

Banishment: Chains and Keys

REVELATION: YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY, Week 4

Revelation 1:9-20 (NIV)

I. John Our _____ in the _____

⁹I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

II. Jesus Our _____

¹⁰On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹ which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

¹²I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

III. Jesus our _____

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

¹⁹ "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Bottom Line

_____ **with the** _____ **of** _____

...by _____ that you are not _____ to _____.

...by _____ when _____ with _____:
"I will endure this suffering in Christ and for his Kingdom."

...by focusing your _____ not on your _____
but on the _____ and _____.

On the Keys of Death and of Hades (Fanning, *Revelation*, 108-09)

John's glorious vision of the resurrected Jesus establishes another authoritative baseline that John returns to again and again in the later chapters of Revelation: Christ's victory over death for himself and for his people. He could call Christians to the utmost level of human devotion (e.g., 2:10 "be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life"), because he himself "died" in fidelity to God and now is "the living one" who is "alive forever and ever" (1:18). He overcame the power of death and now possesses authority over death and the grave: he holds "the keys" to unlock them for those who are his. Some of the most comforting promises in the Bible relate to the victory over death that is ours in Christ (John 11:25-26; 1 Cor 15:20-22; Phil 3:20-21; 1 Thess 4:13-14). For Christians the sting of death is gone (1 Cor 15:54-57), the fear of death is gone (Heb 2:14-15), we need not mourn as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13), and we long for that day when death itself is abolished (1 Cor 15:26) and there will be no more death, mourning, weeping, or pain (Rev 21:4). We grieve over loved ones facing death and struggle with thoughts of our own mortality, but John's vision here along with the rest of the Bible can give us comfort and hope in Jesus. And because of Christ's victory and his own example, we can ask if necessary for grace not to love our own physical lives more than him (Rev 12:11)—and certainly not to love the trappings of our lives in this world more than him either.