

An Amazing Vision (*Part 1*)

Revelation 1:9-20

Thought for the Day: We need to know, worship, and serve Jesus as He truly is, not as we want Him to be.

We need to be careful that we do not worship or present to others a “Jesus” of our own creation. God has revealed Himself to us in the Bible. We need to study the Bible and find out what He is like; we don’t get to invent Him and form Him into our own likeness. Someone has said, “In the beginning, God created man in His own image. Today, we are trying repay the favor and create God in our own image.”

In Revelation 1:9-20, the Apostle John receives An Amazing Vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we study the details of this vision, they present a picture of Jesus with which we may not be familiar, and with which we may not be comfortable.

I. The Circumstances of the Vision (1:9-11)

A. John’s Identity (1:9a)

9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus...

1. Your brother (cp. 1:1 – servant). He doesn’t claim apostolic authority.
 - As a result of our faith in Jesus Christ, we are children in the family of God and, therefore, literally brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - We need to be careful to not assume an attitude of superiority when we are presenting Jesus to others.
2. Your partner in: a) the tribulation; b) the kingdom; c) the patient endurance.
 - The tribulation (persecution): Today, over 245 million Christians are living in places where they experience high levels of persecution. In the last two years, that number has climbed nearly 20%. 80% of Christians in the world are facing persecution. Christianity is the most persecuted religion in the world. Last year, 4,305+ Christians were killed for their faith and 1,847 churches / places of worship were attacked. (*Various sources*)
 - The kingdom: referring to the Millennial Kingdom that Jesus will establish at His Second Coming when He returns to the earth. (To be distinguished from the Rapture when Jesus meets the Church in the air). John was writing as a Christian, not a Jew.
 - This indicates that Christians will participate in the Millennial Kingdom.
 - Only saved people will enter into the Millennial Kingdom. However, many children will be born during the Millennium and will need to be saved and disciplined.
 - The patient endurance [under extreme difficulty] that [is] in Jesus: God will give us the grace we need to patiently endure hardship (Romans 15:5; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Colossians 1:11; 1 Peter 2:20)

B. John's Location (1:9b)

...was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

1. Patmos – a small island about 10 miles long, 6 miles wide, and 15 miles in circumference in the Aegean Sea about 50 miles offshore from the city of Ephesus.
2. John had been banished there by the Roman emperor, Domitian, for preaching the Word of God and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - "If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you."
 - John had refused to confess that the emperor was "lord and god."
 - "According to the earliest records of the ancient church, John was exiled to Patmos for eighteen months, beginning in AD 95." (*Swindoll, Revelation, p. 25*)

C. John's Instructions (1:9a)

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day...

1. A God-given vision. The Greek word translated *was* is literally *became* indicating that this was something very unusual. (Rev. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3 21:10)
2. "In this kind of condition the natural senses, mind, and spirit are not operative in relation to and responsive to the natural world. God brings a man's spirit into direct contact with the invisible spiritual world and with the things in God's own mind, yet always accommodated to a finite human perception.' John was 'transported to a plane of experience and perception beyond that of the human senses. In that state, God supernaturally revealed things to him.' What John saw, heard, and recorded was the result of supernatural revelation." (*Robert Thomas, quoted by Hitchcock, 101 Answers, p. 70*)
3. "Referring to Sunday as the Lord's day became customary by the end of the second century because it was the day when the Lord was raised from the dead." (*Hitchcock, 101 Answers, p. 71*)

...and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet...

- To avoid a heart attack? This was not the Jesus John was familiar with!

11 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."

1. John wrote the book of Revelation as it was revealed to Him. Revelation was then carried to Ephesus, where it would have then been copied by hand. Then on to Smyrna, and so forth. The entire book was communicated to each church.
2. "Perhaps Christ selected these seven churches because their situations represented conditions applicable to churches of every age, including our own. Ephesus, the first of the seven churches and John's own home church at the time, was nearest to Patmos. The rest of the churches were on a natural overland route in the specific order given by Christ." (*Swindoll, Revelation, p. 26*)