

# How Do You See Christ?

Revelation 1:4-20

## I. Christ Is Part Of The \_\_\_\_\_ God Who Wants To Communicate To Us (4-5)

*<sup>4</sup>John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ*

## II. Christ Is The \_\_\_\_\_ Savior Who Frees Us From Our Sin (5)

*<sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood*

## III. Christ Is The \_\_\_\_\_ King Who Will Set This Chaotic World In Order (6-7)

*<sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup>Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.*

## IV. Christ Is The All-\_\_\_\_\_ And Eternal God Who Will Bring The Ultimate Conclusion To Mankind (8)

*<sup>8</sup>"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

### Conclusion:

1. Do we believe we can listen to Christ in directing our lives?
2. Do we believe Christ saved us from sin and will resurrect us unto Him?
3. Do we look forward to Christ's coming to rule the earth?
4. Do we rely on Christ's eternal and comprehensive knowledge to trust His plan for us?

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## Revelation 1:4-20

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### Introduction:

#### 1. Harry Truman

- Ie/ Early in May, I visited Truman's Library, home and farm in Independence, MO
- 33<sup>rd</sup> President of US
- Took office after FDR died in 1945
- The world looked at this meek-looking farmer from Independence, MO and wondered if he could rise to the challenge of ending World War II and stand up to Communism with the beginning of the Cold War.
- He dropped the bomb to end WWII, started NATO and had to deal with a terrible post-war economy.
- He wasn't very much appreciated during his presidency, but as the years went on, people appreciated him more and more.

#### 2. Christ

- Could a farmer be a President?
- Could a Carpenter be a Savior?
- Ie/ on the plane, Ki noticed a passenger reading a book "From Jesus to Christ" – which is a typical liberal view that only sees Jesus as a mere human who was made into a God and Savior by the church
- Critics want to scoff at Jesus for ending up murdered on the cross – not realizing this was a victory in paying for our salvation
- How do you see Jesus?

**Matthew 16:13-16** "Jesus...asked His disciples 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

- **John the Baptist** - some Jews may have gotten this from Herod the Tetrarch who in Mt 14:1-2 called Jesus the reincarnation of JB who is coming back to haunt him
- **Elijah** - a reincarnation of Elijah who was to be sent "before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord" (acc. to Mal 4:5)

- John MacArthur states that: "at many modern Jewish Passover celebrations - an empty chair is reserved at the table for Elijah in the hope of his one day coming to announce the Messiah's arrival"
- **Jeremiah** - one of the most respected OT prophets
  - An ancient Jewish legend in the apocryphal book, 2 Maccabees, says that Jeremiah took the Ark of the Covenant and the altar of incense out of the Temple and hid it at Mt. Nebo to preserve them from Babylonian destruction
  - Some Jews thought that Jeremiah would return for these items before the Messiah returned
- **Prophet** - equivalent to the greatest of prophets in Jewish history

### Religious Beliefs Of Americans 2013 (Harris Poll)

[http://www.upi.com/Health\\_News/2013/12/22/US-belief-in-God-down-belief-in-theory-of-evolution-up/24081387762886/](http://www.upi.com/Health_News/2013/12/22/US-belief-in-God-down-belief-in-theory-of-evolution-up/24081387762886/)

- 57% believe in virgin birth (60% in 2005)
- 68% believe Jesus is God or the son of God (72% in 2005)
- 65% believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (70% in 2005)

## I. Christ Is Part Of The Triune God Who Wants To Communicate To Us (4-5)

*⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ*

- John is taking dictation from God for a letter to the 7 churches of Asia
- **God desires to communicate to us**
  - Ie/ Dating – couldn't wait for 11pm – cheaper phone rates – to talk to Daisy
  - Ie/ Just found the love letters exchanged between my mom and dad
- **God the Father** = *from him who is and who was and who is to come*
  - This phrase is a reference to God's eternality
  - Identifying God with a term similar to Yahweh in the OT
- **God the Spirit** = *and from the seven spirits who are before his throne*
  - Suggested interpretations: 7 attributes of Christ, 7 angels, or the Holy Spirit
  - **Attributes of Christ:** doesn't fit context
  - **Angels:** angels are messengers and could be used to communicate to churches\
    - Angels blow the trumpets of judgment (Rev 8:2) and pour out bowls of God's wrath (Rev 16:1)
    - R. Thomas: "One effort to support the angelic identity of 'the seven spirits' resorts to the seven archangels who were known to Jewish tradition of the time: Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Saraquael, Gabriel, and Remiel ([1 Enoch 20:1-8](#); cf. [Tobit 12:15](#); [Esd. 4:1](#); [Dan. 10:13](#))" (*Revelation 1-7*, p. 74)
    - Supporters of Angels view: Hocking
  - **Holy Spirit:**
    - fits context of Trinity expressing greetings to churches

- Henry Morris: "In view of the placement of this unique name between the names of the eternal one and of Jesus Christ, this is necessarily a reference to the Holy Spirit, rather than to seven great angelic spirits ... Furthermore, grace and peace are not mediated through angels, but through the Holy Spirit." (*The Revelation Record*, Tyndale, 1987, p. 37)
- 7 represents perfection and/or universality
- The Spirit speaks to the churches (Rev 1:10; 2:11,29; 3:13,22; 14:13)
- 3:1 – Jesus has 7 spirits of God and 7 stars
- 4:5 – "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God"
- 5:6 – "seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth"
  - Horns represent authority
  - Eyes represent omniscience

**Zechariah 3:8-9** <sup>8</sup>Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. <sup>9</sup>For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.

- "servant the Branch" = Messiah
- Russell L. Penney: "This clearly seems to refer to the Messiah who will be ruling in His millennial, kingly authority through the power and assistance of the all-seeing Holy Spirit." (*A Bible Handbook To Revelation*, ed. by Mal Couch, Kregel Publishers, 2001, p. 115)
- Supporters of HS view: MacArthur, Walvoord, H.Morris, LaHaye, Emerson, H.Chipchase
- Some try to relate Isaiah 11:1-2 as a 7-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit, but there is uncertainty because 6 descriptions are evident and "rest" may not qualify as a ministry of the HS

**Isaiah 11:1-2** There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of the Lord shall **rest** upon him, the Spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, the Spirit of **counsel** and **might**, the Spirit of **knowledge** and the **fear** of the Lord.

- *The Holy Spirit is spoken of a number of times as "the seven spirits." The first instance of this appears in Revelation 1:4–5,9 where John greets the churches with grace from the Father ("him who was and is and is to come"), from the Spirit ("the seven spirits who are before his throne"), and from the Son ("and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness"). Three other times in the book John also uses "seven spirits" to designate the Holy Spirit (Rev 3:1; 4:5, which also uses "seven torches of fire"; and 5:6, which also uses "seven horns and seven eyes"), since the number seven indicates universality and*

*also, at times, perfection. At times, John also more directly references the Spirit (Rev 1:10; 2:11, 29; 3:13, 22; 14:13; 17:3; 21:10; possibly 19:10 and 22:6)."*

*These descriptions of the Spirit indicate that he is the one who speaks to the churches (Rev 1:10; 2:11, 29; 3:13, 22; 14:13) and who gives the words of prophecy to John (Rev 19:10; 22:6). He is also the one who "carries" John into the different parts of his vision (Rev 17:3; 21:10). The references to seven, coupled with the imagery of fire and eyes, as well as the spatial references of "to and fro throughout the earth" (Rev 1:4–5; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) suggest that it is particularly the Spirit through whom God's omniscience and omnipresence operate. This is not to say that the Father and Son are not also omniscient and omnipresent, but that it is primarily through the Spirit that God acts on these traits. In addition, the description of the Spirit as "before the throne" speaks to his participation in the Godhead, along with the Son "at the right hand" of the Father.*

Emerson, Matthew Y.. *Between the Cross and the Throne: The Book of Revelation* (Kindle Locations 496-515). Lexham Press. Kindle Edition.

- **God The Son** = *Jesus Christ*

## II. **Christ Is The Resurrected Savior Who Frees Us From Our Sin (5)**

*and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood*

- **"Faithful witness"** – Christ is the Giver and Source of Truth
  - Repeated in Rev 3:14

**John 8:37** Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to **bear witness to the truth**. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."

- - **"Firstborn of the Dead"** – resurrection
    - "First born" = *protokos* "implying priority and sovereignty" (J. Phillips, *Exploring Revelation*, p. 19)

**Colossians 1:18** And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the **firstborn from the dead**, that in everything he might be preeminent.

- **"Ruler of the Kings on the Earth"** – King of Kings, Lord of Lord
  - He is sovereign

**Revelation 17:14** <sup>14</sup>These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is **Lord of lords and King of kings**; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."

**Revelation 19:16** <sup>16</sup>And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

**Deuteronomy 10:17** <sup>17</sup>For the Lord your God is **God of gods and Lord of lords**, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.

- **“Loves us”**

**Romans 8:35-39** 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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- **“Freed us from our sins”**

- “freed” = to loose, set free by the redemption of Christ paid for by His blood

- **“by His blood”**

### **III. Christ Is The Coming King Who Will Set This Chaotic World In Order (6-7)**

*<sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup>Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.*

***<sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.***

- “Made us a kingdom” – by saving us, we become citizens of heaven, Christ’s kingdom
  - We are under Christ’s rule
- “Made us priests”
  - You don’t need a priest or pastor to relate to God – He has made us all priests
  -
- His reign is forever
- Doxology: “to him be glory and dominion forever and ever”

***<sup>7</sup>Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.***

- V. 7 “The Coming One” = *erchomai* - a title for Christ
  - Used 9x in Revelation of Christ (7x Christ is using this reference for Himself)
- 500x Christ’s return is referenced in the OT & NT
- 1 in 25 verses of the Bible refers to Christ’s second coming
- **His coming will be visible to everyone**

- How could the whole world see a single event of one person's return? With satellite television and everyone with a telephone that can video and Facebook Live, this is possible.

**Matthew 24:29-30** 29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

- **All the people and nations will wail or mourn because of regret for their sin**
  - A reference to Zechariah 12:10-14

**Zechariah 12:10-12** 10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. 11 On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12 The land shall mourn, each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;

#### **IV. Christ Is The All-Knowing And Eternal God Who Will Bring The Ultimate Conclusion To Mankind (8)**

*<sup>s</sup>"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

##### **Alpha & Omega**

- Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet
- Omega is the last letter
- Alpha and Omega is equivalent to our A to Z
- Words and Language communicate knowledge
- **Alpha and Omega represent His perfect knowledge**
- "All the information in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* is written with only twenty-six letters of the alphabet. So Christ is the A to Z, and He contains in Himself everything we need to know about god and His relationship to the world." (Lutzer, *Christ Among Other gods*, pp. 111-112)

##### **Who is and who was and who is to come**

**John 8:58** <sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

- "was" = *genestai* = came to be
- "AM" = *eimi* = eternal claim of being the Jehovah of the OT
- **Exodus 3:14** Yahweh = "I Am Who I Am"
- "Yahweh" conveys the idea of eternity and self-existence
- Yahweh - connected with Heb. Verb "to be"

- LXX translate "I Am" (Yahweh) into the Gr. as *ego eimi*
- Jews knew what He was claiming - that's why they took up stones and stoned him for blasphemy (acc. to Lev 24:16)
- "The tense of 'I am,' as used in the Septuagint for God and by Jesus for Himself, is a properly continuous tense, implying neither beginning nor end of existence." (C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According To St. John*, pp. 282-283)

### **Conclusion:**

1. Do we believe we can listen to Christ in directing our lives?
2. Do we believe Christ saved us from sin and will resurrect us unto Him?
3. Do we look forward to Christ's coming to rule the earth?
4. Do we rely on Christ's eternal and comprehensive knowledge to trust His plan for us?