

## Revelation Lesson 5 Who It's ALL About!

Revelation 1:5a And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us,

We have seen (what I believe was) the beginning of a Trinitarian style Greeting in verse 4. For we saw: The Father (from him which is, and which was, and which is to come;) and the Holy Ghost (from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;) seen in through His 7 ministerial offices as evidenced in Isaiah 11:2. Some Bible teachers and preachers scoff at the Holy Ghost's interpretation from Isaiah, but notice: the Father was not merely called the Father, he was described. As was (I believe) the Holy Ghost. Now enters our Lord Jesus Christ.....Whom we shall see will be described also.....so I believe that this interpretation is a valid one. Now:

**And from Jesus Christ,** - Thus enters the third well-wisher of John's opening statements. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua. The name means: "Jehovah Is Salvation." Also, the word Christ means Anointed One and comes from the Greek Language. This is known as Messiah in the Hebrew and is one of the Prophetic Names of our Lord. This language Christ/Messiah refers to the fact that Jesus was anointed by the Holy Ghost and thus separated to become the Only Begotten Son of God. Recall that there are many sons of God, but only ONE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. Hence the modern translations get it wrong when they call Jesus, God's "One and only Son!" Anointing with oil was emblematic of the Holy Ghost and was conferred upon Prophets (Isa. 6:1), Priests (Ex. 30:30) and Kings (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kings 1:39). Hence the title The Anointed One (Messiah – Hebrew, Christ – Greek) suits our Lord well for He is ALL of these: Prophet, Priest and King.

Furthermore, the wording "Jesus Christ" is important. Another dangerous change is made when the modern (so-called) bible translators change this wording. The words: "Jesus Christ" occur 198 times in 189 Bible Verses. The First occurrence of these is in Matthew 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Now the law of first mention is thus: The meaning of the law of First Mention: "The principle that requires one to go to that portion of the Scriptures where a doctrine is mentioned for the first time and to study the first occurrence of the same in order to get the fundamental inherent meaning of that doctrine."

Thus the wording Jesus Christ emphasizes the HUMANITY of Christ. We see emphasis upon the work performed in HIS BODY.

Just for sake of study the wording "Christ Jesus" occurs 58 times in 58 verses. That wording has the title of Jesus first in order. Hence this emphasizes His DIETY or the fact that HE JESUS IS GOD. The first occurrence of "Christ Jesus" is in Acts 19:4 "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." So we see in Acts 19:4 Paul was explaining that John the Baptist spoke of the coming Messiah (God in the Flesh the One Anointed or set apart by the Father to do a Work). Paul showed the Ephesians that Jesus was INDEED the Messiah spoken of by the Prophets. One may conclude it's all the same right? What's in a name? Well, for starters A LOT is in a name: Philippians 2:5-11 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in

heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**who is the faithful witness**, Again the emphasis is upon the work of our Lord in His Humanity for we see that JESUS CHRIST (not CHRIST JESUS) is called the FAITHFUL WITNESS. Yes Jesus our Saviour is described as our Faithful:

1. High Priest
  1. Hebrews 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.
  2. Hebrews 3:1-2 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.
2. Witness
  1. Here in Revelation 1:5 and in Revelation 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; (more on this verse and the phrase “the beginning of the creation” later and no it doesn't mean what the Jehovah's Witnesses say it does!).
  3. Not only do Revelation 1:5 and 3:14 describe Him as Faithful but they along with Revelation 19:11 describe Him as True also: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.”

Thus He was and IS Faithful in all He did or does. The word faithful means: Persons who show themselves trustworthy in a transaction of business, the execution of commands or the discharge of official duties. Merriam Webster states: one who is deserving of trust : keeping your promises or doing what you are supposed to do.

So not only did Christ do what the Father said and what the Law stated but also He was and is the WITNESS. One who has information or knowledge of something, and hence, one who can give information, bring to light, or confirm something. Please note however that Christ is called THE FAITHFUL WITNESS. Hence there is only ONE. Clarke said this of Him: He is: The true teacher, whose testimony is infallible, and whose sayings must all come to pass.

McGee said that: Jesus Christ is the only trustworthy witness to the facts of this book. The facts are about Him. He testifies of Himself. It is difficult to believe other people, but we can believe the Lord Jesus. So there you have it, Christ is the Faithful Witness of the Book of Revelation – why? Because He has seen the future. John shall see and I believe experience it, but Jesus has ALREADY had the Revelation completed before it was given to John, hence we see that John is – by Inspiration of the the Holy Ghost – documenting his source material. If you can't believe Jesus, who can you believe?

**and the first begotten of the dead**, Another title of Christ comes to our attention. He is called the FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD. This has to do with His (and our) Resurrection. Have you ever heard of the word Prototype? Which is an original or first model of something from which other forms are copied or developed Well that word comes from the Greek word prototypos, which comes from the root: Prototokos. This Greek word is used primarily to refer to particularly the firstborn of a mother. It is used of Christ in this sense in Matthew 1:25 and Luke 2:7. But in 5 passages this word takes on a new theological meaning:

1. Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

1. Prototokos is rendered as “firstborn” here. Notice “among many brethren” and presents Christ as the preeminent or ranking member of the group.
2. Please note that the predestination here is not (as we shall see later) that God predestinated so many people to Heaven and so many people to Hell. Rather the SAVED are predestinated (recall – Prefix PRE means BEFORE, Destination means Where You're going ) thus God the Father aims for ALL the SAVED to be predestinated to be conformed or patterned like Him. Galatians 2:20 is our Goal: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” So in order to be conformed to Christ we MUST obey the command to take up our Cross daily (Matthew 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. And Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.) We MUST do so because we cannot serve two masters! (Matt. 6:24) Christ crucifies our flesh and our desires so that we can – through the power of the Holy Ghost – be patterned AFTER HIM and HIS IMAGE, so that THEN when others see us they may see CHRIST at work in our lives AND THEN draw others closer to HIM and by the Spirit's POWER see more born into the FAMILY OF GOD!
2. Colossians 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:
  1. Some like the Jehovah's Witnesses use this and Revelation 3:14 to imply that Jesus was the first “thing” that God/Jehovah created. This is not so. According to John 1:3 “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” The Word – that is Jesus our Lord – Created everything. If He is the Creator, then He cannot be the Created! Thus this word now is also used in relation to God's creation referring to Christ's supremacy over it. Jesus Christ cannot be both creator and creature. He is placed above His creation when He is called this “firstborn of every creature.” How do we know that he wasn't the first created creature? Well, the Bible interprets itself see the next verse: Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:
3. Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.
  1. This idea of Christ being the first in line, the head, the prototype is exemplified in this verse where He is styled the “firstborn from the dead.” Why? So He might have the preeminence or be supreme above ALL. Now put this together here in Col. 1:18 we find that “who is the beginning” means that He is the ORIGINATOR” the firstborn “the One who is the First” from (that means OUT OF same as in our text rendered as OF THE DEAD) the dead. So in Christ we fall in “line” so to speak behind Him out of death and into life!
4. Hebrews 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.
  1. In this verse and Rev 1:5 prototokos is translated "first begotten." Here in Heb. 1:6, this refers to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus we see this by the use of “and again.” If this referred to the night of the Birth of Christ, then “and again” would've been left out. As angels were present at His (second) Ascension so will they be at His return and MUST worship Him then. Christ's preeminence is cosmic. He is exalted over even the highest order of celestial creatures. Even ALL the angels (fallen and elect) know and reverence Christ.
5. The final theological passage is our main text of Revelation 1:5 which follows the ideas set forth in the Colossians reference.

So let's put ALL this together into some condensed understandable meaning. **the first begotten**

**of the dead** thus shows us that Christ has a position of honour and privilege. He died and was Resurrected. Not only was He resurrected but He is **THE FIRST ONE RESURRECTED** (of many). As of this moment (until the Rapture happens) He is the **ONLY ONE** that has a Glorified Resurrection Body. We will have a body like His (Phil. 3:21 and 1 John 3:2). Since He died Physically AND Spiritually upon the Cross and has been Bodily and Spiritually raised from the Dead, He has the power, authority and ability to save we who are Spiritually dead so that we shall not be under the power of sin, death or hell. :) So Jesus is the First of the Firstfruits 1 Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. And then 1 Corinthians 15:23 "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Thus Paul yearned for that Day as we all do: Romans 8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

**and the prince of the kings of the earth.** This speaks of His ultimate position during the Millennium. He is styled the prince, the King of the kings and the Lord of the lords and the Leader of the leaders of ALL the Earth. Sadly many of those so named do NOT acknowledge nor submit to His authority or rule. Why? Because many do NOT know Him and furthermore what is so damning is that many of us who DO know Him do not submit to His Lordship or authority any more than Lost people do! God forgive us! Trust the Word, when HE returns to rule and reign, He will be no MEEKLY Babe in a manger, no He is COMING to RULE with a ROD OF IRON! Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

**Unto him that loved us,** But wait, notice Child of God – He will smite those that stand against Him in that day. Here we see that Christ LOVED US. McGee says: The Book of Revelation should not frighten us too much because of the fact that it is from the One who *loves* us. Jesus Christ didn't love us only when He died on the cross, although He loved us at that time, but He also loves us today. Right at this very minute, Jesus loves you.

Yes Brother McGee is correct but recall the emphasis is upon the PAST TENSE of LOVE. We just noted that Christ is THE PRINCE – He is THE HEIR to the Throne! In the Subtle Christian classic – the Lord of the Rings Vol. III you find Denathor the Steward of the throne of Gondor. The prophecy is that one day the King would return and reclaim the Throne. But Denathor's son states: Gondor needs no king! Note that in Genesis God gave dominion rulership of the Earth to mankind, when man sinned he forfeited that rule. Now, Satan has taken over the "throne" of Earth and as "pretender" to the throne, has kicked out the steward. Indeed Scripture calls Satan the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Thus Jesus was tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11) to bypass the Cross and he (Satan) would give Him (Christ) the kingdoms of the world. Christ would become heir of ALL things AFTER the Cross, but it was THROUGH the Cross that Christ showed the LOVE of GOD THEN and back all the back to Eternity PAST, notice that if Christ wanted the Kingdoms and all the glory of them He could've made the effortless purchase, but He suffered Spiritual death, Hellish separation from God the Father and God the Holy Ghost upon the Cross FOR THE REDEMPTION OF OUR SOULS!

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of

the world.

Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

So the FACT that God LOVED us Shows He STILL Loves us NOW! How? Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Before we leave this thought, recall the emphasis Christ and the Apostle Paul placed upon LOVE:

Christ taught us in John 14:15 that IF we LOVED HIM we would keep (obey) His Commandments. In so doing we would fulfill both the Greatest Commandment and the one like it: Matthew 22:36-40 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Hence Jesus and Paul admonished us to LOVE one another as Christ loved us in: John 13:34; John 15:9, 12; Romans 8:37; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:2, 25.

The sad thing is that many fail to remember John 3:16's basic doctrine that God loved the world (EVERYONE) not SOME OF THE WORLD. No friend God did NOT condemn some to Hell and save others to go to Heaven. For God has delayed the return of His Son so others can be SAVED: 2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Thus WHO can get saved? Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. And Romans 10:12-13 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

We would be here a while longer if I were to teach you the rest of verse 5, so in order to do that IMPORTANT portion of Scripture justice, I will wait until our next class. So until next time, God Bless you!