

John's Vision; Revelation 1:9-20

I. Pictures of Jesus

A. "A picture is worth a thousand words"

1. The phrase first appeared in a newspaper article discussing journalism and publicity quoting Tess Flanders, a newspaper editor
2. The phrase gets the label of a Chinese Proverb by Fred Bernard in a 1927 issue of the advertising trade journal *Printer's Ink*
3. At this point the phrase get attributed to Confucius who said, "Hearing something a hundred times isn't better than seeing it once"

B. When we read our mind creates visions of what we are reading (one reason we can be so disappointed in movies after we read the book)

C. Revelation is written for our senses; sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell

D. John gives us several pictures of Jesus throughout the revelation given to Him by Jesus

E. So, throughout this lesson I want you to create a picture in your mind of what John is saying to us in his revelation

II. What John Heard

A. Revelation 1:9–11; ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 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."

B. John is a partner

1. Of the tribulation

- a) John had been exiled to the Isle of Patmos because of Christ
- b) The Romans used several of the Islands belonging to the Sporades for political prisoners
- c) John was exiled to Patmos under the rule of Domitian, but he was not alone
- d) There is a cave on Patmos where John is said to have received this vision, the Cave of the Apocalypse and also a Monastery of Saint John the Theologian
- e) John understood persecution very well having suffered from it and seen it in the vision given to him by Jesus

2. Of perseverance

- a) Acts 12:1–5; ¹ About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. ² He killed James the brother of John with the sword, ³ and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. ⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.
- b) He was arrested multiple times (Acts 4, 5:17ff (twice)), and tradition holds that John was arrested in Ephesus which ultimately ended in his exile to Patmos
- c) "Patmos was a small, rocky and barren area where many criminals of Rome were sent to serve out their prison terms in harsh conditions. There were mines on the island that the criminals were forced to work." amazingbibletimeline.com
- d) John was well acquainted with persecution, yet he persevered and even flourished with God using him to record his vision even in his old age

3. Of the Kingdom

- a) Matthew 4:18–22; ¹⁸ While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.
- b) John was considered one of Jesus’ inner three apostles
 - (1) He was with Peter at the transfiguration
 - (2) Jesus asked him to care for his mother at Jesus’ crucifixion
 - (3) He is referred to as the “one whom Jesus loved”

C. Write what you see

- 1. A letter from Jesus intended to be circulated and read in these seven churches in Asia
- 2. John is in the later years of his life; likely around 80-90 years old
 - a) God is still using him
 - b) We do not “retire” from service to God

D. Remain faithful and persevere

III. What John Saw

- A. Revelation 1:12–16; ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ 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.
- B. John turns to see “the voice”
- C. John’s description of Jesus
- D. Where did John see Jesus?
 - 1. In the middle of the lamp stands, which are the churches
 - 2. Jesus is in the middle of His people
 - 3. He is where hurting people are
 - 4. Remember, John is speaking to people in the midst of persecution
- E. It had been 60 + years since John heard the voice of Jesus
- F. We have the voice of the Lord in Scripture

IV. What John Felt

- A. Revelation 1:17; 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,
- B. Revelation 1:17; Al verlo, caí a sus pies como muerto; pero él, poniendo su mano derecha sobre mí, me dijo: «No tengas miedo. Yo soy el Primero y el Último,
- C. Daniel had the same reaction as John did many years earlier
- D. Daniel 10:2–11; ² In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. ³ I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. ⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) ⁵ I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶ His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. ⁷ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did

not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground. ¹⁰ And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

- E. Daniel could do nothing but fall down to the ground (as John)
 - F. As Jesus comforted John with touch and words, so Daniel was comforted as well
 - G. The one who holds the stars in his hands holds you
 - H. Isaiah 41:10; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- V. What Jesus Said
- A. Revelation 1:18–20; ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. ¹⁹ Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. 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.
 - B. The Living One
 - 1. Who died
 - a) Don't fear death
 - b) Jesus has the keys of death and hades
 - c) He conquered death so that we could live evermore
 - d) He is the Living One who died
 - 2. Who is alive forevermore
 - a) Don't fear life
 - b) Fear, rather, the one who has power over your soul (Matthew 10:28)
 - c) Whatever this world throws at you, Jesus is right there with you; remember He is standing in the middle of the lamp stands
 - d) What, in this world, is worth your soul (Matthew 16:26)
- VI. A Vision of Jesus
- A. What John heard - the voice of the Lord
 - B. What John saw - Jesus in the middle of His people
 - C. What John felt - the desire to worship and comfort from Jesus
 - D. What Jesus said - don't fear life or death