

REVELATION 05 – CHRIST THE ONLY FAITHFUL WITNESS

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Revelation 1:4-5a

PROLOGUE – WITNESSES TO TRUTH: ANGEL WITNESS TO GOD & MAN

- Angel, Greek {ἄγγελος} *aggelos*, simply means messenger and can refer to **any** messenger: heavenly or earthly; their mission: Serve Believers via Son (He 1:14)
- Under the Law, Truth must be confirmed by two or three witnesses (De 19:15)
 - Christ abided by this statute though He admitted that it did not apply to Him as He knew Truth while His detractors did not know Truth; i.e., Him (Jn 5:30-47; 8:13-19)
 - Witnesses did not *change* Truth but validated the reliability of the Messenger/Witness
- Angel *witnesses* Truth between Father and Son then *witnesses* Christ's revelation to John and John's truthfulness in recording the apocalypse {Bible}
 - Confirmed by indwelling Spirit who bears *witness* **in** each Believer; not to the Lost (Jn 4:24; 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:12-15)

PROLOGUE – BLESSED: READER & LISTENER

- Blessed {μακάριος, makarios}: Happy but not generalized happiness
 - Christian μακάριος: Blessedness that corresponds and reinforces one's *new nature*
 - Beatitudes, blessedness, associates happiness to self humility being in Christ (Mt 5:2-12)
 - Lost associates happiness with elevating self by suppressing others (Ro 2:1-11; 3:10-18)
- Reader and Listener blessed, happy, Christ sharing His Truth
 - Reader, teacher: Sharing-teaching Truth of Christ's revealing to His Believers
 - Listener, maturing: Hearing-hoping-waiting for Christ in faith guards the Truth (Ro 8:23-25; 1Pe 4:16-19)
- Blessed is not joy over the eternal death-judgment of the Lost (Ez 33:11-17; Mt 23:37-39)

EPISTLE STRUCTURE: UNDERSTANDING THE ORDER

- Revelation is a letter, or more formally, an epistle {ἐπιστολή, *epistolē*}; it may contain some or all these elements
 - Prologue – Defining the purpose or reason for this epistle
 - Preamble – Identifies the author, not necessarily the writer, and the recipient(s) which may be individuals or groups; i.e., churches as in Revelation
 - Body – Addresses issues and may be subdivided into sections depending on length, subject matter(s), etc. {Christ; Church Letters and Christ's Revelation, etc.}
 - Epilogue – Closes the letter and may identify the actual writer or courier(s)
- Last lesson studied the Prologue; this lesson begins to look at the Preamble

JOHN, CHURCHES AND CHRIST: CORE ELEMENTS OF REVELATION

- John, generally considered John the Apostle, identifies himself as the author
 - He provides no other details indicating that these Churches are familiar with him
 - John moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus before Jerusalem's destruction (70 AD)
- Churches of Asia, Roman province encompassing much of modern Turkey
 - Letter follows major circular route in the order the churches addressed {Christ}
- John includes in his Preamble usual Christian blessings: Grace and Peace {Paul}
 - These flow from Christ who is identified by several significant adjectives important to understanding His relation to Father's Revelation

GRACE – PEACE: WHAT DO THEY REALLY MEAN?

- Grace, often defined as *unmerited favor*, means so much more (Ro 3:21-26)
 - Classical Greek: Wellbeing, often associated with gratefulness and thanksgiving
 - Old Testament: Strong One helping the Weak One hence unmerited favor exemplified in Noah, Moses, Ruth; i.e., entire Bible and each life created (Ge 6:8; Ex 2:1-10; Ruth 2:1-13)
 - Paul associates Grace with entire Christian existence and includes it in his Preambles as John (Ro 1:5-6; 5:1-8; 1Co 15:10; Ga 1:3; Ep 1:2)
 - Acts views Grace flowing from Christ to Believers {Charisma} (Ac 1:6-8; 2:1-12; 8:8-10; 11:19-24)
- Christ's Grace empowers Believers via indwelling Spirit resulting in Faith (Ro 1:17)
 - Peace results from **Christ** satisfying Father's holiness; Revelation *reveals* result of those who live by their **works** not satisfying God's holiness: Not hid in Christ (Ge 2:15-17; Da 7:9-11; Mt 22:11-14; Ro 4:1-8; 5:6-11; Col 3:1-10; Re 20:11-15)

WHO IS IN VIEW? DECIPHERING THE METAPHORS

- Christ's qualities cannot be expressed simply in nouns but in timeless metaphors denoting characteristics relevant to this Epistle and us
- This section has two major interpretations
 - Refers to the Father, Son and Spirit {Majority view}
 - Refers to Christ from several facets that appear contradictory or confusing to our empirical finite minds {My view}
- Our interpretation must be guided by the fact that this *revealing* is about Christ, though it originally preceded from the Father; eschatology is incidental
 - Christ is always the Preeminent One for several reasons we will now discuss (Col 1:15-19)

CHRIST AND HOLY SPIRIT: *ALL ABOUT CHRIST*

- Who of the Trinity is the One who is, who was {died} and who will come?
 - Answer: Christ who came in the flesh to die, died, arose, ascended and will return (Ac 1:9-11; 1Co 15:3-11; 1Jo 1:1-3; 2:28)
- Who are the Seven Spirits? Metaphor for the Holy Spirit indwelling each of the Seven Churches who will be named directly by Christ (Re 1:10-11)
 - Spirit indwells entire body of Christ, Church, each local church and each believe; It always points to Christ (Jn 16:7-15; Ro 8:9-11; 1Co 12:12-13)
- Does Christ sit on the Throne? If we **see** God, then it must be Christ for no one has ever seen the Father except the Son-Spirit (Jn 1:1-18; 4:23-24)

ALLOW SCRIPTURE TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

- Two Christs? No! Two perspectives of Christ emphasizing Him as The Faithful Witness who died for Man
- John names Jesus as God which is an affront to the Jews; Revelation is also to the Jews as well as to the Church (Ac 4:1-20; 6:8-15; 7:51-58; Ro 11:7-11)
 - First born from Dead; First Fruits of completed New Covenant salvation (1Co 15:20-23)
 - Already The Ruler of all earthly rulers {Important after the Church Letters} (Ro 13:1-2)
- First, Jesus is The Faithful Witness proved by His Death (Jn 5:36-40)
 - All that can be known about Father and salvation comes *only* through Christ
 - If Christ is not a Faithful, True, Witness His Gospel cannot be True: No Salvation!
(Jn 8:12-19, 31-47)