

Portraits of Christ

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[0 : 00] As you can tell, Josh had an extremely busy week going to Calgary from Monday until Thursday evening. And then Friday they looked at that house and had a decision.

So knowing what was going on, I said, instead of speaking on July 1st, I'll take today's communion service. And I just want to focus on three pictures of Christ from the book of Revelation.

So today is communion. I would like to focus on Christ. Since I'm old school, I don't have the scriptures on the overhead. So please grab a Bible, or as it's described in Ephesians 6.17, the Word of God, which is the sword of God.

So if you don't have a Bible with you, grab one from the pew ahead. There's Bibles down. I'd like you to follow what I'm reading.

So Revelation 1, verse 1-3. The revelation from Christ Jesus, which God gave him to show his servants, which must soon take place.

[1 : 23] He made it known by sending his angel to the servant John, who testifies to everything he saw, that is, the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it, and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

So this is the God's inspired word to John, the same John that wrote the book of John, so just quite a few years later.

Whenever we remember Christ, we should remember what he has done in the past, what he is doing now, and what he will do in the future.

Many picture Christ once a year as a cute baby in a manger, or others view him as he's still on the cross. But Revelation pictures Christ as he is, mighty and majestic.

God. So if we turn to chapter 1, I'll read verses 4 to 20. To the seven churches in the province of Asia, grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

[3 : 07] To him who loves us, and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom, and priests to serve him, God and Father, to him be glory and power forever and ever.

Amen. Look, he is coming in the clouds, and everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the people on earth will mourn because of him.

So shall it be. Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, said the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Verse 12. This is Revelation chapter 1, verse 12. I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me, and when I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man, dressed in a robe, reaching down to his feet, with a golden sash around his chest.

The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.

[4 : 27] In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword, his face like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said, Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last.

I am the living one. I was dead, and now, look, I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven lampstands is this.

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. Great. First notice that John sends the greetings of grace and peace.

[5 : 31] We are in the time of grace. Right from the time of Adam and Eve, God has not dealt with man in the way he warned them. Eternal death.

Romans 6.23 tells us, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 2.8.9, and we alluded, well, we talked strenuously today in the older Sunday school class about this verse and grace.

But this is, we are in the time of grace. We unmerited favor. We deserve death. God is, through his love for us, has offered salvation.

Ephesians 2.8-10. For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves. It is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one could boast.

[6 : 41] For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Again, grace you have been saved, through faith.

Not what we do, but what we believe. Next, Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, who is and was and is to come.

This describes the eternal nature of Jesus. Jesus. Everything and everyone else has a starting time. God, in Genesis 1.1, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Starting time. Everything else, there was nothing before that. But Jesus was before that. He's from everlasting to everlasting. Warren Wiersbe, I used his book there, describes the pictures of Christ as follows.

Christ's garments are those of a judge king, clothed with honor and power, like he had a flowing robe and a sash. His white hair describes his eternity and purity.

[8 : 03] His eyes see all to judge righteously. He doesn't just kind of judge on a scale. Well, it's, this is, if you believe in him, you're forgiven.

If you don't believe, you're not forgiven. It's his eyes judged righteously. The glowing bronze feet also speak of judgment, since in the Old Testament, bronze altar was the place where the fire consumed sin offerings.

Sounds of many waters suggest he speaks with power and authority. The sword represents the living word of God. So anyone that's got a sword, hold them up.

This is the sword. This is the word of God. And that's what he uses to fight his enemies. The Lord's shining continents reminds us of his transfiguration.

And the sun reminds us not only of blessings, but also judgment. Also, in Revelation 21, we're not going to look at this much, but this is also a picture how we receive light in heaven.

[9 : 15] After the thousand year reign, when we're truly in heaven, it's his face, it's him, who illuminates all of heaven. His blazing glory shines forth.

Next is Revelation chapter 5. Another picture of Jesus. This is the second picture of Jesus. Then I looked at the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

A scroll was written on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaim in a loud voice, who is worthy to break the seal and open the scroll.

But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.

Then one of the elders said to me, do not weep. See, the lamb, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed. He's able to open the scroll and its seven seals.

[10 : 19] Then I saw a lamb looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the lamb.

Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. And they sang a new song saying, you are worthy to take the scroll, to open its seals because you were slain.

And with your blood, you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth.

Then I looked and heard the voices of many angels numbering thousands upon thousands and 10,000 times 10,000.

[11 : 29] They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise.

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them saying, to him who sits on the throne and to the lamb be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever.

the four living creatures said, Amen and the elders fell down and worshiped. This time frame describes the end of the church age and the start of the seven years of tribulation.

People, there are people that believe in the rapture that are certain that believers will not be present during the seven years of hell on earth. So this is the start when he opens the seal that is the start of the tribulation that we read in verses 6 to 19 of Revelation.

It's a time of absolute misery. It's a time where people's morals are just destroyed.

[12 : 52] It is a time of hell on earth. It's a picture of what hell of eternity will be like. Just a picture, not the whole thing. Only Christ is worthy to start this time of judgment.

Verse 5 describes the lineage of Jesus as a human back to David through his mother Mary. You can look in Matthew. That's why the book of Matthew has his lineage.

It describes it all the way back to David. It was because Jesus took the form of a man and became a sin offering that believers will not face eternal punishment.

I was at a funeral recently where much scripture was read confirming that the deceased was going to eternity in heaven. The problem was nothing was mentioned on the fact that only Jesus can take our punishment.

the illusion was yeah this person gets to go to heaven because I read the scripture and it describes heaven out of context out of the this is why you're allowed to go not because you're a good person just because.

[14 : 13] John 3 16 to 18 very very familiar verses but they describe who qualifies for heaven. John 3 16 to 18 for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life for God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him whoever believes in him is not condemned but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only son very clear believe not believe whoever believes in him is not condemned whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of

God's one and only son so this is there's no I'm a little bit better than I am bad and God likes me so I get to go to heaven it's very cut and dried verse 6 describes Jesus as a lamb that was slain when Moses led the nations out of Egypt God used many plagues to convince the Pharaoh to let his people all leave the last plague was the death of the first born of everyone the only way that family was to not have death in the house was to take a perfect lamb slay it wiping the blood on the door frame the angel of death would pass over that house and go on to those not marked by blood this is why Jesus was crucified during the Passover it wasn't a coincidence this was a fulfillment only God is to be worshipped and the 24 elders do it eternally if Jesus were only an angel as some churches claim as some religions claim then no worship would happen to him also noted is the prayers of the saints who are true believers so people that when you pray and you're truly a believer the prayers are saved in the form of an incense prayers don't just hit the ceiling and die but are stored as sweet aroma for Jesus verse 11 can you imagine the roar of over 100 million angels encircling the throne along with the living creatures and the elders singing in a loud voice we cannot imagine it would be absolutely deafening we won't need hearing aids

I guarantee that worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise that is the definition of praise and worship so when these when he's being praised this this is the utmost that they can honor him with finally chapter 19 of revelation verses 4 to 21 this is what is to come actually the last the the seven years of tribulation we have not it has not happened yet but it is promised to happen but revelation 19 4 to 21 is really the encapsulation is the ending the 24 elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne and they cried hallelujah or amen hallelujah then a voice came from the throne saying praise our

God all you servants both great and small then I heard what sounded like a great multitude like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder shouting hallelujah for our God almighty reigns let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory for the wedding of the lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready fine linen bright and clean were given her to wear fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people then the angel said to me write this blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the lamb and he added these are the true words of God at this I fell at his feet to worship him but he said to me don't do it I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of

Jesus worship God for it is the spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true with justice he judges and wages war his eyes are like blazing fire and on his head are many crowns he has a name written on it that no one knows but he himself he is dressed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is the word of God the armies of heavens were following him riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen white and clean coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations he will rule them with an iron scepter he treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God almighty on his robe and on his thigh he has the name this name written king of kings and lord of lords and

[20 : 37] I saw an angel standing in the sun who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair come gather together for the great supper of God so that you may eat the flesh of kings generals the mighty of horses and their riders and the flesh of all people free slave great and small then I saw the beast and the king of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army but the beast was captured and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf with these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped its image the two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur the rest were killed with the sword coming out from the mouth of the rider on the horse and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh verse four confirms

Jesus is God receiving worship from the 24 elders so we know without a doubt that this is Jesus who is coming the wedding of the lamb has come this is a fulfillment of Ephesians 5 22 to 27 this is an illustration of Christ's relationship to the church wives submit yourself to your own husbands as you do to the Lord for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church his body of which he is the savior now as the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her take making her holy cleansing her by washing her with water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish but holy and blameless only through

Christ sacrifice can the believing church be made clean nothing we can do nothing we can say nothing we can pay purgatory means nothing any of these other things we can't do it's only Christ's sacrifice verse 10 again confirms we should only worship God this is where Satan sinned by feeling that he should be worshipped you remember John was going to bow down to this angel and the angel said don't worship me worship God alone this point is the end of tribulation Christ is the rider coming to make war with those who are evil again his eyes are like blazing fire able to see and judge correctly crowns indicate magnificent rule the robe dipped in blood is not his own blood but from Isaiah 63 1-6 we see he trampled the wine press in his wrath and their blood was splattered on his garment so these things are prophesied all through the old testament this is a picture of warning all the way from

Isaiah the armies of heaven this is a combination of angels and believers clothed and pure white and clean this is the redeemed church people people who believe in the rapture see this that this is the church following after christ so this is the church and the angels coming with christ you know coming for war so does it make sense to be robed in white if you're going to war well if the war is already predestined that christ has one weapon and that's the word of god when he speaks the war is over if you're a believer you're just you're just there to witness what happens you're on a horse white horse and we see it happen we don't actually fight but we're there so the church will come back with christ the sword god speaks and all ends just like in creation when he spoke and all was created verse 19 to 21 then i saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army but the beast was captured and with it the false prophecy who had performed the signs on its behalf with these signs he had

deluded those who had deceived the mark of the beast and to worship its image the two of them were thrown alive into fiery lake of burning sulfur the rest were killed with the sword coming out of it out of the mouth of the rider on the horse and all the boards gorged themselves on their flesh another place this is

Armageddon this is the battle of Armageddon we read in Zechariah chapters 12 to 14 so written you know about 2500 years ago these things happening that confirms that this battle isn't just they're coming against Jerusalem this is a battle of Jerusalem that is why you see Jerusalem is always in the news it is the most important place in God's kingdom this is where it comes back Jerusalem will not ever be wiped out no matter what happens Jerusalem will always be there and then is it fair that Jesus destroys all who are left there has always been grace shown to people Adam Adam lived over 900 years after the garden of Eden God chose Abraham to start his chosen people Joseph was used to save the starving group of people

[26 : 44] Moses brought these people out of Egypt 430 years later as the nation Israel this saved them from intense suffering as slaves many prophets warned Israel about following false gods Jesus came to dwell as a human died as a sacrifice in places those believed in him finally during this seven years of tribulation God sends an angel to trumpet the truth two witnesses with great powers to trumpet the truth and 144 thousand Israeli evangelists to trumpet the truth many will turn to Christ and be murdered for their faith that is promised but we think well why is it fair but revelation 16 10 and 11 states men on their tongues in agony cursed the

God of heaven because of their pains and their sores but refused to repent of what they had done so even though there's 144 thousand like you can imagine all the things that are going on angel in heaven the two witnesses that there would be televised all over the world and yet people still refused Jews remember they crucified Christ after they realized that Christ had raised Lazarus from the dead that was only a few days earlier they refused to accept him as God men during this people not just men people during this seven years of tribulation will refuse to repent of what they had done is God fair to judge them he offered salvation they refused in conclusion God has never forced anyone to believe in salvation he doesn't do that he offered his grace but allows us the choice to believe in him or not communion is a proclamation of that choice it is our choice to believe that Jesus is the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end so with that let's bow our heads and we'll partake in the communion service dear lord thank you that you are the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end who was and who is and who is to come lord we can see from revelation and worship you because this is communion is to remember what you who you are and what you've done lord thank you that you offer salvation through grace and now as we partake it's just a reminder a physical reminder of what you did on the cross for us and I thank you for that