

Knowing the Triune God

Part 1

Text: Revelation 1:4–8



Knowing the Triune God - Pt.1 (Revelation 1:4–8)

Knowing God - Our Greatest Privilege

"Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul."

"Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life's problems fall into place of their own accord."

— J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

Knowing the Triune God - Pt.1 (Revelation 1:4–8)

Revelation 1:4–8 answers the question:

“How can we Rest in Unstable Times?”

1

The Triune God
Controls History

vv. 4–5a

2

The Triune God *Cares*
for His People

vv. 5b–6

3

The Triune God *Calls* All
Men to Eternal Worship

vv. 7–8

The background is a dark, atmospheric landscape painting. It features a range of jagged mountains under a cloudy sky. A river or path winds through the valley below. In the bottom right corner, there is a still life arrangement including a vase with flowers and some other objects.

Knowing the Triune God - Pt.1 *(Revelation 1:4–8)*

I.

The Triune God Controls History

Revelation 1:4–5a

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I. The Triune God Controls History (vv. 4–5a)

Grace and Peace — The Source

John opens with the ordinary form of a first-century letter — sender, recipients, greeting — and then fills that ordinary form with extraordinary content.

Grace — Charis (Greek)

A Greek greeting extended to Gentile readers.

Peace — Shalom (Hebrew)

A Hebrew greeting extended to Jewish readers.

The Order Matters

Grace first, then peace. Peace is always the product of knowing the grace of God in Christ.

Knowing the Triune God - Pt.1 *(Revelation 1:4–8)*

I. The Triune God Controls History (vv. 4–5a)

A. The Father: God Who Ordains All Things (v. 4)

John describes the Father as: **"The One who is and who was and who is to come."**

A Unique Title in All of Scripture

This title occurs nowhere else in the Bible except in Revelation (Rev 4:8; cf. Rev 11:17; 16:5).

An Expansion of the Burning Bush

The phrase is an expansion of the name revealed to Moses – **"I AM WHO I AM"** (Exodus 3:14).

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i. The One Who Is

Exodus 3:14–15 — "I AM WHO I AM... The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob..."

This ascribes the unique fact and quality of God's **unchanging, stable nature** that sustains all things.

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ii. The One Who Was

This stresses the Father's **eternality** — He has always been.

Before You Were Born — He Was

Before creation, before time began, before Satan and the angels existed, God was.

He Has Always Existed

There was never a moment in which God came into being.

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iii. The One Who Is to Come

Notice what John does — we would expect "*who will be.*" Instead John writes "**who is coming**" — present tense

He Is Coming to Rule

He is coming to put down His enemies and establish His reign through His Son — the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:20–28).

He Is Coming to Dwell With Us

Revelation 21:3 — "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them..."

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"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." — **Matthew 5:8**

"The One who is" and "who is to come" shows that the Father is a **present reality**, not far away
Whatever your struggle today — **God is your comfort!** He is here. He was. He is coming.

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I. The Triune God Controls History (vv. 4–5a)

B. The Spirit: God Who Provides all we Need (v. 4b)

"And from the seven Spirits who are before His throne."

Seven = Fullness and Completion

John is not describing seven angels or seven spirits — he is describing **the one Holy Spirit** in the fullness of His sevenfold ministry (Isaiah 11:2).

The Zechariah Background

Zechariah 4 stands behind the image — the lampstand with seven lamps. Not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit (Zech 4:6).

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Isaiah 11:2 — The Seven Ministries of the Spirit

1

The Spirit of the Lord

2

The Spirit of Wisdom

3

The Spirit of Understanding

4

The Spirit of Counseling

5

The Spirit of Might

6

The Spirit of Knowledge

7

The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

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Romans 8:11 — "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you."

The Same Spirit Who Strengthened Christ Is also Our Strength!

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I. The Triune God Controls History (vv. 4–5a)

C. The Son: God Who Rules Over All (v. 5a)

Three emphatic titles for Jesus as the Ruler of all

Title 1

The Faithful Witness

Title 2

The Firstborn of the Dead

Title 3

**The Ruler of the Kings of the
Earth**

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i. The Faithful Witness

A Witness Who Died for His Testimony

Martus ("witness") is where we get our English word *martyr*. Christ proclaimed and died for the truth

An Example to us

As Christ's Disciples are we willing to be faithful witnesses?

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ii. The Firstborn of the Dead

Colossians 1:18

Firstborn = Preeminence

Genesis 49:3, the firstborn is "preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power."

Lord Over the Church Right Now

The resurrected Christ reigns now, at the right hand of the Father.

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iii. The Ruler of the Kings of the Earth

Written to People Governed by Caesar

"Kings of the earth" — throughout Revelation, these are those who align themselves to oppose God. Yet **Christ is ruler over all of them now.**

He Is Ruling Right Now

The world in rebellion is still under His sovereign authority and power (Dan 2:20–21; 4:17; 5:18). Even now — Jesus Christ is ruling!

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Faithful Witness

Proclaim Christ amid opposition

Death & Resurrection

Share in suffering and new life

Dominion & Reign

Participate in Christ's victory

Christ's Victories are ours to follow in!