall be perfectly satisfied.

How sweet, then is this promise of our Savior,
“Surely, I come quickly!” **How earnestly our souls**
ought to pray, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Amen.