

St. Paul's Dorking Sermon Notes 27thth June 2010

'Past Imperfect Future Tense'

The Coming of Christ Rev 19 11-21

Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

Chapter 19 brings us to the climax of this great book and indeed the climax of all history! And what John describes for us in this powerful vision of the Rider on the White Horse is nothing less than an insight into the divine event toward which all history since the beginning of time has been moving. Nothing less than the unveiling of the presence of Jesus in power and glory! This is the most prophesied event in the Bible. Before this point on several occasions Revelation has brought us to the very edge only to be drawn back, but now at last we come to the event itself on which everything hinges. And what a picture John paints for us. Read verses 11-16. This is the 'Jesus' event that completes the Gospel Story – in the words of Jesus himself *"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky and all the nations of the earth will mourn, They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory"* Matt 24:30. In a new C of E report our Archbishops say that 'Christians should not be embarrassed about converting others,' yet admitted that many are nervous about sharing their beliefs in a society fixated on personal choice. In our Multi faith society there is a desire to respect and value all spiritualities and quite rightly so but the question will always remain "Yes but what about Jesus? What do you do with Jesus? What place is there for this man who lived, taught, died, rose again? This man who showed us God! This man who was God! Where does Jesus fit into the grand scheme of things? This is the question the Bible confronts us with. The Christian assertion is that Jesus is the great issue of life and life will only find real meaning in him and hope for this broken world can only ultimately be fulfilled in him and in his coming again. And so *"all nations...will see the son of Man coming....with power and glory"* not just Christians! Throughout Revelation we have kept coming back to the Christian Prayer - that God's Kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven – this prayer is inextricably bound up with the Christian proclamation that Christ has died, Christ is risen and that Christ will come again. It is this 'coming again' of Christ 'with power and glory' that John takes us to in his vision of Jesus as the rider of the White Horse. In this vision John reveals not only the character of Christ but the character of the change in the world that will come with the defeat of evil when Christ and his kingdom comes.

John gives four names to the Rider each pointing to the character of Christ and his Kingdom:

1. **Faithful and True** – read v11. It is in this capacity as Faithful and True that Christ will come to judge and bring perfect justice. Evil needs to be dealt with and only Christ will be able to execute this. Only Christ will be able to make right all wrongs only Christ will be able to bring truth and justice to all.
2. **No Name!** Read v12. There is a sense of mystery of the Incarnation behind the 'no name' reference but his 'blazing eyes' and 'crowns' on his head point to a character of full discernment, penetrating knowledge and authority. We are dependant on God and also accountable to him.
3. **Living Word** – read v13. Jesus is the Living Word of God. The Word of God would have translated as - the rational principle pervading the universe; a world soul – what was supremely important and significant; a divine name. John in his gospel writes *"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the Father full of grace and truth."* John1:13 -14. Here in Rev John envisages Jesus red with his own blood winning the final victory, wrapping all things up at the end of all things. With true Kingdom values the Lamb and the Warrior are one. Victory is won not by the shedding of the blood of others but by the shedding of blood of Christ alone.
4. **King of Kings and Lord of Lords** – read v16. Christ 's reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords is linked to his ruling with an iron scepter (v15) symbolising unbending justice, unwavering righteousness and ultimate authority. It is Jesus who will be the Supreme Ruler and Supreme Lord.

And so the Final Battle is won read v19 -20. Faithfulness, Truth and Justice win the day but only when the one who is full of discernment and perfect knowledge, the one who has God given supreme authority, the one who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes again. And in the meantime? Well the message of Revelation consistently calls all believers to 3 tenets of our Christian faith: Spirit filled Worship, Constancy in Prayer and Faithful Witness. Faithful worship, prayer and can help change the world because they place matters firmly in the hands of the only wise God who is working his purpose out. Just and lasting change in the world is ultimately God's doing.



Witness: questions to discuss

Before discussion, read the Bible passages and ask God to help you discern what the Spirit wants to say to your group. Make sure there's plenty of room for prayer, worship and ministry.

1. Back at the beginning of our series on Revelation we asked one another what we meant when we proclaimed 'Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again'. Spend time again talking about what you now think 'Christ will come again' means.
2. How do we bring Jesus to those of other faiths? Are you 'embarrassed' about converting those of other faiths? How should we approach 'inter faith services, chaplaincies, chapels etc?
3. *Spirit filled Worship, Constancy in Prayer and Faithful Witness will help bring about God's ultimate purposes.* How might this challenge you/your small group/the Church?