

## Revelation 1:4-6

Look with me at verses four through six as we dig into the second message in our verse-by-verse journey through the book of Revelation.

As we read these verses, we should take note of John's salutation to the servants of Jesus Christ. Remember the purpose of this book is to show the servants of Jesus Christ things which must shortly come to pass. Thus, in verse four when John says grace and peace be unto you, he is greeting the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ in the seven churches of Asia but also scattered through-out the world.

May I ask you a question: are you a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ? This is not a difficult question to answer. Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If someone asked you, "are you a follower of Jesus Christ" how would you answer?

I cannot answer for you, however, I hope your answer would be the same as mine. If you asked me that question, I would say yes. Yes, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. My heart was conquered by his love many years ago. I bowed my heart and bowed my knee to the Lord Jesus Christ many years ago.

My faith rests in Jesus Christ. He is both my Creator and my Redeemer. In my heart he has no equal. I cling to his cross as my only hope of heaven. I fully trust him and place my eternal destiny in his hands. Truly he is my Savior whom I trust to keep me and one day to present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Praise his name!

Please look now at Revelation 1:4 where the Scripture says:

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 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, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

You will notice that verse four identifies the apostle John as the human instrument used by the Holy Spirit to give us the content of God’s last word to mankind through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, and in fact the content of this book is the last word he speaks to the world by his Son. The apostle John per the instruction of the Lord Jesus wrote these things in a book and sent it to the church.

The Lord chose John for this holy task. You may recall, we are first introduced to the apostle John as he is mending fishing nets with his father Zebedee and his brother James. As they did so that day, Jesus called both John and James to follow him.

They both immediately left to follow Jesus that day, leaving behind their fishing nets and the life so familiar to them. Little did John know that his first steps following the Savior would one day land him on the Isle of Patmos where he would see in the Spirit a panoramic view of end time events culminating in the Revelation of Jesus Christ as he returns in great power and glory to rule and reign on the earth.

Next, we take note that John is writing to the seven churches which are in Asia. Of course, there were many other churches in the world at that time. However, these seven are representative of the church at large and so the message of the book of Revelation is to the entire church. It is to be read by the entire church who is to keep those things which are written therein. Without doubt, one of the great

purposes of this book is to focus the heart and mind of every believer on the certainty of Christ's return.

While we may have much to learn as we study the words of the prophecy of this book, there is no way to miss the central theme of the book. Jesus Christ is to be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in fulfillment of his own words as recorded in Matthew chapter 24.

In that chapter Jesus says, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Hear me well today: the book of Revelation is written to the church! It is to have a sanctifying work in the heart of every believer. Authentic believers are not among the crowd who mock and say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" We are not like the evil servant found in the parable recorded in Matthew 24 who mistreats others and eats and drinks with the drunken with no thought of his Lord's return.

Jesus says of unbelievers pictured by the evil servant in that parable, "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

As true believers we approach this book with reverence and we are ready to hear what the Spirit says to us through the apostle John. Furthermore, we allow the message of his return to purify us. John says elsewhere when he (Jesus) shall

appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure.

My friends, as we journey through this book let this powerful word from God draw you into a closer walk with him. Let this word speak. Let it grip your heart. As the apostle Peter put it, seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

John is writing to the churches, and we all need to listen!

Next, note that John's greeting is from the Father which is, which was, and which is to come; and from the Holy Spirit who is depicted as the seven Spirits which are before the throne. This language speaks of the sevenfold character of the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of the Lord; he is the Spirit of wisdom; he is the Spirit of understanding; he is the Spirit of counsel; he is the Spirit of might; he is the spirit of knowledge; and he is the Spirit of the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2).

And finally, his greeting is from Jesus Christ. Look now at verse five as I conclude this message calling attention to seven things John says about our Lord.

First, he says Jesus is the faithful witness. During his teaching and preaching ministry Jesus bore testimony to the truth. Jesus said, "whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." We can fully trust the teaching of Jesus because he is the faithful witness!

John goes on to say, Jesus is the first begotten of the dead. Indeed, Jesus Christ has conquered death. Christ is the first fruits, but his victory over death has secured our resurrection at his coming.

John proceeds to say Jesus is the prince of the kings of the earth. He was born King of Israel, but he is King of Kings. He is the prince of the kings of the earth.

Now John breaks out into praise because Jesus loved us and gave himself for us at the cross, and because he has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and he has made us kings and priests unto God his Father. For all these blessings John says “to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

We should put our own "amen" right here. Our Lord is worthy of all glory and power and dominion and thus we praise him with the whole heart! Amen.