

John the Revelator (Message #3)

Revelation 1: 9-11, 19

Our study, thus far, has dealt with the sovereignty of our Lord, the blessings of this book, and the prophecy concerning the return of Jesus. We know that Jesus is the focus of Revelation, but in these verses, the Holy Spirit has allowed us a glimpse of the Apostle John.

We get a close up look at the events and circumstances surrounding the writing of Revelation. John was loved of Jesus; this is clear in the gospels. Even here, he is loved of the Lord. As we consider these [circumstances](#), I trust they will encourage us to continue in the faith. Let's consider a significant portion of the life of: [John, the Revelator](#).

I. His Reality (9b) – [I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.](#) Our text reveals that John was [in the isle that is called Patmos](#).

- He wasn't on a vacation at a 5 star resort. This wasn't a place men longed to be. Patmos is a small island, found in the Aegean Sea, about 30 miles from Ephesus. It is found between modern day Greece and Turkey. It is about 10 miles long and 6 miles wide. It is formed from rough, volcanic rock.
- Patmos was used in John's day as a prison for the most hated and violent offenders. It was the "Alcatraz" of ancient Rome. To be sent to Patmos was considered a death sentence. Life was difficult, laboring in copper mines, with little, if any, comfort or provisions. Those who were sent there faced the brutality of the Roman soldiers.
- Patmos was likely a welcome relief for John. History tells us the Roman Emperor, Domitian, hated John and the gospel he preached. They tried to kill him by placing him in a vat of boiling oil. Their attempt failed, so he was exiled to Patmos.
- Domitian didn't realize it, but he didn't possess the power to kill John; God wasn't finished with him. He was an old man, believed to be around 90, but he was to receive the Revelation. We face a determined adversary, but he can't destroy us. God will keep us as long as He desires!

II. His Reflection (9a) – Patmos was a difficult place to exist, but John held onto his faith. He had not forgotten who he was and to whom he belonged. When faced with life's reality, it would do us well to reflect on who we are.

A. A Son – [I John, who also am your brother](#). John refers to himself as a brother. He is mindful of the relationship he has with the Lord and fellow believers. He was suffering, but he still

wanted to remain connected with the saints of God. We find no boasting about his past with Christ, just a humble brother of faith.

- He shares a great lesson in humility. We must always remember that our service to the Lord is all about Him! Whatever we are in Christ is a direct result of His blessing. Jesus said - **for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.**

B. A Soldier – I John, who also am your brother, and **companion in tribulation**. John was faced with great affliction while on Patmos. Imagine being 90 years old, boiled in oil, and forced to work under brutal conditions.

- It would be easy to focus on one's problems, desiring sympathy from others. John was aware that he wasn't the only one who had suffered for the cause of Christ. All believers of that day were faced with severe punishment, even death, for their faith.
- Here this aged soldier of the cross desires to encourage those who would read the Revelation to be strong in the faith. He wanted them to focus on the Lord rather than the suffering.
- What an inspiration John was and is. If he can continue to bear his cross, we can too! We live in a peaceful land; I've never been persecuted for my faith. What would we do, stand for Christ or deny Him? Be a true soldier for Him!

C. A Servant – John was also a **companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ**. He was looking beyond the present suffering to a future glory. **Rom.8:18 – For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** In the midst of his trial, he remained steadfast.

- It would be easy to abandon our faith, but we must continue, as John did, watching and patiently waiting for the coming of our King. **I Cor.15:58 – Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.** I'm not sure what the future holds, but we must continue for the Lord. There is no place to give up or quit.

I. His Reality (9b)

II. His Reflection (9a)

III. His Resolve (9c) – He was no thief or murderer. His only crime was preaching the gospel of Christ. He was in Patmos **for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ**. He could've denied the faith, stopped preaching, and likely been released to a life without trouble.

- He refused to conform to the demands of this world and stood firm for Jesus! John possessed something that rose above the desire of the flesh. He was a born again Christian; the Holy Spirit dwelt in his heart!
- There is no question as to where his loyalty was. He wasn't about to abandon what the Lord had called him to do. He was living out the Scripture he penned in [1 Jn.5:4 – For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.](#)

I. His Reality (9b)

II. His Reflection (9a)

III. His Resolve (9c)

IV. His Rejoicing (10) – [I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.](#) Domitian had banished John to Patmos. I'm sure he thought this would break the preacher's spirit. If he was isolated from the people he loved, he would have no reason to serve the Lord. He had no idea that John was about to worship like he had never done before! John remained faithful to observe the Lord's Day, Sunday, in spite of his circumstances.

- I can see John as he went to that special place he had prepared for worship. As he was there, presumably all alone, the Lord showed up! Physically he was in bondage on Patmos, but spiritually he was liberated into the very presence of the Lamb of God. His body may have been beaten, weak, and sore, but his spirit was alive and well in the presence of Christ!
- Hey, even in the valley, God is good ([Ps.23](#)). Business will pick up when the Lord shows up! This ought to encourage us to worship even when we don't feel like it. You may be weary, but worship anyhow. John worshipped on Patmos; surely we can worship at Pilgrim!

V. His Responsibility (10-11, 19) – [I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. V.19 – Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;](#)

- John heard a great voice, as of a trumpet. The Lord had come to reveal what John must do. His time on Patmos wasn't intended for suffering, but to record the Revelation. John would see things no man ever saw. He would spend time in the very presence of God.

- Had it not been for the Patmos vision, we wouldn't be studying this blessed book tonight; there would be no Revelation. God had a purpose for John in the midst of great affliction. [Rom.8:28 – And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.](#) Patmos had purpose for John; God was going to work it for his good, as well as ours, amen!
- We must not lose sight of our responsibilities when faced with adversity. [Deut.10:12 – And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.](#) When trials come, serve God; when heartache abounds, serve God; when you can't see the way clear, serve God; every day, serve God!

I have certainly been challenged by the testimony of John. What a soldier of the cross he was. Often we are guilty of complaining about the minor difficulties we face. We have it easy compared to many across our world tonight.

Jesus wants us to be faithful unto Him. Are you serving the Lord with gladness or are you just drifting along? Let's commit to give Jesus our best whatever the circumstance!