

Who is this Child?

Welcome

Christmas Eve Service 6pm. Baptism Jan 3rd. Ordination Service 1/9 6pm

Introduction

If you have your Bible, and I hope you do...

- Those around us seem so much more interested to hear about Jesus at Christmas time... People are used to hearing about the baby in a manger. And the story is truly incredible. The story of Mary being visited by an angel, the stable, the shepherds and the wise men. The baby Jesus is surrounded by animals.
- But who is this baby exactly? We need to ask ourselves this question because if we don't, our Christmas will be too small. And by that, I do not mean that our tree is too short or we don't have enough lights outside, or our gifts are not expensive enough. I mean that unless we see Jesus for who he truly is, we will never realize that Christmas is only the beginning.
- For those of you exploring Christianity, I have been praying all week that God would open your eyes to see Jesus for Who He is. Then for those of you who may have been Christians for years or decades even, I pray that you would understand who He is in a deeper way today, because His greatness is inexhaustible and in a sense indescribable. My prayer that I have been praying all week, is that we would understand who exactly Jesus is.

Revelation 1:9-18

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

Context/Story

Imagine with me that you are a Christian in the first century. This is not an easy time for you. Because you are a follower of Jesus, you face danger on every side. Persecution from the

Jewish establishment, Persecution from the Roman government. Imagine that you have members of your church, or even members of your family who are imprisoned right now in dark dungeons. Others you have seen have been hung on crosses, or thrown before wild beasts. People you know from your church have been beheaded because of their faith. You face daily pressure from the Roman authorities to bow down and worship the emperor. And you know that if you do not, you will lose your job and with it your ability to support your family. You may lose your family, or you may lose your life. And all indications are pointing to things getting worse, not better. All because you are a follower of Jesus.

Who is this Child?

1. Just think about John's assignment in verse 11. A voice like a trumpet booms behind him and says, "Write what you see in a book" That's not an easy thing to do. It's one thing to write down words you hear; it's a whole different thing to write down in words the wonder of what you see with your eyes.
 - a. Imagine you have a pen and a piece of paper, then somebody says, "Write down what you see in the Grand Canyon." You look at your pen and paper, you look at the Grand Canyon and you think, "There's no way to write down the grandeur of what I see out there."
 - b. That's what John is trying to do. Feel the difficulty of his task as he turns and sees the voice of the One who's speaking to him and attempts to describe Him in words.
2. Reread 12-18 and See if you can pick out the attributes of Jesus from this section
 1. Jesus is the Son of Man (vs13)
 - a. He is the fulfillment of centuries of prophecy (Daniel 10)
 - b. There are 300 specific references to the coming of Jesus, written over 1,000 years, prophesying where He would be born, as well as the circumstances that would surround His birth, His life and His death.
 2. Jesus is God
 - a. First and the Last (vs17)
 - i. Vs 8 - God the father describes himself as the Alpha and Omega
 - b. Infinitely old (Vs14) - Jesus' hairs are white, like white wool, like snow. That is a deliberate biblical picture of age.
 - c. Infinitely wise (vs 14) - In ancient culture, white hair was a symbol of accumulated wisdom through years of experience. The experience and wisdom of Jesus knows no end.
 - d. Jesus is Totally Pure (vs 15)
 - e. Jesus is all powerful (vs 15)
 - f. Death is Controlled by Jesus(vs 18)
 - i. Jesus was dead for a time, but now He is alive for all time—which means death is controlled by Jesus. He has the keys of Death and Hades. A key is a symbol of authority in Jewish thought. Jesus says, "I have authority over Death. I speak and Death listens. I speak and Death obeys."
 3. Jesus is the Final Sacrifice for Sin (vs 13)

- a. Clothed with a long robe and a golden sash around His chest. Six of the seven times a long robe like this is mentioned in the Old Testament, it refers to the clothing of the high priest, who would enter into the most holy place to offer sacrifices for the sins of God's people. Jesus is pictured here as the One who entered into the presence of God the Father and has offered full and final, once and for all, sacrifice for the sins of God's people.
 - i. If you are exploring Christianity, this is the essence of why Jesus came. We have all sinned against God; we are all separated from God and if we die in our sin, separated from God, we will be separated from God forever. But Jesus came to offer His life as a sacrifice for our sin. That's why He died on the cross. That's what He was doing. He had no sin to die for, but He chose to die for our sin—for your sin and my sin

4. Jesus Sees All Things (vs 14)

- a. His eyes are like a flame of fire. Nothing escapes His gaze. He sees it all, and He sees through it all. Jesus sees through all the pretense. He searches every area of our hearts. He sees the impurity of our hearts; He sees the stains in our hearts. Jesus sees everything we would like to hide. Nothing in your life or my life escapes the pure and penetrating gaze of Jesus

5. Jesus Determines Our Eternal Fate (Vs16)

a. Jesus Issues Eternal Salvation

- i. Two edged Sword
- ii. The first side of the double edge is this: Jesus declares eternal salvation for all who trust in Him. To all who trust in Him, Jesus declares, "You are saved from your sin."

b. Jesus Issues Final Judgement

- i. At the same time, Jesus decrees final Judgement for all who turn from Him.
- ii. Revelation 19:15-16 - From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule[c] them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

- 1. If you're exploring Christianity, I challenge you to consider anyone who even comes close to comparing with Jesus. You ask, "Well, how do you compare religious teachers and leaders?" I would encourage you to start with this question: who else has defeated the grave?
 - a. Ladies and gentlemen, there is no one like Jesus: fully human and fully God, the fulfillment of centuries of prophecy, the final and ultimate sacrifice for sin, infinitely old, infinitely wise, Who sees all things and knows all things, Whose purity has no error, Whose power knows no equal, Whose voice resounds with authority, declaring eternal salvation and final judgment, Whose face radiates with light, the One with the first and last word in creation, Who was dead for a

time and is alive for all time, and Who rules over death itself. There is no one like Him!

Fear Not

1. If you are not a christian
 - a. see the gulf of grandeur and glory that separates you from Jesus and fall on your face at His feet. Specifically, if you are not a follower of Jesus, I would say to you, "Have much fear. Have much fear."
 - b. Here's what I mean by that. If you are not a follower of Jesus, if you have not trusted in Who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for you on the cross, if you are separated from God in your sin and have not turned to this Jesus as Savior and Lord of your life, then you have much reason to fear today. You will meet Jesus one day as either Savior or Judge.
 - c. The Bible teaches that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The question is not, "Will you bow?" The question is, "Will you bow now, or will you bow when it's too late?" I urge you to trust in Jesus today, right now. I've prayed for this moment specifically. That you wouldn't just Yawn in the face of Revelation 1 and go on about your christmas holiday.
 - d. God has brought you here right now to hear this news loud and clear: your eternity hinges on how you respond to Jesus. I assure you that He loves you. He has offered the sacrifice for your sin. He's made a way for you to be forgiven of all your sin and reconciles you to God forever. I urge you: trust in Him today. If you're not a follower of Jesus, have much fear.
2. If you are a christian
 - a. for all who have trusted in Jesus and for all who trust in Jesus today... HAVE NO FEAR. one of the greatest struggles in life is fear. I want you to hear what the Bible is saying. I want you to picture Jesus putting His hand on John's shoulder saying, "Do not fear."
 - b. Listen. Get the picture of what's happening in this passage. You've got the lampstands, the stars—what does this mean? John tells us that Jesus is standing in the middle of these seven golden lampstands which symbolize the seven churches that John is writing to. These are churches that are filled with Christians who are going through dark days. So where is Jesus while all of that's happening? He's right in the middle of them. Jesus is protecting them in the midst of all they're going through.
 - c. The Bible is teaching, and God is saying right now to men and women who are going through all kinds of dark times in life. Jesus is saying in the middle of it all to you right now, "Have no fear." Why? Because Jesus is present with you.
 - d. Isaiah 43:1 - But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

- e. 2nd Timothy 1:7 - for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Fall Down in Worship (Conclusion)

Fall Down and Worship Him

Rise up as a witness

John, Isaiah, Daniel, Moses, Abraham

When people encounter God, they are sent out as His witness to the world.

May we never cease to be amazed by the magnificence of Jesus, never tire of gazing upon His glory. As we take this week and reflect upon the baby in the manger. Remember who Jesus actually is.

Pray

God, please, please, please keep us from yawning and moving on with the busyness of our days and all the activities of this week. Please, O God, keep us from giving a tip of the hat to Jesus. Keep us from a religious, monotonous routine that says, "We'll give Jesus nominal adherence or casual attention once a week." Jesus, You're worthy of so much more. You're worthy of our lives. You're worthy of all our worship, all our praise, all our adoration. In You we trust. We praise You. We glorify You. So help us, God, help us we pray to fall down in worship

Invitation