

The Revealing Of The Church's Future

Part 2

John sees Jesus in his present and future appearance and work in several different ways.

The dazzlingly radiant Son of Man.

Revelation 1:12-16 [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. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”*

The victorious lamb.

Revelation 5:6-9 [NIV] *“Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.”*

The conqueror on a white horse.

Revelation 19:11-16 [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. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 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. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”*

The judge.

Revelation 14:6-7, 14-20 [NIV] *“Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth, to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” ... “I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one “like a son of man” with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses’ bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.”*

Preparing the dwelling place for His bride.

Revelation 21:1-5 [NIV] *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”*”

The healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:1-6 [NIV] *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. The angel said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.”*”

We do **not** know when these things will happen.

We do **not** know all the details of these events.

But we **do** know that our Lord Jesus Christ will be returning to this earth.

We **do** know that we should **not** neglect or ignore God’s message to humanity that is recorded in this last chapter of God’s Holy Christian Bible.

Revelation provides strong reinforcement to the prophetic declarations of other Christian scriptures found in God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

Jesus is coming again.

The promise that the Creator God has a divine plan and timetable for a new order and rule on the earth is **not** some novel idea advanced by overzealous handlers of the scriptures.

Many times during His earthly ministry Jesus declared that He would come again to intervene in human history.

Can we ignore Jesus’ own words on the subject of His return?

Matthew 24:30-31, 36 [NIV] *“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.” ... “No-one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*”

The apostle Paul had similar words with the same significance for the Christians in Thessalonica.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4 [NIV] *“for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “Peace and safety”, destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.”*”

The apostle Peter wrote the same message of caution and spiritual preparation.

2 Peter 3:10-12 [NIV] *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.”*

We are responsible in three ways in the light of these scriptures relating to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

a) **2 Peter 3:14** [NIV] *“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”*

To prepare ourselves for that event.

b) **1 Peter 3:15** [NIV] *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”*

Be always ready to tell others of the hope we have in the return of Jesus Christ to rule in righteousness the whole world.

c) **Revelation 6:9-11** [NIV] *“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow-servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.”*

To join our brothers and sisters in Christ who had died as a result of the testimony. To cry out to God “how long?”, not only for our own sakes but for those who are suffering because of their being blinded to the truth by our enemy Satan.

Always remember one thing in our seeking to be prepared for this soon-coming event.

What Jesus Christ is to us in our personal life, moment by moment, is more important than merely dwelling always on what He did for us.

Christ actively dwells in us through the work of the ungrieved Holy Spirit in us who He sent to continue the work He started when here on earth the first time.

Matthew 28:18-20 [NIV] *“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

The final words of our Saviour before He returned to the Father in Heaven to be our High Priest on the right hand of the Father.

Christ remains with us and gives us the authority and the power to continue His work of making disciples through the active work of the Holy Spirit in us and flowing out from us to others.

John 7:37-39 [NIV] *“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

As we receive the Holy Spirit [Spirit of Christ] into our lives He must flow out from us to others.

This is the way God has chosen to spread His love for all humanity to others.

Romans 5:5 [Literal Translation from Greek] *“And the hope does not make ashamed, because the love of God has been poured out through [Greek “en”] our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us.”*

The Greek preposition “en” means to remain within yet flowing out to others in the form of union and fellowship.

The Holy Spirit is likened in other scriptures to a wind that is constantly on the move influencing all it touches.

When meditating on this scripture we see that the driving force our lives, our heart, must constantly be the vehicle through which God can bring His love to others.

To approach the book of Revelation simply out of curiosity is, in my judgement, close to sacrilege.

In the spiritual realm, truth not acted on in obedience becomes darkness.

The Holy Spirit who in the first place inspired the Holy scriptures is the only One who can give us inner illumination as we read and study The Bible, God’s Word.

If we do not embrace and act on what we read we grieve the Holy Spirit and His active presence in our lives will fade and the veil of darkness will gradually descend again, and our zeal for God’s Will for our lives will go out.

Ephesians 4:30 [NIV] *“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:19 [NIV] *“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire;”*

The crux of the whole matter is this, our wonderful, created world will be restored to its rightful Owner.

I for one look forward to that day. I want to live here on earth when Jesus Christ owns and rules the world.