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THE ROLE OF CHRIST IN EACH OF THE FOUR  
VISIONS OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION  
OF JESUS CHRIST

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As soon as you became a christian, you became able to say, "Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior! '...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' (II Timothy 1:12.) This is what guarantees me eternity in heaven in the presence of God."

And now you have a hunger to know more about this Jesus who loved you so much that he volunteered to die for you, to accept the punishment you deserved, and to pay the price to save you from that punishment.

One place to begin your study of Christology (the study of what and who Christ is) is in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation presents four facets of Christ which, added to your knowledge of him as Lord and Savior, will help you to see him in greater fullness.

These four facets are presented in the four visions of Christ that John the Apostle had on the island of Patmos near the end of his life. In them, Jesus is presented as:

1. Head of the Church (Revelation 1:9 - 3:22)
2. God (Revelation 4:1 - 16:21)
3. King and Judge (Revelation 17:1 - 21:8)
4. Husband (Revelation 21:9 - 22:5)

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The first vision is recorded in Revelation 1:9 - 3:22.

In this vision, Jesus Christ is presented in his role as Head of the Church. In that capacity, his awesome power is displayed in Revelation 1:14-16, and we see the picture of his loving tenderness in Revelation 1:17-18.

Throughout this vision, Jesus takes a fatherly approach: commending, rebuking, guiding, and promising rewards for obedience. "These are the words of..." sets the authoritative tone.

In Revelation 2:1-7, Jesus commends the church at Ephesus, rebukes them for deficiencies, calls upon them to repent, says he will punish them if they don't, and promises them a reward for obedience.

In Revelation 2:8-11, Jesus commends the church at Smyrna, encourages them not to fear the suffering which is about to come upon them, and promises them a reward (the crown of life) for obedience.

In Revelation 2:12-17, Jesus commends the church at Pergamum, rebukes them for deficiencies, calls upon them to repent, says he will punish them if they don't, and promises them a reward for obedience.

In Revelation 2:18-29, Jesus commends the church at Thyratira, rebukes them for deficiencies, calls upon them to repent, says he will punish them if they don't, and promises them a reward for obedience.

In Revelation 3:1-6, Jesus rebukes the church at Sardis

for deficiencies and calls them "dead", calls upon them to wake up and repent, says he will come as a thief and punish them if they don't, and promises them a reward for obedience.

In Revelation 3:7-13, Jesus commends the church at Philadelphia, encourages them to continue to endure, and promises them a reward for obedience.

In Revelation 3:14-22, Jesus rebukes the church at Laodicea and calls them luke warm; saying he is going to spew them out of his mouth! He rebukes them for deficiencies saying they are arrogant; they claim to be rich while they are really poor and naked! He calls upon them to repent, says he will punish them if they don't, and promises them a reward for obedience. Jesus specifically says, "Those whom I love I rebuke and chasten."

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The second vision is recorded in Revelation 4:1 - 16:21. In this vision, Jesus Christ is presented in his role as God: at the right hand of God the Father. He is seen as the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, and the Triumphant Lamb which was slain.

In this vision, Jesus takes the approach of the avenger and punisher, pouring out the wrath of God on the ungodly at the same time that he lovingly shelters and protects his own.

Chapter 6 records the opening of the first six seals.

Chapter 7 records the sealing of the 144,000.

Chapters 8 and 9 record the opening of the seventh seal and the blowing of the first six trumpets. The reading of the little scroll is recorded in chapter 10.

Chapter 11 records the story of the two witnesses and the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Chapter 12 records the account of the woman and the dragon. Chapter 13 records the account of the two beasts.

Chapter 14 records the harvest, and Chapters 15 and 16 record the seven angels and the pouring out of the seven bowls of God's wrath.

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The third vision is recorded in Revelation 17:1 - 21:8. In this vision, Jesus Christ is presented in his role as King and Judge; as the victorious ruler.

In Chapters 17 and 18, he punishes the great prostitute, Babylon the great, killer of the saints. This prostitute appears to be a revival of the Roman Empire (cf. reference to "seven hills,") who makes war against the Lamb. (The Lamb wins!)

In Chapters 19 and 20, we see the wedding supper of the Lamb, his riding forth on a white horse and his subsequent millennial reign on earth, the destruction of Satan, and the Great White Throne Judgment.

In Chapter 21, we see the New Jerusalem and God dwelling with man. In an echo of the first vision, Jesus promises rewards for obedience in verse 7, and he promises punishment for disobedience in verse 8.

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The fourth vision is recorded in Revelation 21:9 - 22:5. In this vision, Jesus Christ is presented in his role as Husband and the Church is presented as his bride, the wife of the Lamb.

There is no temple in New Jerusalem because God and the Lamb are its temple. There is no sun or moon because the Glory of God is its light.

The river of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. The tree of life is there: there is no more curse.

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It is wonderful, marvelous, and joyous beyond description to realize that Jesus loves us and died for us and saves us and directs our paths. Truly he is a wonderful Lord and Savior.

But he is so much more besides. We have seen that he is Head of the Church, God, King, Judge, and Husband. And this is just a beginning: the study of who and what Jesus is will be a fascinating and captivating subject for our thoughts and prayers throughout this life and throughout all eternity!

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