

4) John: To the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5) and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has set us free from our sins by his blood, 6) and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father — to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation reveals (unveils) the message of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

- God the Father = *from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come...the Alpha and Omega....Almighty God.*
  - God the Spirit = *the seven spirits before the throne*, indicating the perfect nature of the Holy Spirit on earth and in heaven.
  - God the Son = *and from Jesus Christ.* Jesus is the mediator revealing His heavenly Father's message. *The revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place.* (1:1)
1. Jesus Christ = the faithful witness. A witness is one who is reliable and dependable. Jesus is the faithful witness because He will be called forth to testify. Picture a courtroom scene. God is seated on the judge's bench. Satan is the prosecuting attorney. Jesus is called to the witness stand to testify.
    - ✓ His testimony concerning the condition of mankind and the way of salvation is true and reliable. Jesus gives testimony of Nicodemus' night time visit and his question regarding being born again. Jesus' testimony – born once (physical birth), die twice (physical death and spiritual death). Born twice (physical birth and spiritual birth), die once (physical death and eternal life). Jesus also gives testimony of being the way, the truth, and the life, and the once pathway to God.
    - ✓ His testimony concerning Himself is true and reliable. He is the logos (word) made flesh (born as a human). He gives reliable testimony of the many miracles performed. He gives reliable testimony of servant ministry. He gives reliable testimony of kingdom parables.
    - ✓ His testimony concerning the future events and is true and reliable. Satan's final questions concerns future events. Jesus gives undisputed testimony of his ascension into heaven and His assignment of getting heaven ready for his followers. And Jesus gives undisputed testimony of His second coming.
  2. Jesus Christ = the firstborn from the dead. Death is the enemy of all creation – the threat of loss and finality. But Jesus conquered death through his resurrection. First born from the dead is compelling because life emerges from existing life. Jesus is the witness born not out of life but out of death. Implication = God's faithful people will be resurrected as well. We cannot resist the words of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:50-58 – What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor can corruption inherit incorruption. Listen, I am telling you a mystery: We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For this corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body must be clothed with immortality. 54 When this corruptible body is clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body is clothed with

immortality, then the saying that is written will take place: Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, death, is your victory? Where, death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

3. Jesus Christ = the ruler of the kings of the earth. Jesus did not begin His ministry as ruler. He came not to be ministered to, but to minister; not to be served but to serve. But he taught as one having authority, and not as one of their religious scholars (Matthew 7:29) But not, the Jesus designation at the end of time – all authority belongs to Him. All in positions of authority will one day yield to Him. All in positions of authority continue to reign as He permits. (Philippians 2:9-11) *For this reason God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth – and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
4. Jesus Christ = the glorified One – to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.
  - ✓ Our Great Shepherd *is who loves us and has set us free from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and father.* (5) As our Chief Shepherd, Jesus liberates us (sets us free) and grants us significance (a kingdom of priests). Peter designated believers as a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). We have access to God through Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest and our mediator.
  - ✓ Our Majestic Messiah is the resurrected, glorified Christ. *Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me. When I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was one like the Son of Man* (Jesus title for Himself – very similar to Daniel's encounter with the Ancient of Days [Daniel 7:8-14]), *dressed in a robe and with a golden sash wrapped around his chest* (a symbol of royalty). *The hair of his head was white as wool – white as snow* (white = the color of purity and holiness) – *and his eyes like a fiery flame* (a descriptor of penetrating eyes – omniscient eyes, able to see, comprehend, and judge even the most hidden mysteries [Patterson, NAC, 68]). *His feet were like fine bronze as it is fired in a furnace* (bronze is forged by smelting copper and tin ore together with charcoal, producing irresistible strength), *and his voice like the sound of cascading waters* (the roar of the falls drowns out every other sound). *He had seven stars in his right hand* (the messengers – pastors – of the church); *a sharp double-edged sword came from his mouth* (Hebrews 4:12 – the Word of God is living, effective, powerful than any two-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart), *and his face was shining like the sun at full strength.* (1:12-16)
  - ✓ Our Encouraging Christ is the one who comforts us. *“When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me and said, ‘Don’t be afraid. I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look – I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.’”*

Conclusion: Our world is broken and cannot be remade or revitalized apart from the final intervention of Jesus Christ. We long for His kingdom to come. We desire for all things to be the way God created them to be. In the final sentence of Revelation, Jesus promises to return: *He who testifies about these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”* Our prayer should be as John prayed, *“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”* (22:20)

