

OUR AMAZING SAVIOUR
Revelation 1:5, 6

Intro: Thomas Brooks, one of the Puritans, who probably was born in 1608 and died in 1680, wrote in one of his works that there are five things that a Christian ought always to be studying:

- 1) Christ.
- 2) His Word.
- 3) Our own hearts.
- 4) Satan's plots.
- 5) Eternity.

All of these, of course, are to be found in the Word of God. I am sure that we would all profit greatly if we were to follow this wise pastor's advice.

Tonight we are going to do just that. We are going to think particularly about Christ--Christ as He filled the thoughts and heart of the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos. His contemplation of the Lord in particular (but also of all of the Persons of the Godhead) was so strong that in writing to the seven churches his heart was filled with ecstasy, and his purpose was to comfort and encourage others who were not in anything of the difficulty that he was in.

The whole first chapter of The Revelation is wonderful. I love to teach it, and am always sorry when I have finished teaching it. It is a chapter full of Christ.

I want to call your attention to what he said about the Lord in his introductory greeting and prayer--verses 5 and 6, but reading verse 4 with it so you will see the connection. (Read.)

Note the two expression which cause us to look in two directions:

- 1) "And from Jesus Christ"--in v. 5.
- 2) "Unto him," that is, unto Jesus Christ--also in v. 5.

What is it that comes from Jesus Christ?

Well, if you will look back into verse 4 you will see that John was praying for the two things that Paul usually prayed for the people to whom he wrote, the two things which we considered this morning in beginning the study of 2 Corinthians--"grace . . and peace."

What did he want the churches of Asia to give to Jesus Christ?

Was it their money? No, no here. Was it their service? No, not here. What was it? The answer is at the end of verse 6:

"to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

From Him, Christ, we receive grace and peace; to Him we give glory and dominion for ever and ever. What a message of encouragement for any church IF they would take heed to the aged Apostle's words.

Now you can see that my text has two points:

- 1) HOW WE RECEIVE GRACE AND PEACE.
- 2) WHY WE GIVE HIM GLORY AND DOMINION.

Perhaps we could say that the Christian life really can be summarized in these two ways: what we receive from the Lord, and what we given to the Lord.

Let us consider these two points.

I. HOW WE RECEIVE GRACE AND PEACE. See verse 5a.

Remember that "grace" has to do with the spiritual strength that the Lord gives to us, and that "peace" is that inner tranquility of heart which we all need each day. Here we see how God answers this prayer. He will move upon our hearts to meditate on the Lord Jesus Christ as:

- 1) "The faithful witness."
- 2) "The first begotten of the dead."
- 3) "The prince of the kings of the earth."

If you would take your Bible and meditate on these three roles which our Lord occupies, and would do this each day for a week, you would have more grace and peace than you have had at any time during your life.

Let us find out what they mean?

A. "The faithful witness." Cf. Rev. 3:14. Also Rev. 19: 11.

For this title which John gave to our Lord Jesus Christ I would suggest that you read again the Gospel of John. It has to do with the words of the Lord Jesus Christ which He spoke while He was here on earth.

Notice John 17:8 as an illustration of what we find a number of times in John's Gospel. It was a kind of a report that He was giving to the Father. He had given the Father's words to those people whom the Father had given to Him. Every word was true. You never need to question anything that the Lord Jesus said. He is "the faithful witness"!

Let your heart be filled with His words, and see what grace and peace you receive.

In these days particularly, how wonderful it is to have a message and a Messenger you can trust.

B. "The first begotten of the dead."

Do you fear death? Is death that which keeps you from enjoying the peace of God? Do you need strength so as to be able to face death unafraid?

Then think of the Lord Jesus Christ as the first and only One Who has conquered death. No one else has ever done it.

Read Rev. 1:17, 18. If you do not fear, then you have peace! What a marvelous thing is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ! You and I do not think about that enough. And yet we commemorate His resurrection every Sunday when we get together.

C. "The prince of the kings of the earth."

"The kings of the earth" would include all of the world leaders in any generation. It included the Caesars in John's day.

Do you fear what the nations might do? Is this the reason that you do not have peace? Do you want strength to face such a fear, and to have peace?

Then notice the word, "prince." Do you know what it means? It means that our Lord Jesus Christ NOW is the first One in power. No king, nor all of the kings of the earth, are superior to our Lord Jesus Christ in power and authority. He is the chief ruler in the whole earth.

We talk about the sovereignty of God and of Jesus Christ knowing that that word belongs pre-eminently to Them.

I only have time to touch on these great titles of our Lord Jesus Christ, but, with the Apostle John, I commend them to you for your daily meditation and worship. Trinity Bible Church would not be the same place next Sunday if you and I would seriously think about our Lord in these three ways. Truly then we would become stronger and more peaceful, having "grace . . . and peace."

But now let us look at the other side--the giving side. First we receive, then we will give, give "glory and dominion" to Him "for ever and ever. Amen."

II. WHY WE GIVE CHRIST GLORY AND DOMINION.

Again we have three reasons.

- A. Because He loved us, and continues to love us--this is the meaning of what John the Apostle wrote.

Can you and I ever contemplate the love of Christ too much? Certainly not. And it will do something to you to remember this. It will take the sting out of your trials, and it will take the weight out of your burdens. If the Lord Jesus is your unfailing Friend, what difference does it make who your enemies might be?

What Paul was saying in Rom. 8:38, 39 means that nothing can be interpreted as meaning that the Lord's love has changed in the least.

And the greatest proof of His love is to be seen in His death for you. Cf. Rom. 5:8. Think about it, and ask the Lord to make it more of a reality to you.

- B. Because He has loosed us, or washed us, from our sins.

There is a change in the tense of the verb here. He always loves us, but He just needed to loose us once. He has loosed us from sin's penalty; He has loosed us from sin's power. Think where you might be, and what you might be, if it were not for what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for you and for me.

How long has it been since you gave serious thought to this? There should never be a day but what our thoughts go to the Cross. Be as Paul was when he wrote 1 Cor. Gal. 6:14.

But there is one more point that John made.

- C. Because Christ has made us a kingdom of priests unto God.

What would you do if you could not pray with the assurance that God hears, and that He answers your prayers? This is what a priest does--he goes to God on behalf of others.

Are you praying? Do you pray for your fellow-believers? Do you go to the Lord with the realization that if it were not for the Lord Jesus Christ, you could not go to the Father at all? What a glorious thing to be a priest to God!

Now--if you consider all of these great truths, then you will want to give something to the Lord for all that He has

done for you. What will it be?

John mentions two things:

- 1) "Glory."
- 2) "Dominion."

The first means worship--all glory and praise belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ because of what He is and what He has done.

Glory means that you are going to do all in your power, and I will, too, to attract attention to the Lord Jesus Christ, not to yourself, or to any other human being or angel. This is what the Lord did when He appeared in glory to Peter and James and John. This is what He did when the glory appeared in the Tabernacle of the OT, and in the Temple!

True worship means turning our attention, and turning the the attention of others, to CHRIST!

What about "dominion"?

This is the Greek word which is commonly translated "dominion" in the doxologies of the NT. Cf. 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 25; Rev. 5:13. It conveys the idea of a perfected power, or authority, or dominion.

Do you want to see this in the earth? Oh, yes, we do! What a difference this will make in this world when the Lord comes as King of kings and Lord of lords!

But it seems to me that John had something else in mind as well. He must have been thinking of giving the Lord "dominion" in our lives NOW.

Can you love a Saviour like this too much? Can you trust Him too much? Can you obey Him too much? The answer to all of those questions is, NO!

But let me ask you another question: Does He have dominion in your life? Are you more concerned about pleasing Him than you are anything else?

Concl: My grandson taught me a great lesson while we were on the bike trip this past week.

Dick and Nancy Skelton (she works in John and Darrell's office) had their boat at Cultus Lake, and their daughter and son-in-law wanted to take Miles and Katie and Will out on the lake for a boat ride. I had gone to look for the bikers. Gary was with them. And Martha was with me. Will would not go because his Daddy and Mama had not said he could go even though his grandmother and Aunt Marilyn said he could. Finally, he ran down the road to find his mother. Are we that anxious to please Christ?