

Jesus Christ: the Lion & the Lamb

Text: Revelation 5.1–8

Theme: We must hear the message of who Jesus Christ is in order to be finally saved

Introduction – So far, what we’ve learned in our overview of Revelation is this:

- we need to hear about the opponents so we are aware of the challenges they present
- we need to have ears to hear what Christ says to us...and live it out
- we need to persevere until the end and refuse to compromise
- if we do this, we will not only be blessed now, but for all eternity
- but we still need truth like a deer rifle needs bullets
- this is why we looked last Lord’s Day at God’s sovereignty, holiness, and judgment
- patient endurance gets rewarded because evil doesn’t win

This book is called: the revelation of Jesus Christ

- it is God’s only-begotten Son that we look to this morning
- this could consume our attention for a very long time
- He is Messiah, King, descendant of David
- He is fully divine, equal with God the Father
- He has redeemed and freed His people from our sins
- we, who believe, are spared from the judgment ultimately because Christ bore it all on cross
- evil in our lives has been washed away
- we are now able to dwell in God’s presence with great joy forever and ever
- and in this prophetic book, we learn that Jesus is coming again
- He will bring in His ultimate kingdom
- He will, indeed, judge those who have opposed and rejected Him
- and He will reward those who are His very own

Let’s start by considering...

I. Who Is This Jesus?

- John the apostle is the writer, but not the ultimate author
- God gives Christ this message; in this we see an equality that we mustn’t miss

1. Jesus is God

- time will only permit us to look at a couple of examples
- first one comes right in beginning

John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

(Revelation 1:4–6 ESV)

- note: grace & peace are coming not just from God
- they also come through Jesus Christ
- look what it says about Jesus in v. 5: ruler of kings on earth
- this is normally assigned to God the Father; God rules over kings, as we saw law week
- when the church suffers, it wonders if God is ruling on His throne: yes, He is!
- So does His One and Only Son, Jesus Christ
- no earthly power has sovereignty: only God the Father and God the Son
- also: Jesus made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father

- only God has the right to make up a people called His own & appoint priests
- yet John attributes this to Jesus also
- Jesus is one with His Father; the Word was God, he wrote in his gospel account

2. Son of Man

- look at the description of Jesus in 1.12–18

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 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. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 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.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

(Revelation 1:12–18 ESV)

- John is leading us back to Daniel 7
- we learned then, that this “son of man” has same stature and identity as God Himself
- rest of description in 1.12–18 paints Him just like Daniel did in Daniel 7.9
- what John does with this is tell us Jesus is God: eternal, wise, full of holiness & righteousness

3. Still more given

- in 1.16 we see Jesus holding seven stars
- these represent angelic creatures, declaring Jesus’ authority and sovereignty over angels
- He is called the first and the last, reminiscent of Isaiah 48.12
- only God is eternal, yet Jesus is described in very same terms
- then we see the phrase, “the Alpha and Omega”
- just as God is the beginning and the end, so to is Jesus: same in identity and authority

- well, we could spend all day and tomorrow on this wonderful teaching
- but we’ll see this again and again as we walk through this book
- just make sure your ears are attuned to this harmonic melody
- then when you do hear it, you’ll sit up, recognize it, and sing the song of Revelation

Now, let’s see...

II. A Lamb Who Saves

- Revelation as a whole lifts up the name of Jesus Christ
- but it also stresses the saving work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

1. Son of Man comes to save a great harvest

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

(Revelation 14:14–16 ESV)

- this son of man is Jesus Christ, coming to harvest those who are His
- this is not the wrath of God in judgment against unbelievers

- the grape harvest, mentioned prior to this is that wrath of God poured out
- this is the gathering of all men and women who believe in Jesus

2. A Faithful Witness

and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

(Revelation 1:5 ESV)

- Jesus identifies readily with His brothers and sisters
- these are the ones He came to redeem; He has freed us by His blood poured out on cross

3. The Lamb slain

And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”

(Revelation 5:2 ESV)

- “worthy” — crucial part in whole book: only One is worthy
- no human being or any other creature is worthy—only this One in Revelation 5
- John weeps because no one is found worthy
- but then, as if in slow-motion, we see something happening in throne room of heaven
- if scroll isn’t opened, redemption of man not accomplished: this must be done
- John then told, only the Lion from Judah’s tribe can open scroll
- this Lion is the promised Messiah, the Deliverer God foretold would come to redeem man
- but when John thinks he’s going to see a Lion, instead he sees a Lamb...that has been slain

And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

(Revelation 5:6 ESV)

- what is John doing? seeing?
- nothing less than that Jesus is both!
- He conquered, but not as a Lion...rather, as a Lamb slain
- Christ’s victory was not won with overwhelming force
- no, it was won through loving self-sacrifice and surrender
- this Lamb is worthy as the slain Lamb
- by His death on that cross, Jesus accomplished redemption for His people
- therefore, He alone is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll
- it is by His blood He purchased people from every tribe, language, people, and nation
- oh the joy of this good news
- and the fact that we simply have no more time at present to consider it; must move on

Let’s now focus upon and think about...

III. Those Who Are His

And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

(Revelation 7:4 ESV)

- these 144,000 are sealed, which means these represent the whole church of Jesus Christ
- and everyone of God’s people—Old Testament saint & New Testament saint alike— are His
- they are sealed, therefore they are protected from God’s wrath-filled judgment

- when His wrath is poured out, they are able to stand...because of Jesus Christ
- in both Revelation 7 & 14, the 144,000 refer to the same entity: the entire church
- clothed in white robes, which designate those belonging to God
- those who have come out of the great tribulation not final seven year
- but rather the whole period between resurrection & second coming: this is the church
- robes are white because they've been washed

I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

(Revelation 7:14 ESV)

- we should always be praising God that He has given us His Son, Christ Jesus
- we should be thankful always that Jesus gave His life, a propitiation for our sins
- our hearts should swell with joy knowing we've been washed, redeemed, sealed, and saved
- all praise be to this Lion, the Lamb that was slain

Of course, one of most important pieces regarding Jesus reveals His...

IV. Power Over the Dragon

- we saw last week, that this dragon is the devil, that great deceiver
- in ch. 12, we see the curtain pulled back upon the cosmic conflict going on around us
- without going into the details now, we see the church & her saints fiercely persecuted
- the dragon wants to destroy the Bride of Christ
- thinking if he destroys the baby, the son born to save, he would win the day...
- ...the dragon goes even harder
- the nations rage, an allusion to Psalm 2
- but the Lord's Christ will rule with a rod of iron

"She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne,"

(Revelation 12:5 ESV)

- then John seems to zoom out to show the culmination of this great conflict
- Jesus the Christ reigns as the risen one, the exalted one in dominion and authority
- as believers, we rejoice in this; the accuser of the brethren has no teeth to bite any longer

In His victory, not only will Jesus return for His own; He will come as...

V. The Coming Judge

- Jesus receives the kingdom from His Father
- He stands amidst His churches, lamp stands burning brightly for His glory
- then, twice we are told "the time is near" — Rev. 1.3; 22.10
- this time in view is the end of the present world order
- Jesus is coming soon and quickly
- along with coming for His bride, He comes to bring judgment upon the world
- Jesus' coming will establish justice upon the earth at last

"Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen."

(Revelation 1:7 ESV)

- in ch 19, we see Jesus' judgment against the beast & false prophet

"And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur."

(Revelation 19:20 ESV)

- when He comes, all will see Him in majesty, riding a brilliant and beautiful white horse

- He, who is Faithful & True and wages war in righteousness, is the Judge
- all who have stood opposed Him will fall
- now is the time, my friend; if you have not come to Christ, do so now
- do not wait, do not put it off, come now, come humbly, come quickly
- look to the only One who can save you
- look to the One who bore your judgment and will keep that from you on that final day
- if you do not; I love you enough to tell you: you will face Him as Judge, not as Savior
- come, come, come; look to the Lord and live

Conclusion – Are You Listening?

- those who have an ear to hear must listen
- you must especially listen to the word about Jesus Christ
- Jesus is divine; He is God, equal with God, one with God
- He is the Messiah of Israel, the true Israel of God, our only Deliverer
- He redeems His people; He frees us from our sin
- by His blood are we cleansed and spared the final judgment
- but that judgment will come; you do not want to be part of that
- hear Christ calling you this very day & come to Him
- join all the saints in heaven in praising our Lord Jesus