"NO FEAR...IN CHRIST"

Revelation 1:17,18

HRM Sonrise Service – 4-4-2021

INTRODUCTION:

In modern Christianity too much attention is placed upon man and not God. Books are published by the tons with teaching on: self-image, improving yourself, overcoming depression, doubt, fear etc. We as believers need to refocus our attention on Christ, for He is the answer to life's problems and perplexities.

Read and explain - Rev.1:9-16 (read v.17-18)

Note the reaction of John (v.17)

This is the same John who witnessed the transfiguration
" " " who is called the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (Jn. 21:7,20).
" " " who pillowed his head on the bosom of Jesus at the last supper (Jn. 13:23).
" " " who outran Peter on the resurrection morning in a race to the sepulchre (Jn.20:4).
" " " who worshipped Jesus after He arose from the dead (Mt. 28:17), and witnessed his ascension into Heaven (Acts 1:9,10).

- When Job saw the Lord Jesus, he cried out "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6).
- When Joshua saw Christ as the Captain of The LORD'S Armies, he fell on his face to the earth, and worshipped (Josh. 6:14).
- When Manoah (Samson's father) saw Christ (as the messenger of YAHWEH) he cried out "We shall surely die, for we have seen God" (Jud.13:22).
- When Isaiah saw the Lord - he cried out "Woe is me!"
- Ezekiel fell on his face before the glory of God's Christ (Ez.1:28).
- Daniel saw a pre-incarnate appearance of the glorified Christ (note: similarity with John's vision) and his strength left hem he turned pale white, and fell with his face to the ground. (Dan.10:7-9).
- After fishing with no success all night, Jesus met Peter and said let down your nets. The catch was so great that Peter "Fell down at Jesus' knees, saying `Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord'" (Lk.5:8).
- When Saul (Paul) saw and heard Christ from Heaven, he fell to the earth trembling with astonishment (Acts 9:4,6).

"right hand"- A touch of comfort. Christ shows His affection and desire to comfort John. Human weakness is answered by Divine comfort.

"fear not"- Words of comfort. these words would have been remembered by John because: at Christ's transfiguration, after they heard the father speak from Heaven, "They fell on their faces and were much afraid. And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, `arise, and do not be afraid'" (Mt.17:6-7)

One night (at about 3:00 a.m.) Jesus walked on the water. When the disciples saw Hem they were frightened saying "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them saying, `take courage, it is I, do not be afraid'" (Mt. 14:27).

Why do people fear? - because of one word: **UNCERTAINTY**
(uncertainty of: future, death, salvation)

***** THERE IS **NO NEED TO FEAR**! IF YOU BELONG TO CHRIST
How can I know?
By looking at **3 qualities** (features, attributes, characteristics) of the person of Christ.

I. HE IS ETERNAL! (v.17)

Because Christ is eternal it is implied that:

1. He never began to exist, but always was.

Cults say: God created Jesus; Liberals say: Jesus was not virgin born, but began to exist at conception.

The incarnation did not originate the life of Jesus. He was in the beginning with the Father (Jn. 1:1, 14).

"I am the first and the last" Is. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Rev.22:12-13

Christ is eternal (Ex.3:14 & Jn.18:5 He is the "I AM")
Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb.13:8).

"Living One" The Jews used this title to distinguish Jehovah God from false Gods. The name Jehovah (Yahweh) means "The One Who is" or "The Eternal One"

2. He knows all things.

Nothing catches Christ by surprise. Because no one came before Him, no one is qualified to teach Him anything. (Note: Kinosis) "God is the only One who never ever learned anything"

In eternity past He knew you!

3. He can be trusted.

Ill. of getting directions from someone who is new to a certain town. They can't be trusted.

Because Christ is the source of all life, you can trust Him with yours.

He said "I am the way, the truth, the life" (Jn. 14:6).

No need to fear! Christ is the Author and sustainer of the Christians life.

II. HE IS **RESURRECTED**!

"was dead" = Became dead. This One who is eternal entered into death. Death = When the spirit leaves the body (Mt.27:50, Jn.19:30).

1. This proves He was who He said He was.
   He is the Savior (The Messiah) "Destroy this temple..."
   No other prophet (true or false) rose from the grave.

2. This proves that He has power over the grave.

   Ill. As a young man, D.L. Moody was called upon suddenly to preach a funeral sermon. He hunted all through the four Gospels trying t find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but searched in vain. He found that Christ broke up every funeral He ever attended. Death could not exist where He was. When the dead heard His voice they sprang to life.

   ex. Lazarus.

3. This assures the believer that He too will rise again.

Ill. 400 years before the birth of Christ, Socrates, the renowned Greek Philosopher, drank the poison hemlock and lay down to die. "Shall we live again?" his friends asked. The dying philosopher could only reply. "I hope so, but no man can know"

At Lazarus' tomb Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn.11:25).

Our union with Christ assures our resurrection with Him.

Read: Rom.6:8-9; Col.3:1-4.
"Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept"

The Lord Jesus by His resurrection took away Satan's power to cause a fear of death. The Bible teaches that He took upon Himself flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14,15).

"Alive for evermore" - no matter what may happen in this world, you can rest on the confidence that Christ is alive.

He knows what is going on in your life and He cares.

There will be no funerals in Heaven!
"The Christian dies to live" D.L. Moody

Because He lives, we live!

Hymn: "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, because He lives all fear is gone, Because He lives I know He holds my future, and life is worth the living, just because He lives"

III. HE IS <u>SOVEREIGN</u>! (v.18b)

Christ is sovereign in the area of physical death.

"keys" denote: <u>ownership, authority, control</u>.

Christ has the right to say who goes where. He is in control. He controls when you will die.

No one dies without God's permission (ex. Job - Satan was allowed to test, but not kill) (ex. in Rev.9 men are tormented for 5 months but death flees from them.)

"key" symbolizes undisputable authority **<u>see Rev.3:7</u>**.

1. <u>Believers should not fear death or Hell.</u>
(This is the comfort John received by the statement)

   Death had its gates (Ps 9:13, 107:18; Is.38:10) But Christ has the keys to the gates.

   Ill. of an emperor's limitation. The Emperor Theodosius having on a great occasion opened all the prisons and released his prisoners, is reported to have said: "and now would to God I could open all the tombs and give life to the dead"

   Only Christ has authority over death! God said to Job: "Have the gates of death been revealed to you? Or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? Job 38:17.

   Friend, if your salvation does not take from your heart the fear of death, then I advise you to make sure you have genuine salvation.

2. <u>Unbelievers should fear death and Hell.</u>
(Because you don't belong to the One who is holding the keys)

   The very things about Christ which should cause a believer <u>not</u> to fear, should cause an unbeliever <u>to fear</u>. The Bible says "For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life."(II Cor.2:15,16).

"Keys" (plural) Christ has double power - He either saves <u>from</u> Hell, or He consigns (sends) <u>to</u> Hell.

"Hell" = Hades: The place of the spirits of the unbelieving dead.

Christ must and always will protect the Holiness of God. He will not allow anyone to approach the Father's throne who is not as holy as He Himself is.

Turn to: Jn.5:21-28 (Note: verse 28 does not teach works salvation cp.v.24; what it does teach is that your works (fruits) reveal whether or not you have salvation)

Turn to: Rev.20:11-15 (Note: Christ is the judge-Jn.5:22)

In Hell there is no enjoyment of life, home friends, possessions! There is no rest, and no comfort.

Although there is no way to fully describe the horrors of Hell in human terms, Jesus described Hell as a reality; a place of torment, memory and remorse. A place of unsatisfied desire (Lk.16); a place of darkness (Mt.8:12); A place of isolation-eternal separation from loved ones who are believers and a place of weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth (Lk.13:28), a place of everlasting punishment (Mt.25:46).

Jesus Christ will have no other choice than to open Hell for those who are absolutely determined to reject His matchless love and grace. (you say: "I have never rejected it" - If you have never received it you are rejecting it) (you say: "I don't believe there is a Hell", Friend, "Hell is a truth seen too late")

If you go there you go there against God's will. "God is not willing that any should perish..."

CONCLUSION:

There is no need to fear! If you belong to Christ. He is eternal, He is resurrected, and He is sovereign.

This description of Christ should effect you in one of 2 ways:
-It should encourage you - if you are a believer.
-It should inspire fear in your heart - if you are an unbeliever.
(while Christ's appearance is terrifying to the lost it is consoling to the saved.)

The good news for you who are not saved is that the eternal, resurrected, sovereign Christ wants to be your personal savior today! Will you let Him?

If you open your hearts door to Him, He come into your life. He will not only unlock Heaven's gates for you to enter, when you die, but He has a richly abundant life to unlock for you right now!