

CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST

Part 3 of ENCOUNTERING JESUS. Revelation 1:9-20.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. January 22, 2023.

CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST

The Book of Revelation was written to tell us: Christianity Is Christ.

- This directly impacts our lives every day.
- Every aspect of a believer's life is shaped and formed by or because of him.

Revelation 1:9-120 was written to remind struggling Christians:

- Christianity is Christ.
- Therefore, stand firm without compromise.

REVELATION 1:9-20

The prophet: I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

His prophetic commission: 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

His prophetic vision: 12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 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. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 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.

His prophetic vision: 17 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, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

His prophetic commission: 19 Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST: TWO IMPLICATIONS

1. Because of Christ, Christians suffer - verse 9.

- All Christians share as partners in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance.
 - Tribulation: The present reality for faithful believers.
 - Kingdom: The present reign of Christ on earth. Jesus is Lord.
 - Faithful Endurance: Present necessity for all believers - stand firm.
- We could avoid suffering by denying Jesus is Lord and living like the world.
- But then we'd have no reason to call ourselves Christians.

2. Because of Christ, Christians are safe - verses 12-18.

- Jesus is always working for our good. Even if we suffer and die.
- Christ is our high priest. In verse 13, he is dressed in the uniform of Israel's high priest, Exodus 28:4.
- Jesus, our high priest, does two things for us:
 - **First, the crucified Christ** offered himself to God as the sacrifice that takes away all our sins. All our sins - past, present, future - are forgiven.

Hebrews 9:11-12 (ESV) But when Christ appeared as a high priest ... 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

- **Secondly, the risen Christ** continually intercedes for Christians today.

Hebrews 7:25 (ESV) Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

“Christ is ... our attorney, or advocate, that pleads for us, and **CONTINUES** peace and friendship between us and God (1 John 2:2, John Flavel).

- Christ always stands between us and God, interposing his atoning blood:

Revelation 5:6 (ESV) And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain,

“Those wounds he received for our sins on earth, are, as it were, still fresh bleeding in heaven: a moving and prevailing argument it is with the Father, to give out the mercies he pleads for” (John Flavel).

- Christ always intercedes for our safety in three ways:

His intercession is more powerful than our sin and guilty conscience.

His intercession is more powerful than the world's accusations.

His intercession is more powerful than our spiritual weakness.

CONCLUSION: CHRISTIANITY IS CHRIST

Christ is the center of the Christian faith.

- Everything outside the center may fail. But Christ never fails.
- Therefore, whatever happens, we can stand firm in the Christian faith.

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

Pick one or more of these questions to discuss this week.

Start Talking. Get the conversation going.

- I feel confident about the future of Christianity because ...

Start Thinking. Review Sunday's teaching on Revelation 1:1-8.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- Which aspect of Christ's intercession encourages you the most?

Start Sharing. Apply Sunday's teaching.

- Read the following passages in Hebrews and discuss the two aspects (sins atoned for, intercession for ever) of the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ:
 - Hebrews 7:23-28; 8:1-2
 - Hebrews 9:11-14; 9:24-28
 - Hebrews 10:11-18
 - Hebrews 10:19-25
- When your sins testify against you, satan accuses you, the world condemns you, how does the intercession of Christ help you stand firm?

Start Praying. Be bold.

Lord Jesus, all praise to you, our great High Priest. Because of your atoning death, we are forgiven and free from condemnation. Because of your perpetual intercession, we are always accepted, loved, and helped by God. Thank you. Amen!

Keep Reading/Watching for more Insights and to prepare for next Sunday.

- Blessed: Chapter three.
- The seven churches: www.youtube.com/watch?v=apMj6heeibo