

A GOLDEN LAMPSTAND



“Revealing the King in All His Beauty!”

Revelation 1:9-20

Main Idea: Revelation reveals that this book was given to the church by the Eternal King of the church: Jesus Christ our Lord!

Revelation was given through a brother and a partner in the work of the church (9-11).

- *It reveals the tribulation that connects us (9).*
- *It reveals the kingdom that unites us (9).*
- *It reveals the patient endurance in Jesus that strengthens us (9).*

While on the island of Patmos, exiled because of his faith and his faithful proclamation of the gospel, John was given a unique and powerful vision of the Lord Jesus. He was worshiping on a Sunday when this vision was given to him, making it clear that he was to write down the vision in a book in order to give it to the seven churches that were in Asia Minor. John identified himself, however, in a very special way. He reminded the readers that he was their brother and their partner. John and the believers in these churches had a relationship through Christ that was significant. They were family! They were brothers and sisters in the family of God through the Lord’s grace to them through the Son of God, Jesus. They were also partners! They had a shared purpose and responsibility as children in the family of God. Their mission was to make disciples of Jesus Christ. They couldn’t do that without proclaiming the gospel of Christ and teaching the words of Christ. John reminded them of their partnership, which includes some interesting and important realities. First, they were partners in the tribulation. John didn’t say that the tribulation was yet to come. It was already here! They were living in a time of tribulation, where the world who rejected its Lord rejected those who worshiped and followed the Lord. Second, they were partners in the kingdom. John reminded them that although there was tribulation in the kingdom of the world, believers are partners in the victorious and eternal kingdom of God! Third, they were partners in the patient endurance. John encouraged them with the reminder of the strength of Christ that enabled believers to endure through tribulation with the hope of the peace, joy, and rest of the fullness of the kingdom to come.

1. How do you see the reality of tribulation for believers in the world today? How have you personally experienced tribulation for your faith? Take time to pray for those who are under persecution for their faith and faithfulness to Jesus.
2. How do you see the reality of the kingdom of God in the church today? How have you personally experienced the reign of God’s kingdom in your heart?
3. Why is patient endurance needed in the life of a believer? How do we find this patient endurance in Christ? Have you ever received it? Share, and encourage one another.

Revelation reveals the presence, glory, and power of the Lord of the church (12-16).

- *It reveals the presence of Jesus with his church (13a).*
- *It reveals the glory of Jesus, who reigns over his church (13b-16).*

John saw the seven lampstands, but more importantly, he saw the one standing among the seven lampstands. Immediately, it was apparent that John saw the risen Lord Jesus! This revelation disclosed important truths about Jesus' presence, glory, and power. First, Jesus was with his church! In the midst of tribulation in this world, Jesus wasn't disconnected and uninterested. Jesus was there! He walked among his church. Second, Jesus wasn't a spectator, helplessly watching his church. Jesus was the King of kings and the Lord of lords! His presence was the very presence of God! He was the Great High Priest, full of holiness and wisdom and knowledge. He was the King of kings, with all authority and power. He was the Lord of lords, with all glory and might. In the midst of tribulation in this world, there's nothing that reminds us of the Kingdom and strengthens us with patient endurance like the vision of our King!

1. Take time to talk through each element of this vision of Jesus. What did you learn or were reminded of that encouraged your faith today? How does this vision of Jesus lead you to worship Jesus today?
2. What does this vision of Jesus reveal about his power and authority? Why is this important for our worship and work for Jesus?
3. Do you know someone who needs to see and to understand this vision of Jesus? Perhaps they discount him as weak, or perhaps they presume on his grace because they see him as just a gentle, suffering servant. How can you share this vision of Jesus with them and tell them what it means about the fullness of who Jesus is?

Revelation is a message from the Eternal Lord to his church (17-20).

- *It reveals what is (19).*
- *It reveals what is to come (19).*

John reacted in the way that we all probably will when we see the Lord in all his beauty: John fell on the ground as though he were dead! The Lord's words brought comfort and strength: "Fear not!" Jesus continued and shared in words what the vision of his appearance revealed. Jesus was the eternal Son of God who is the King of kings. What would be revealed to John were the things that were and the things that were yet to come. Revelation isn't just about a future reality, but it explains the reality of things today! Jesus gave this message to his church, and he gave it through the messengers to his church. The word in the Greek for "angels" literally means messengers. It's used both for spiritual beings (angels) as well as for human beings who were sent as messengers (such as John the Baptist). In this context, as the seven lampstands represented the seven churches, it's most likely that the seven angels or messengers represented the leaders of those churches, who would be the individuals to read John's letter to their church. Regardless, Jesus knew his churches. He knew his messengers. He had a message that was important for them to hear.

1. Read through the words that Jesus used to describe himself. How significant are these descriptions based on the fact that Jesus himself used them? What do these words reveal about the identity of Jesus? What do they reveal about the power and authority of Jesus? What do they reveal about the purpose of Jesus?
2. How does it encourage you that Revelation reveals what is? How does it encourage you that Revelation reveals what is to come?
3. What do these verses reveal about the significance of the message that's coming to the church today?