

Revealing The Soon-Coming All-Powerful Sovereign World Ruler

[Part 4]

The Glorified Man Jesus Christ, the True Head of the Christian Church

Ephesians 1:17-23 [NIV] *“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. **I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills everything in every way.**”*

The man Jesus Christ is our model and the more we come to know Him the more we will be like Him.

We will then be putting on the very “likeness” of God, the very reason we have been given human existence.

How is this fulfilled?

God the Father made the glorified man Jesus head of the church.

On a physical level it is the head that is the central driving force of the whole body.

If we lose our head we are dead.

If a church does **not** have Jesus the Son of Man leading and empowering it, it is dead.

Revelation 1:12-13 [NIV] *“I turned round to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 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 round his chest.**”*

The seven golden lampstands are the seven different attitudes in the Christian churches, in Asia at that time but also attitudes that have continued down through the history of the church.

Among all of these churches then and now is the presence of Jesus the Son of Man.

As we study the attitudes of these seven churches we see that **not** always was Jesus accepted as the Head of that church.

In our time we have all kinds of status symbols in the Christian church, membership, deacons, pastors, bishops, etc.

But there is only one status symbol that should make a Christian congregation genuinely glad, and also make its presence in the community effective.

That is to know that Jesus the glorified Son of Man is present, walking in our midst and leading us.

Some Christians feel that they need a great cathedral if they are to worship God properly.

Or a mighty organ or artistic stained-glass windows, or other certain gold and silver objects.

What a Christian congregation really needs is its eternal head, Jesus.

The One in its midst whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and the One from whose mouth proceeds a double-edged sword, that is the word of God the Christian Bible.

Revelation 1:17-18 [NIV] *“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. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”*

It was the fear that was generated by the sight of the Head of the church that caused John to flatten himself to the ground in worship.

It was also the words that Jesus spoke that put reverence into John.

Hebrews 4:12-13 [NIV] *“For the word of God is living 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. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”*

Do the words in the Christian Bible have this effect on us?

It is far better to have the active presence of the glorified Jesus in our congregation than to be surrounded by physical symbols, however attractive they may be.

God’s presence is the only reason for any Christian congregation to exist.

Revelation 3:20 [NIV] *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”*

Is this what is happening at the moment to the congregation that you are a part of?

Is the congregation you attend more of a “religious social club” than a group who have in their centre the living glorified Jesus?

What are the major priorities in your congregation?

Diligent study and meditation on the Word of God the Christian Bible?

Or are fund-raising and social events the major occupations?

Humble prayer circles or coffee mornings?

What you do as a congregation will determine if Jesus is still knocking at the door of your church wanting to be let in, or is in the centre of your communion.

The Church Congregation must be Holy

The true Christian church must understand it is to live a disciplined life, individually and as a group.

Although our High Priest loves us in spite of our weaknesses and failures, He commands us to be a holy people because He is a holy God.

Revelation 4:8-11 [NIV] *“Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” Whenever the living creatures give glory, honour*

*and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: “**You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.**”*

All of heaven and the created earth cry aloud all the time of the holiness of our Saviour.

1 Peter 2:9-10 [NIV] *“**But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**”*

We as Christians are called to be a holy group of people.

How does this happen?

Leviticus 20:7-8 [NIV] *“**Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy.**”*

Here is a key to holiness, it is something that God will do.

It has to be God because only God is holy in Himself.

The Hebrew word translated “consecrate” is “*qâdâsh*” meaning to dedicate or set yourself apart but also to be clean.

That is our part of the process of becoming holy.

Holiness, the Greek word “*hagiōs*” means to set apart.

In Christian spirituality, holiness is the devotion and purity of life associated with discipleship, in which we live according to God’s will and exhibit that commitment in all areas of behaviour.

Sanctification, the Greek word “*hagiasmōs*” is the process or result of God’s continuing work in Christians believers through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holiness of God is depicted by His character that does set Him apart from any other being.

Galatians 5:22-25 [NIV] *“**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.**”*

These are the very characteristics of our Creator God, all of which stem from the first, love, the Greek word “*agapé*” which is **only** associated with God or God-like character.

“*Agapé*” is a spontaneous love, irrespective of the rights or response of the person receiving that affection, a sacrificial love where the personal desires are sacrificed in order to show this love to others.

Our Saviour Jesus, the Son of Man and our High Priest is the perfect example of this love.

Holiness may be an unpopular subject in some church congregations, but holiness in the Christian life is a very precious treasure in God’s sight.

What I am about to say may hurt.

We have lived with unholiness so long today that we are almost incapable of recognising true holiness.

Ministers have largely given up preaching Bible-centred sermons on holiness.

Preachers today would rather give their congregations “*spiritual tranquilisers.*”

True scripture-based preaching should be with such convicting power that it makes people sweat, **not** leaving a church service feeling good.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 [NIV] “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, **rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness**, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*”

Rebuking and correcting are **not** “*tranquilisers*”, but are designed to make sinners sweat with fear and awe of our Creator God.

2 Peter 2:20-22 [NIV] “*If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. **It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.** Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.”*”

Messages preached in our churches should make backsliding Christians sweat.

These are the powerful messages that need to be preached in the churches if the congregation is to become holy.

Preached no matter what the people may think of such a minister of God.

Revelation 1:14 [NIV] “... *His [our Saviour and Lord] eyes were [and are] like blazing fire.*”

The x-ray eyes of the resurrected Jesus can see right through every façade we may have to fool other human beings as to our true character.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 [NIV] “*Now all has been heard; **here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man.** For God will bring every deed into judgment, **including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.**”*

Nothing is hid from the Lord Jesus who will be our judge.

2 Corinthians 5:10 [NIV] “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*”

No-one can avoid this day.

Most Christians today have a hard time accepting this fact, preachers and lay people alike.

We seem to think that our respectability should be accepted by our Lord as spirituality.

This is the same tragic mistake the self-righteous Pharisees made in Jesus’ day.

Matthew 23:27-28 [NIV] “*Woe to you, **teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean.** In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.*”

Jesus condemned the Pharisees and religious leaders for outwardly appearing saintly and holy but inwardly remaining full of corruption and greed.

God already knows all about us

In fact God knows each of us better than we know ourselves, [**Psalms 139:1-6**].

God knows that our outward show of humility is often just another form of pride.

God knows our strengths and our weaknesses.

John 15:5 [NIV] *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; **apart from me you can do nothing.**”*

Jesus, before the coming day of judgement, tells us that the only thing capable of harming us is to believe we can accomplish anything of eternal value by our own strength.

2 Corinthians 12:10 [NIV] *“That is why, for Christ’s sake, **I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**”*

We can never be too weak for the Lord to use us, but we can get too strong, if it is our own generated strength we are using.

1 Peter 2:2 [NIV] *“**Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,**”*

We can never be too ignorant for the Lord to use us, as long as we seek to learn of Him like a new-born child.

But we can be too wise in our own conceit.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 [NIV] *“**Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things, and the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, so that no-one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God, that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”**”*

We can never be too small or insignificant for the Lord to use us, but we can get too big and get in His way.

No Christian or Christian congregation dares settle for anything less than the illumination of the Holy Spirit and the presence of our divine High Priest and King in their midst.

Revelation 19:11-13, 15 [NIV] *“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no-one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.” ... **“Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron sceptre.”** He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.”*

The future coming King of kings and our eternal judge, on His second coming, will judge all nations according to His Word, that is the Christian Bible.

When we invite the same Jesus into our lives and our congregations we will be preparing to meet Him as our eternal judge.

This same *“two edged sword”* the Word of God judging us now.

1 Peter 4:17-18 [NIV] *“For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”*

All of us as Christians will be those we are first to face the judgement of Jesus our soon coming Lord.

We are a people getting ready to see Him face to face.

Are we ready right now, for that face to face encounter?