

Sermon Outlines
The Preeminence Of Christ In The Revelation - No. 1

Readings:

Revelation 1:1-5

Introduction

The writer to the Hebrews emphasizes the preeminence of Christ in respect to the sacrifices, priesthood, and Mosaic covenant. The Revelation emphasizes His preeminence regarding His judgeship to all that is contrary to that which is contrary to God and His kingship.

Furthermore, Revelation is not the only New Testament book which presents the Kingship or preeminence of the Lord. It is dealt with in:

- a) Colossians, where Paul wrote: “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.” (Col. 1:18)
- b) Ephesians, where Paul wrote: “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” (Eph. 1:18-23)
- c) Philippians, where Paul wrote: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9-11)

The Preeminence Of Christ In Revelation

In the Revelation of Jesus Christ, God reveals His thoughts about Christ in three distinct ways:

- a) The worthiness God recognizes in Him.
 - i) He alone who is the Lamb and the Lion is worthy to take, look and open the book.
- b) The work God entrusts to Him.
 - i) He alone can discipline the local church, no church has the right to discipline. This is seen in a figure in the Old Testament when the priest dressed the lamps (Ex. 30:7), and in Revelation chapters 2-3 when the Lord seeks to correct the churches.
 - ii) To do this He must be without the errors that are mentioned, for how can one correct another when guilty of the same?
- c) The titles that are given to Him.
 - i) The Lord is given at least 21 names and titles in Revelation which come in “clusters”. For instance:
 1. “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev. 1:8)
 2. Interestingly, with every title or name given, the definite article is before each of them, He is:
 - (a) The Lion of the tribe of Juda (Rev. 5:5)
 - (b) The beginning of the Creation of God (Rev. 3:14)
 - (c) The Root and Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16)

Three questions:

- a) “If you had been writing Revelation, what terms would you include in the first cluster?” I would have chosen some title like, “The Lion” or “The Almighty”. The Holy Spirit calls Christ: (Rev. 1:5)
 - i) The Faithful Witness

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- ii) The First begotten of the dead
 - iii) The Prince of the Kings of the earth.
- b) Which of those three titles would you have put first?
- c) What did the Holy Spirit put first and why? “The faithful witness”.
- i) To me the answer is clearly seen in three distinct avenues;
 - 1. Chronological avenue:
 - (a) Our Lord was the faithful witness on earth before Calvary.
 - (b) Our Lord was the first born from the day after Calvary.
 - (c) Our Lord will be the Prince of the Kings of the earth and that is future.
 - 2. Moral avenue:
 - (a) He is the faithful witness, and to be such He had to be impeccably holy and perfect in all He said, was, and did.
 - 3. Literary avenue:
 - (a) As the faithful witness, He is God’s perfect witness perfectly qualified to give His critiquing on the churches (Rev. 2:1- 3:22)
 - (b) As the first begotten from the dead, He has the worthiness to take the book and to open it, and so develop God’s purposes (Rev. 4:1-20:15), suppressing all rebellion and bringing into fruition God’s new creation perfectly ruled for the glory of God (Rev. 20:1- 22:7)

Christ The Faithful Witness

The Lord was manifestly, “The faithful Witness”

- a) When on earth the Holy Spirit records:
 - i) His personal witness to the evil character of its works. “The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” (Jn. 7:7)
 - ii) His witness before Pilate. “I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession” (1 Tim. 6:13)
- b) When dealing with people on earth.
 - i) The churches (Rev. 2:1-3:22)
 - ii) The world’s armies (Rev. 19:11-21)
 - 1) Thus the book begins and ends with the Lord as the “Faithful and True”.
 - 2) Then in all His adjudications, is being faithful to God, faithful to us, and perfectly true in all that He is doing.

The Character Of The Early Church Leaders

- 1) John will speak of himself as being true with that which he records (Jn. 19:35)
- 2) Peter will speak of himself as being true with us (2 Pet. 1:16)
- 3) Paul will record how he was a faithful witness even when in jail, so that “my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places” (Phil. 1:13), which has resulted in the furtherance of the gospel (Phil. 1:12, 14).

But They Did Fail

Peter failed to be a faithful witness and denied the Lord when he should have spoken the truth (Matt. 26:70, 72).

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- a) This is set in contrast to our Lord who, when He was asked, "Are you the Son of God?", in everyday talk He answered, "Yes" (Matt. 26:53). The Lord must answer to be faithful to the command of God because he had been put under an oath, therefore, must answer according to truth (Lev. 5:1-4). Of course this does not mean that the Lord would not have answered according to truth even if He had not been put under oath.
- b) How often we fail like Peter or John who was among those who forsook the Lord (Matt. 26:56).
 - i) How could I ridicule or condemn them when I ask, "Have I always stood up for the Lord, or have I ever denied Him?"
 - ii) As I look at the damage that I have done to others:
 - 1) Spiritually, emotionally, and physically, I ask, "How can I approach this perfect God?"
 - 2) The only way I can approach God is through this lovely man who was the faithful witness and never damaged anyone in all that He ever did.

Christ Was The Superlative Faithful And True Witness

Being the Faithful Witness meant:

- a) Being fully conversant and having full understanding of God's truth, and never compromising it in any way.
 - i) Consider the questions asked and how perfect His answer.
 - 1. In the resurrection, "Whose wife will she be?" (Matt. 22:28)
 - 2. Should we give tribute to Caesar? (Matt. 22:17)
- b) Never did He misrepresent the truth of God to permit tradition to be followed.
 - i) It is of interest to note the number of times He uses the expression, "but I say unto you" (Matt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 11:22, 24; 12:6, 36; 17:12; 26:29)
- c) He was completely unbiased in judgments and decisions.
 - i) He must needs go through Samaria (Jn. 4:4)
- d) Always being sincere and transparent in every aspect of life.
 - i) Never having a hidden agenda. He said, "Lo, I come to do thy will" (Heb. 10:9), at the end of His earthly sojourn He could say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn. 17:4)
 - ii) Never was there any deceit or hypocrisy in Him, "Who did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22); "In him is no sin" (1 Jn. 3:5); "Who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), and after all the temptations, He was "yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).
- e) Always under all circumstances and in all ways fully manifesting the perfections of God to the Father.
 - i) He alone could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9), and He alone declared God (Jn. 1:18); and His name (Jn. 17:26)
 - ii) With what reverence the Lord spoke to God and His Father. He will use terms such as "Father" (Jn. 11:41); "Holy Father" (Jn. 17:11); "Righteous Father" (Jn. 17:25); "My Father" (Matt. 7:21); "Abba Father" (Mk. 14:36).
 - iii) Speaking to God was never a casual experience and He never really used terms such as, i.e. "daddy" in speaking to God.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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