

Approximately 35 minutes Expository



Revelation 1:1-20

“Behold the Glorious Christ”

Opening Prayer:

Father God, we come before You in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Lord, open our eyes to see Jesus as He truly is...not just as a baby in a manger, not only as the suffering Savior on the cross, but as the risen, glorified King of kings and Lord of lords. Give us ears to hear what Your Spirit is saying. Strengthen the believer, awaken the sleepy heart, comfort the suffering saint, and draw the lost person to salvation. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Setting the Stage: The World Behind Revelation

The book of Revelation was written by the apostle John, the same John who walked with Jesus, leaned on Jesus at the Last Supper, stood near the cross, saw the empty tomb, and later became a pillar in the early church.



By the time Revelation was written, John was an old man. Many believe it was near the end of the first century, during the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian. The Roman Empire was powerful, proud, and increasingly hostile toward Christians.

Rome demanded loyalty. The emperor wanted honor. The culture pressured people to bow down, compromise, and blend in. But the Christians had one confession:

Jesus is Lord.

That confession was dangerous.

John was not living in comfort when he received this vision. Revelation 1:9 tells us

he   (NIV) **...was on the island of Patmos “because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus...”** (v.9) Patmos was a rocky prison island in the Aegean Sea. Rome may have thought they had silenced John.

But man cannot silence the Word of God.

They put John on an island, but heaven opened. They isolated him from the churches, but Jesus came to him. They tried to limit his influence, but God gave him a message that would strengthen the church for generations.

And that is a lesson right away:

Your circumstances may feel like a prison, but God can still speak there.

Your Patmos may be painful, but Jesus is still present.

You may feel forgotten by people, but you are never forgotten by the Lord.

Revelation is not meant to scare the believer. It is meant to reveal Jesus Christ, strengthen the church, and remind us that history is not out of control.

The world is not moving randomly.

God has a plan.

Jesus is coming again.

The Church will be caught up to meet the Lord before the wrath of God is poured out.

Christ will return in power and glory.

He will establish His kingdom.



He will reign.

That is the pre-tribulation, pre-millennial hope: Jesus will come for His Church, and later He will come with His Church to reign.

But before Revelation shows us seals, trumpets, bowls, beasts, Babylon, Armageddon, and the millennial kingdom, it begins with the most important vision of all:

The glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The Revelation Belongs to Jesus ... Revelation 1:1-3

  (NIV) ***Revelation 1:1-3 The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³ 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.***

The book begins by telling us this is “the revelation from Jesus Christ.” The word “revelation” means an unveiling. It is like pulling back the curtain so we can see what was hidden.

Many people say, “Revelation is too hard to understand.” But God did not give Revelation to confuse His people. He gave it to reveal truth.

- Yes, there are symbols.
- Yes, there are visions.
- Yes, there are deep prophetic themes.

But the main message is clear:

- Jesus wins.
- Evil is judged.
- The Church is called to faithfulness.
- The King is coming.



(NIV)

Verse 1 says these things

“...must soon take place...” That does not mean everything happened immediately in John’s lifetime. It means once God’s prophetic timetable begins to unfold, things will move according to His appointed plan. God is never late. He is never early. He is always right on time.



(NIV)

Verse 3 gives a special blessing:
“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy...” There is a blessing for reading Revelation, hearing Revelation, and taking it to heart.

That means Revelation is not just for prophecy experts.




- It is for the whole church.
- It is for new believers.
- It is for mature believers.
- It is for pastors.
- It is for suffering saints.
- It is for those who need hope.

👉 God blesses those who read it and obey it.

Notice that Revelation is not given merely to satisfy curiosity. It is given to change how we live.

👉 Prophecy should not make us weird.

- It should make us watchful.
- It should make us holy.
- It should make us evangelistic.
- It should make us worshipful.

   The point is not just to know the future. The point is to know the One who holds the future.

2. Grace and Peace from the Eternal God ... Revelation 1:4-6

  (NIV) **Revelation 1:4-6** ⁴ **John,**

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,
⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.



To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

John writes to seven churches in the province of Asia. These were real churches in real cities. Later in chapters 2 and 3, Jesus will speak directly to each of them.

But these seven churches also represent the complete witness of the Church. **Seven** in Scripture often points to **completeness**. So while the letters were written to real first-century churches, they still speak to churches today.

John greets them with “grace and peace.” That is exactly what we need.

Grace is God's undeserved favor.
Peace is the settled confidence that comes from being right with God.

This grace and peace come from the eternal God,   (NIV) **verse 4** **“...who is, and who was, and who is to come...”** He is not trapped in time. He is not learning as history unfolds. He is not surprised by elections, wars, disasters, persecution, or personal suffering.

- He is the God who is.
- He is the God who was.
- He is the God who is to come.

Then John speaks of Jesus Christ and gives us three powerful descriptions.

- First, Jesus is **“the faithful witness.”**
(v.5) Everything Jesus revealed about the Father is true. Everything He said about sin is true. Everything He said about

salvation is true. Everything He said about judgment and eternal life is true.

- Second, Jesus is **“the firstborn from the dead.”** (v.5) That does not mean He was created. It speaks of rank, supremacy, and position. Jesus rose from the dead, never to die again. His resurrection is the guarantee that believers will also be raised.
- Third, Jesus is **“...the ruler of the kings of the earth...”** (v.5) That is a bold statement. Rome thought Caesar ruled the world. Today, leaders and governments may think they hold ultimate power. But heaven says Jesus is the ruler over all rulers.

Then John breaks into praise: **Jesus “...loves us” and “has freed us from our sins by his blood...”** (v.5)

That is personal.

Jesus does not merely tolerate His people. He loves us.

He freed us from sin, not by religious effort, not by human goodness, not by church membership, but by His blood.

The cross was not an accident.

The cross was the place where Jesus paid for sin.

The blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse the guilty, rescue the lost, and make sinners new.

Then **verse 6** says He has made believers **“...a kingdom and priests...”** (v.6) That means if you are born again, you belong to His kingdom, and you have access to God. You do not need to earn your way into His presence. Jesus has opened the way.

That should make us worship.

To Him be glory and power forever and ever.

3. Behold, He Is Coming ... Revelation 1:7-8



(NIV)

Revelation 1:7-8 ⁷ “Look, he is coming with the clouds,”

and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”;

and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”

So shall it be! Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Verse 7 lifts our eyes to the future: **“Look, he is coming with the clouds...”** (v.7)

This is one of the great themes of Revelation. Jesus is coming again.

- At His first coming, He came in humility.
At His second coming, He will come in glory.
- At His first coming, He was rejected.
At His second coming, every eye will see Him.
- At His first coming, He stood before rulers.
At His second coming, rulers will stand before Him.

This verse points to the **visible, glorious return of Christ to the earth**. This is **not** the same event as the rapture of the Church. In the rapture, Jesus comes for His Church. In the second coming, Jesus comes with His saints in power and judgment.

The Bible teaches that the Church is not appointed to wrath. Before the great outpouring of judgment described later in Revelation, Christ will gather His Church to Himself. That is the **blessed hope**.

But Revelation 1:7 looks ahead to His public return when **“...every eye will see him...”** (v.7) The world that rejected Him will see Him. Those who pierced Him will recognize Him. The nations will mourn because they will realize the One they resisted is the rightful King.

Then **verse 8** declares the majesty of God: **“I am the Alpha and the Omega...”** (v.8)

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. God is saying He is the beginning and the end. He is sovereign over all history.

- He starts the story.
- He finishes the story.
- He writes the final chapter.

That means your life is not outside His authority. **Your pain** is not outside His care. Your future is not outside His hand.

 The world may look unstable, but the throne of God is not shaking.

4. John on Patmos ... Revelation 1:9-11



(NIV)

Revelation 1:9-11 ⁹ ***I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.***
¹⁰ ***On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,*** ¹¹ ***which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."***

John identifies himself as a brother and companion in suffering, kingdom, and patient endurance.

That is important. John does not speak down to the churches. He suffers with them. He knows persecution. He knows hardship.

He knows what it means to follow Jesus when it costs something.

The Christian life includes suffering, but it also includes kingdom hope and patient endurance.

- We suffer now, but we reign later.
- We endure now, but glory is coming.
- We may be rejected now, but our King is coming.

John says he was **“in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day.”** (v.10) Even on a prison island, John worshiped. He may not have had a church building. He may not have had a choir. He may not have had friends nearby. But he had the Lord.

That speaks to us.

- You can worship in a hospital room.
- You can worship in a prison cell.
- You can worship in your home.
- You can worship when your body hurts.



- You can worship when your heart is heavy.

John heard a loud voice like a trumpet. Trumpets in Scripture often announce something important. This was not a small whisper. This was a commanding, heavenly voice.

The voice told John to write what he saw and send it to the seven churches.

👉 God wanted this message preserved. Revelation is not private speculation. It is written revelation for the Church.

5. Jesus Among the Lampstands ... **Revelation 1:12-13**

  (NIV) **Revelation 1:12-13** ¹² **I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,** ¹³ **and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching**

down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.

John turns to see the voice, and he sees seven golden lampstands. Verse 20 tells us the lampstands represent the seven churches.

👉 That is a beautiful picture.

A lampstand does not create light by itself. It holds forth the light. The Church is called to shine the light of Christ in a dark world.

Jesus said His followers are the light of the world. But the light does not originate in us. It comes from Him, Jesus our Lord.

Then John sees someone **“...like a son of man...”** (v.13) among the lampstands. This points us back to Daniel chapter 7, where the Son of Man receives dominion, glory, and an everlasting kingdom.

🤔 Where is Jesus standing?

He is among the lampstands.

That means Jesus is present with His Church. He is not distant. He is not uninvolved. He walks among His people. He sees every church. He knows every pastor. He knows every believer. He knows every act of faithfulness and every compromise.

 That is both comforting and sobering.

It is comforting because Jesus is with us.
It is sobering because Jesus sees us.

- He knows when the church is faithful.
- He knows when the church is lukewarm.
- He knows when love has grown cold.
- He knows when truth is being compromised.
- He knows when His people are suffering.

The Church belongs to Jesus. It is not man's invention. It is not a social club. It is

not a business. It is the blood-bought people of God.

6. The Glorious Description of Christ ... **Revelation 1:13-16**



(NIV) ***Revelation 1:13-16*** ¹³ ***and***

among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

John now describes the risen Christ in symbolic, majestic language. This is not

Jesus weak and defeated. This is Jesus glorified.




He is dressed in a robe reaching down to His feet with a golden sash around His chest. (v.13)

This speaks of dignity, priesthood, and authority. Jesus is our great **High Priest**. He represents us before the Father. He intercedes for His people.

His head and hair are white like wool, as white as snow. (v.14)

This speaks of purity, wisdom, and eternity. In Daniel chapter 7, similar language is used of the **Ancient of Days**. Here we see the deity and eternal majesty of Christ.

His eyes are like blazing fire. (v.14) That means Jesus sees perfectly. He sees through appearances. He sees through religious performance. He sees the **motives of the heart**.

   You can fool people, but you cannot fool Jesus.

His feet are like bronze glowing in a furnace. (v.15) **Bronze** in Scripture is often connected with **judgment**. His feet speak of strength, stability, and righteous judgment. Jesus will judge evil. He will crush rebellion. He will make all things right.

His voice is like the sound of rushing waters. (v.15) Have you ever stood near powerful waters? You cannot ignore that sound. It overwhelms everything else. The voice of Jesus carries divine authority.

- When Jesus speaks, creation obeys.
- When Jesus speaks, demons tremble.
- When Jesus speaks, the dead are raised.
- When Jesus speaks, churches must listen.

In His right hand He holds seven stars. (v.16) Verse 20 says these are the angels or messengers of the seven churches. There is debate about whether this refers to

heavenly angels or human messengers. Either way, the picture is clear: Jesus holds His servants in His hand.

! What a comfort.

- The Church may feel weak, but Jesus is strong.
- The messenger may feel overwhelmed, but Jesus holds him.
- The ministry may feel difficult, but Jesus is Lord over it.

Out of His mouth comes a sharp, double-edged sword. (v.16) This speaks of His Word. Jesus judges by His Word. His Word cuts through lies. His Word exposes sin. His Word brings truth.

Hebrews tells us:   (NIV) **Hebrews 4:12**

12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the

heart. The Church does not need entertainment more than truth. We need the Word of Christ.

Then John says His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

This reminds us of the Mount of Transfiguration, when Peter, James, and John saw a preview of Christ's glory. But here in Revelation, John sees the risen, glorified Lord in overwhelming majesty.

This is the Jesus the world will one day see.

- Not merely a teacher.
- Not merely a prophet.
- Not merely a religious figure.
 - 👉 He is the eternal Son of God, risen, glorified, holy, and coming again.

7. John Falls, Jesus Touches **Revelation 1:17-18**

Revelation 1:17-18 ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

When John sees Him, he falls at His feet as though dead.

Remember, John knew Jesus personally.

- John had walked with Him.
- John had eaten with Him.
- John had heard Him teach.
- John had seen His miracles.

👉 But when John sees the glorified Christ, he collapses.

This should correct the casual way many people think about Jesus today.

- Yes, Jesus is loving.
- Yes, He is gentle.
- Yes, He welcomes sinners.
- 👉 But He is also holy, majestic, and glorious.

We must never reduce Jesus to a buddy, mascot, or religious idea.

He is Lord.

But notice what Jesus does. He places His right hand on John and says, **“Do not be afraid.”** (v.17)

That is grace.

The same hand that holds the stars touches the trembling servant. The same voice like rushing waters speaks comfort. The same eyes like fire look upon John with love.

Jesus says, **“I am the First and the Last.”** (v.17) That is a divine title. He is eternal. He is before all things and will remain after all things.

Then He says, **“I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!”** (v.18)

That is the heart of the gospel.



Jesus died, but He did not stay dead. He was crucified, buried, and raised. He is alive forevermore.

Christianity does not rest on a dead founder. We serve a living Savior.

Then Jesus says He holds **“the keys of death and Hades.”** (v.18)

Keys speak of authority. Jesus has authority over death, the grave, and eternity. Death does not have the final word. The devil does not have the final word. Sin does not have the final word.

Jesus has the keys.

  For the believer, death is not defeat. It is departure into the presence of the Lord. Because Jesus lives, we also will live.

8. The Outline of Revelation ... **Revelation 1:19-20**

Revelation 1:19-20 ¹⁹ **“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.** ²⁰ **The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.**

Jesus tells John to write three things: what he has seen, what is now, and what will take place later.

This gives us a helpful outline of the book.

- **“What you have seen”** points to the vision of Christ in chapter 1.
- **“What is now”** points to the church age in chapters 2 and 3.
- **“What will take place later”** points to the prophetic events beginning in chapter 4 and moving forward.

This fits beautifully with a pre-tribulation understanding of Revelation. The Church is clearly seen in chapters 2 and 3. Then in chapter 4, John is caught up into heaven, and the focus shifts to heavenly scenes and judgments upon the earth. The Church is not seen going through the wrath of the Lamb described in the tribulation judgments.



Why?

Because Jesus delivers His Church from the coming wrath.

👉 That does not mean Christians avoid all suffering. The Church has always faced

trials, persecution, and hardship. But the tribulation is a unique period of divine judgment upon the unbelieving world and a time connected to Israel's prophetic program.

The believer's hope is not to prepare for wrath. Our hope is to look for Christ.

Titus calls it the **“blessed hope.”**

- Jesus is coming for His Church.
- Jesus will judge the world.
- Jesus will save Israel.
- Jesus will defeat the Antichrist.
- Jesus will establish His kingdom.
- Jesus will reign for a thousand years.
- Then He will bring in the eternal state, where there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain.

That is where Revelation is going.

But it begins here: Behold the glorious Christ.

Personal Application: How Should We Respond?

- First, we should worship Jesus. Revelation chapter 1 does not invite us to debate only. It calls us to bow. Jesus is glorious. Jesus is worthy. Jesus is Lord.
- Second, we should trust Jesus. He holds the keys. He holds the churches. He holds the future. He holds His servants. He holds all authority.
- Third, we should listen to Jesus. If His voice is like rushing waters, then His Word must not be treated lightly. When Jesus speaks, the Church must obey.
- Fourth, we should live ready. The King is coming. This world is temporary. Sin is not worth it. Compromise is not worth it. Playing church is not worth it.
- Fifth, we should share the gospel. If Jesus is coming again, then people


need to be saved. We should not study prophecy with cold hearts. We should study prophecy with tears, urgency, and compassion.


Invitation: Are You Ready to Meet This Jesus?

Now let me speak directly to anyone listening who has never been born again.

Revelation 1 shows us Jesus in glory. But the same Jesus who shines like the sun is the Jesus who died on the cross for sinners.

- He loves you.
- He shed His blood for sin.
- He rose from the dead.
- He is alive forevermore.
- He holds the keys of death and Hades.

 The question is not simply, “Do you know about Jesus?”

 The question is, “Do you belong to Jesus?”

The Bible teaches that all have sinned. Sin separates us from God. No amount of religion, good works, church attendance, or personal effort can wash away sin.

Only the blood of Jesus can cleanse you.

To be born again means you turn from sin and place your faith in Jesus Christ. You believe He died for you. You believe He rose again. You surrender your life to Him as Lord and Savior.

One day every eye will see Him. But you do not have to wait until judgment to bow before Him. You can come to Him now and be saved.

If the Lord is touching your heart, pray to Him sincerely:

 Let us Pray...

Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner... I believe You died for me and rose again.... Forgive me.... Cleanse me.... Be my Lord and Savior.... I surrender my life to You..... Thank You for loving me and saving me.... Amen.

If you prayed that from your heart, the Bible says **whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.** (Acts2:21)

Begin walking with Jesus. Read His Word. Pray daily. Find a Bible-teaching church. Tell someone you have trusted Christ.

Romans 10:9 ⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Closing Encouragement:

Brothers and sisters, Revelation begins with Jesus because everything begins and ends with Jesus.

He is the faithful witness.

He is the firstborn from the dead.

He is the ruler of the kings of the earth.

He loves us.

He freed us by His blood.

He is coming with the clouds.

He is the Alpha and the Omega.

He walks among the lampstands.

He holds the stars.

He holds the keys.

He is alive forevermore.

👉 So do not fear.

- When the world grows darker, look to Jesus.
- When your body grows weaker, look to Jesus.
- When the church feels pressured, look to Jesus.

- When prophecy seems overwhelming, look to Jesus.
- When death seems frightening, look to Jesus.

The message of Revelation 1 is not merely, **“Hard times are coming.”**

The message is greater than that:

Jesus is coming.

Jesus is reigning.

Jesus is glorious.

Jesus is alive forever and ever.

Amen.

Closing Prayer:

 Let us Pray

Lord Jesus, we worship You as the risen and glorified King. Thank You for loving us and freeing us from our sins by Your blood. Help us to live ready, faithful, and unashamed in these last days.

Strengthen the Church. Wake up the careless heart. Comfort the suffering believer. Save the lost. And keep our eyes fixed on You until the day You come for us. We ask this in Your mighty name. Amen.



Matthew 28:19-20