

# REVELATION

Jesus Christ is the Active  
Head of the Church

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.

Revelation 1:9

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 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.’

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 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. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow.



His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 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. 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, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.

As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”

Revelation 1:10-20

# 1. Christ points to His own Deity.

- Revelation 1:17-18a: “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, and the living one.’”
- Isaiah 48:12-13: “Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last. My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand forth together.”



# 1. Christ points to His own Deity.

A. Christ clearly claimed to be divine: we must accept the truth He has give.

B. Because Christ is divine, we have no need to fear.

❖ John's vision of Christ was not designed to bring fear and terror but to bring peace and comfort.



# 1. Christ points to His own Deity.

- We face many difficult and frightful things in life. But we can turn to an all-powerful God and trust Him instead of fearing what we face.

## 2. Christ says He has authority over death and punishment.

- Revelation 1:18b: “I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”
- Keys show the authority to let people in and out and also the authority to determine when someone goes in or out.





## 2. Christ says He has authority over death and punishment.

- Two observations:
  - A. Christ has the authority over physical death.
    - ❖ Tradition says that John was the only apostle to die a natural death. God permitted him to be exiled, but not killed.
    - ❖ God protected Job's life in trials.

## 2. Christ says He has authority over death and punishment.

- Two observations:

B. Christ has the authority over spiritual death.

❖ John 1:11-12: “He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

## 2. Christ says He has authority over death and punishment.

❖ John 10:27-28: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”



## 2. Christ says He has authority over death and punishment.

❖ John 17:1-3: “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.’”

### 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

- 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.”

# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

A. Christ is active in the church.

❖ Revelation 1:11: “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.”

❖ Christ actively gives truth to His church.

# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

A. Christ is active in the church.

❖ Revelation 1:12-13a: “Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man.



# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

A. Christ is active in the church.

❖ Revelation 1:20: “As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”

❖ Christ is in the midst of the church.



- Interpretation of Revelation

- ❖ Revelation contains many symbols and illustrations. But these symbols are not abstract spiritual ideas that can be interpreted many different ways.
- ❖ The symbols of Revelation represent concrete ideas and objects, such as the candlesticks that represent the churches.

# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

B. As the active Head of the church, Christ can control the church.

- ❖ Revelation 1:16a: “In his right hand he held seven stars.”
- ❖ Revelation 1:20: “As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”



- Who are the “angels”?
  - ❖ ἄγγελος (angelos) = messenger
  - ❖ Angelic messenger: “And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” (Rev 19:9a)
  - ❖ Human messenger: “This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’” (Matt 11:10)





- Who are the “angels”?
  - ❖ God typically gives His message to an angel to take to people.
  - ❖ John could likely receive visitors in prison much like Paul did in Rome. It’s possible that the “messengers” are the ones who took Revelation back to Asia Minor.

# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

B. As the active Head of the church, Christ can control the church.

- ❖ Christ is in control of His messengers and church. He holds them in His hand.
- ❖ He can protect them.
- ❖ He can guide them.

### 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

C. As the active Head of the church, Christ can evaluate how the church is doing.

- ❖ As it's Head, Christ can command the church.
- ❖ But He can also evaluate how well they measure up to what He says.

### 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

C. As the active Head of the church, Christ can evaluate how the church is doing.

❖ John 5:22-23, 27: “For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him . . . And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.”



# 3. Christ is the active Head of the church.

C. As the active Head of the church, Christ can evaluate how the church is doing.

- ❖ Christ is evaluating the churches in Revelation 2-3.
- ❖ He commends when they do well and warns when they do poorly.
- ❖ Christ has the authority to command, but also to evaluate.

# **Conclusion: What do we do with what God has revealed?**

Submit to the authority of Christ.

- We as individuals must be willing to respond to God's work in our lives.
- When we see something God wants to change, we must be willing to change.

# Next Time

## Revelation 2:1-7

- The Church  
at Ephesus