

Series: The Glory of God in the Person of Christ #1225

Title: God's Revelation of Himself

Revelation 1.1

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Yesterday I completed my introduction to the grand passage of Scripture before us, The Revelation of Jesus Christ chapter 1. And in a moment we will plunge into verse 1. But first let me just follow up on my last insight from last time. I was telling you that the Revelation is so important to read and understand, because in this Book God tells us in precise detail about everything that is going to happen in the future. That's why I take a futurist interpretation of the text. And there are hints of the future even in chapter 1 that we will be examining together.

And the future, isn't that what so many people are worried about? Even when you glance at the headlines there's a lot of hand wringing over what is going to happen. And this is understandable for people who are separate from Christ. Of course, they have no assurance for today let alone for tomorrow on out into the rest of their lives. So I get it. For someone who knows not God, the future is scary. But what I do not understand is how a Christian person fears what comes ahead. Not only did Jesus command us to never, ever worry, but in this final Book of the Bible Jesus unveils for us all the elements of the End Times. So, literally, all you have to do to know the future is to read, study, and believe what God says here.

And this is what makes The Revelation of Jesus Christ a must have for our knowledge of the Word of God. Not only must this Book be understood, but also it can be understood. Believe it or not, Revelation is one the easiest writings in the Bible to outline and follow along. Let me prove this to you. And then we'll get into verse 1. Stick with me.

Jump ahead if you can in your text to verse 19. Listen to Revelation 1, and verse 19. This is Jesus, through the angel, speaking directly to the Apostle John. **"19 Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things."** That right there is the outline of the Book.

Part I: the things which you have seen (the past). Part II: the things which are (the present). And Part III: the things which will take place after these things (the future). Pretty direct and straightforward outline, wouldn't you say? Believe me, other Books of the Bible are far more challenging to outline in such a concise manner. And so, this Book is understandable. Many Christians avoid it, thinking they will never be able to figure it out. But, I urge us not to be intimidated by what is here. God, by His Spirit, will show us what He wants us to know, and what we can share with others, that which will offer them peace for the future. In fact, the only way to feel good about what lies ahead is to know the Revelation of Jesus Christ and to obey it.

My mandate is to teach you the whole counsel of God, and that is what I intend to do. So, let's pick up the reading now at verse 1. I am reading The Revelation of Jesus Christ, verses 1-3. **"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, ² who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. ³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near."**

As we get going, I want to give you three insights into verse one. First, a statement that captures the full meaning of all that I just read. And this is a statement that I gave you during the introduction. Let me re-iterate this. It summarizes this prologue or introduction of John's. **The glory of God is revealed in the person of Christ.**

Let's see this in the text and begin with my first insight on verse 1. So I am moving now from the macro into the micro, from the big picture into the small details. Here's the **first insight: there is an order to how John receives this Revelation.**

It goes like this. God the Father gives it to God the Son (Jesus) and Jesus gives it to His angel and the angel gives it to the Apostle John and then John gives it to Christ's bond-servants (that's me and many of you listening). Verse 1: **"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him..."** Notice Him is capitalized. The "Him" is Jesus. So God wants to reveal who He is and to do this He chooses His Son Jesus. Back to verse 1, **"...to show to His bond-servants..."** Leave that phrase here for a minute and move a little ahead with me in verse 1, **"...and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John..."**

"He sent..." Who sent? Jesus sent for and communicated God's revelation to His angel who in turn gave it to John. So my first insight is: there is an order to how John receives this Revelation. It goes from God the Father to Jesus the Son to His angel to John and then to us, the people God calls **"His bond-servants."** And who are the bond-servants (better translated slaves) of God? Those are everyone who has put their faith alone in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin, the slaves are Christians. The Apostle John was a bond-servant and all believers in Christ down through the ages are bond-servants (slaves) of Christ!

And here is my **second insight** into Revelation 1, verse 1: **the source of all divine revelation is God.** I can say it this way: God is the source of this Revelation of Jesus Christ. Highlight if you can the two words in verse 1, **"God gave..."** God gave. So important! The Bible speaks of this in the Old Testament. I am thinking about the Book of Daniel. Listen to Daniel chapter 2. I will read verses 28, 29, and 45. This is Daniel chapter 2 and verse 28, **"28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries..."** Verse 29: **"He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place..."** That's the prophet Daniel telling King Nebuchadnezzar about the source of his dreams. And then verse 45 of Daniel chapter 2: **"...the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future..."**

Isn't that fascinating? Daniel declares to King Nebuchadnezzar that Holy God is the true source of all divine revelation. He reveals Himself to us. And the Apostle John over here in Revelation 1, at the far end of the New Testament, is told the same. *The* source of all divine revelation is God. And He is the source of this Revelation of Jesus Christ. That's why I hope the words **"God gave"** are highlighted in your Bible.

Today I am giving you three insights into Revelation 1, verse 1 and here now is the **third: the mediator of God's revelation of Himself is Jesus.** I can also say it this way: God reveals Himself and He does so through Jesus Christ. Look again at verse 1: **"God gave Him,"** that is God gave to Jesus **"...to show His bond-servants..."** God the Father wants us to know Him and so He reveals Himself through the mediation of His Son Jesus.

And God tells us this earlier in the Bible. The Apostle John wrote the Revelation, and he is also the author of the fourth Gospel. And we don't have to read very far into the Gospel of John to see this great truth. Listen to John chapter 1 and verse 18: **"18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, [Jesus] has explained Him."** How marvelous. We cannot see God, because God is a spiritual being not a physical being and God is invisible. But Jesus comes to us from God and Jesus is God and Jesus explains who God is! So to know Jesus is to know God. John 1.18.

And then we continue in the Book of John to chapter 5 and verse 20. Listen again to the words of Jesus, **"20 For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing..."** Again we learn that the mediator of God's revelation of Himself is Jesus. God the Father shows Jesus all the things that God is doing, and then Jesus reveals them to us. Jesus has a mediatorial role in God's divine revelation. And Jesus is constantly telling us this in John's Gospel.

And so the Apostle John was having this drilled into Him as He followed Jesus the Lord throughout Jesus' earthly ministry. Remember, John writes about what he sees Jesus doing, what he hears Jesus teaching. That was when John was a young man, 19-20. And then we meet the author of the Revelation when he is a very old man, as old as age 90, and again John knows the Revelation he receives comes from Jesus. John the Apostle understands that the mediator of God's revelation of Himself is Jesus. And we must also understand this.

God is in charge of the beginning and the end and everything in between. And God reveals Himself to us at all intervals of human history and at every interval of our own lives. The question is: are you prepared to accept who God is *today*? As we move along in this Revelation I really want to encourage you to have eyes to see what the Spirit of God is saying to us. Be reflective of what you hear during our time together. Come to this broadcast and podcast prepared to learn. And do that again with me on Monday because God Is!

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