Descriptions of Jesus in Revelation: Part 1

Zanesville, OH | December 23, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Revelation 1:5

**Intro**:

* There are numerous instances in the scriptures where Jesus is given majestic descriptions both of His character and His appearance. We could look at instances in each book of the bible where that would be the case but perhaps none stand out more than the glorious descriptions of our Lord in the final book of the bible: **Revelation**. There are a variety of descriptions endowed to Him in this book that speak of His power, authority, glory and majesty. These descriptions include:

1. **The Faithful and True Witness** (Rev. 1:5; 3:14; 19:11)
   1. The very first description we read of Jesus is not a coincidence! He is called the faithful and true witness multiple times throughout this book. Why is this the first description stated about Jesus?
   2. Jesus’ entire purpose, His life and His ministry was to reveal God and His nature (Jn. 1:18; 3:32-33; 18:37; 1 Tim. 6:13). Jesus bore witness to the truth that YHWH alone is God, that He loves and cares for everyone and through Him we can live forever! Jesus was brutally tortured and killed for that testimony.
   3. The book of Revelation is centered around Christians who have been and will be going through severe persecution (physical and spiritual) for their faith and hope in God. The immediate chapters following chapter 1 gives us an indication that Christians were tempted to compromise their witness (Rev. 2:10, 13: 3:8).
   4. This description of Jesus at the very onset, serves as a powerful faith “booster” and courage “lifter” in that just as Jesus suffered immensely for holding fast and staying true to God’s truth and He is now at God’s right hand in Heaven, then they can rest assured that they will be there with Him!
2. **The Firstborn of the Dead** (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5)
   1. The second description of Jesus found in Rev. 1:5 states that He is the firstborn of the dead. Is the bible affirming that Jesus was the first person ever to raise from the dead? NO!
   2. The point of the text is that the resurrection of Jesus (Matt. 28:1-7; Jn. 20:1-18) holds pre-eminence above all others. Many people were raised from the dead before Jesus, but they undoubtedly died again! Jesus rose from the dead never to experience death again (Rev. 1:18)!
   3. This description also emphasizes that only through Jesus’ resurrection can all men live forever even though they die on the earth (Jn. 11:25-26). To the Christians at the time, this was both reassuring and enlightening.
   4. They could rest assured that even in the face of death for their testimony for Christ, they would die if necessary because Jesus was going to make them live again and this time it would be with Him in comfort forever and ever (Rev. 1:18).
3. **The Sovereign Ruler** (Rev. 1:5; 11:15; 17:14; 19:16)
   1. The third description in this trifecta of illustrations concerning Jesus states that He is the ruler of the kings of the earth. That is to say, Jesus is the Sovereign ruler (perhaps most repeated description of Jesus in the book). Jesus has authority and power that no man can even begin to imagine let alone wield (Matt. 28:18).
   2. It may have been that Nero, Vespasian, Titus and Domitian sat of the throne in Rome, but Jesus wanted them to know, that He was the one who had the final say. His rule and His dominion extend far beyond their time and their rule.
   3. The devil wanted Jesus to worship him in exchange for the kingdoms of the world and their glory (Matt. 4:8-10). Jesus refused him but still achieved the supreme authority and magnificent exaltation over all the kingdoms of earth through His death and resurrection (Phil. 2:8-11; Rev. 11:15).
   4. Just as Christ was tempted to give in to the devil, even so the Christians in Revelation were tempted to give in. The security and comfort that could come from denying Jesus and God and Lord was indeed hard to turn down.
   5. Jesus encouraged them that the momentary affliction they would face and the suffering they would undergo would be worth it in the end. Why? Because He sits on the throne of God and He has granted them victory through His death and resurrection (Rom. 8:18).