

The End of the Beginning

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2-4 Play. Men's Breakfast. REAL.
- B. Pray: Numb.6

II. Slide5 **Intro: The End of the Beginning**

- A. CS Lewis sums up things at the end of the Narnia series in *The Last Battle*. "...for us this is the **end** of all stories (death), and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. **But** for them it was only the **beginning** of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning **Chapter One** of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."

III. Slide6a **GREETING (4-8)**

- A. (4-6) John wishes **Grace & Peace** from the Triune God.
- B. **Father** – the unchangeable God. *He stands above history & is not limited by time.*
- C. Slide6b **Holy Spirit** – *7-fold Spirit* is explained in Is.11:1,2 *There shall come forth a Rod (shoot) from the stem (trunk) of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 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 of the fear of the Lord.* [also in 3:1, 4:5, 5:6]
 - 1. 7 Spirits are represented as *being present among the 7 churches.*
- D. **Son** – (3-fold description of the Son) [only place in this order. maybe last shows *prominence*]
 - 1. **The Faithful witness** = the source of the revelation to be given.
 - 2. **Firstborn from the dead** – referring to His historic resurrection. [title of honor]
 - 3. **Ruler over the kings of the earth** – speaking to His prophetic role after His 2nd coming.
- E. (5) **Loved us & washed us** (freed) –
 - 1. **He Loved us** - (most manus. in the *pres tense*) [parallels John's gospel & epistle]
 - 2. **He Washed us** – or freed us.

- a) Never forget *the blood*. It washes/frees us (vs.5). Redeems us (5:9). Makes us overcomers (12:11).
- F. (6) **Amen** – hearing what this *made us* this prompted John to express a benediction of worship & praise. [He culminates with Amen *so be it*]
- G. (7,8) These 2 verses announce the *main theme* of the book.
- H. (7) **Every eye will see Him** – *in contrast to* his 1st coming at His birth & *in contrast to* the Rapture. [public *vs.* secret]
1. **Invisible coming** - When He comes to **catch away**...He comes as a **Thief**.
 2. **Visible coming** - witnessed by the whole world. [The climax of the Trib period]
- I. **Even those who pierced Him** – Though the literal executioners & rejecters are now dead & won't be res until after the Millennium, the godly remnant of Israel *will look on the One who they have pierced*. (Zech.12:10)
- J. (8) **Alpha & Omega** - God who is at the **beginning** of all things, is also at their **end**.
- K. **Who is & was & is to come** - The Eternal God, unlimited by time.
1. He is **not** the Great **I Was**.
- L. **Almighty** - A key name for God in Rev. (9 x's).

IV. Slide7 **PATMOS (9)**

- A. **Return Address...Patmos**.
- B. **Tribulation** – There was already persecution taking place (it's 95ad).
1. **Slide8 Nero started it in 64ad**. Soon after Peter & Paul were killed.
 2. Rome was beginning to exalt the emperor as a *semidivine* being.
 - a) **The Christian faith was already illegal**. [*until* Constantine reigns in 306-337ad]
 3. **Slide9** It was the emperor **Domitian** who banished John there, as a punishment for his *sedition/rebellious preaching in Ephesus* (where he pastored). **And** as an attempt to *quarantine* the further spread of the gospel.
 4. Domitian was the 1st emperor to take the title to himself, **God the Lord**. He insisted his people call him *Lord of the earth, invincible, glory, honor to you alone*.

- C. **Slide10 Patmos** – A small crescent shaped little Island of Greece (in-between Athens & Turkey). A rocky island 10x6mi. in the Aegean Sea, 35mi off shore. [pop 3047 today/like Catalina]
1. Maybe that's why John mentions **sea 25 x's** (picture being on a **postage stamp of an island**, surrounded by **water**)
 2. Rome had a **penal colony** there where the prisoners labored in the mines. **BUT** though he was **banished** to the island, it doesn't mean he was ever in this penal colony.
 - a) It was here on this island spot that John **received the visions** that make up **Rev.**
- D. **Imagine how lonely that must have been for him.**
1. Cut off from his church (was pastor of Eph). **Looking out across the blue bars of his Alcatraz, to the distant mountains of Asia Minor...wishing he was home.**
 2. **Maybe you're experiencing a Patmos exile of your own?**
 - a) Unemployment, Divorce, A Terminal Illness, Rejection, feel cut off, perhaps even from God?

V. **Slide11 THE CHURCHES (10-11)**

- A. (10) It's been 60 yrs since John's heard Jesus voice...**now** he hears it **as a trumpet** (also 4:1)
1. **Trumpets** are important in Revelation. **The Jews used Trumpets to...**
 - a) **Gather an assembly. Announce war. To proclaim special days.** [i.e. **gather** saints at Rapture. **Gather** Israel at His coming. **Announce** war on the world]
- B. **John was on Patmos & in the Spirit** – **Yet, every Christian lives in 2 locations.**
1. John was in a human environment **&** a heavenly one.
 2. A Christian was asked if he was going to heaven, to which he replied, **I live there! Was he right? Well, A workman had a little store. He also had an apartment upstairs over his shop.** Someone asked him about his situation. **"I work down here,"** he said, **"but I live up there!" That's it!**
- C. **Slide12 7 churches** – these are mentioned in geographical order, on Asia Minor (Turkey), in which mail would have been delivered. [clockwise]
1. John just became **Postmaster General of Patmos.** (Swindoll)

VI. Slide13 PORTRAIT OF CHRIST (12-18)

- A. (12) Explain **lampstand** (20). Picture a *Menorah* (holds oil & wick, not candles in those days).
- B. Slide14 (13) In the midst of the 7 lampstands - [*Shamash*, Servant] [note diff in Temple menorah vs. Chanukah]
1. (from a Jewish website) We need an extra candle in order to light the actual Chanukah candles. We can't just light one candle from the next, because it is forbidden to make use of the actual Chanukah-candles because that would be demeaning to the Mitzvah. Therefore we have an **attending** candle. Even after lighting the menorah we don't extinguish the **Shamash**; instead we place it in close proximity of the other candles. This way if one of the candles blows out - or if a candle is needed for any other task - we will use the *Shamash* instead of one of the mitzvah-candles.
 - a) Slide15 In the middle of the lampstand stands *The Light of the church*, Jesus Christ arrayed in **splendor & glory**, in close proximity to the churches. [explain icon]
 - b) No matter how **weak** the church seems, how **flawed** or **unfaithful**, always remember that *Christ stands in the center*.
 - (1)Mt.16:18 *I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. We can depend on Him to keep that promise.*
 - c) Also, allow Him to be *the center* of your life.
- C. Slide16 (13-16) Like & as – a **Simile** is a *figure of speech* that draws a comparison between two different things. (i.e. as white as a sheet)
1. Similar to Daniels vision (Dan.7:9,10).
 2. We have very little knowledge of *what Jesus looked like* while here on earth...
 - a) A Beard (Is.50:6). Nothing esp attractive about Him (Is.53:2) [though children liked Him]
- D. (13) **Garments** - Those of a *Judge or King* [One w/honor & authority]
- E. (14) **White hair** - Symbolizes His **Eternality** *the ancient of days*. And wise.
1. *The glory of young men is their strength, And the splendor of old men is their gray head.* Prov.20:29
- F. (14b) **Eyes** - Seeing all, enabling Him to Judge righteously.
1. Talk about having piercing eyes.

G. (15) **Feet of fine brass** - Also suggests *judgment*.

1. The **Brazen**(brass) altar was the place where the fire consumed the sin offering.
2. **He came to judge:** [1] The Church [2] The world system.
3. *The serpents fangs once fastened on Jesus feet. Now the red-hot brass will trample on His serpents head. Gen.3:15 He (Jesus) shall bruise your (satan) head, and you (satan) shall bruise His (Jesus) heel.*

H. (15b) **Voice** - The sound of many waters.

1. **Imagine arguing w/Niagara Falls?** [12 mill cubic feet of water roaring down each minute]
2. His voice will drown out all who try to *talk back, or offer excuses* to Him.

I. (16) **Sword** - The living word of God. **He fights His enemy w/His Word.**

1. **Has time dulled His sword?** No way. **Will manmade religions blunt it?** Not a chance.

J. **Slide17 Countenance** - Reminds us of His transfiguration.

1. Mt.17:2 *and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.*
2. **Was like the sun** - *But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings. Mal. 4:2*
 - a) Reminds us of the unapproachable Light.

K. (17) John in the upper room **leaned on Jesus chest** (13:23); **but** when he saw the glorified Christ, he *fell at his feet as a dead man*.

1. **Wow, just a little of God's glory** causes one to **fall on their face**. Sounds just like what happened to **Ezekiel** in 1:28, *Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face.*
2. **And Daniel** in 10:9 *Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.*
 - a) A vision of the exalted Christ can only produce **awe & fear**. This is when you can't scream, can't move, your strength is zapped, your knees buckle & you drop.

3. John would say like Paul did, *Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.* 2 Cor.5:16
 4. So we must approach this book as *Wondrous & Worshipers*.
- L. Note these are Jesus' words of comfort to John: He laid His right hand on me and said, do not be afraid - what a reassuring touch :)
1. The right hand *not of restraint nor of correction nor of chastisement*, but the right hand of *the loving touch of our Savior* – Have you felt His hand?
 2. Evans Roberts prayed, *Bend me, Bend me* & when God answered, *the Great Welsh Revival* resulted. 100,000 souls saved 1904-1905 [make that your prayer]
- M. I have the keys of Hades & of death - Here Christ affirmed that *He alone has the keys* of death and hades *that is, authority* over death and the place of the dead.

VII.Slide18 **BOOK OVERVIEW (19,20)**

- A. (19) An **inspired** 3 point **Outline**:
1. **What you have seen** (ch.1) – the Glorified Christ.
 2. **Which are** (ch.2,3) – the churches.
 3. **Which will take place** (ch.4-22) – the Rapture, Tribulation, Millennium, Judgments, & the Consummation.
- B. (20) **Stars** = angels or messengers. *Top views...*
1. **Each church has Guardian Angel** – The normal meaning of angel in Rev is *spirit being*. [*to the CM Angel write...*]
 2. **Pastor** – unusual language.
 3. **Messenger** – Roman Postal Service (RPS) was only for Imperial use, **thus** business & congregations had to develop their own mail system. **Thus...the 7 mail carriers**.
- C. **Next week** we'll start the **1st** of our *Postcards from Patmos*. Ephesus
1. **But** the following week *my Timeline*.