

It Is Hard To Be Sad When Remember That Jesus Reigns

Revelation 19:11-16 ¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

I asked the kids this morning if they were sad that the school year was almost over and they weren't going to see their teachers for three months. You can hear their response on today's posted devotion. However, you can probably guess what they said. It's hard for kids to be sad on the eve of summer vacation.

When the apostles return from the ascension of Jesus you would expect them to be sad. Jesus has just left them. Instead, they are rejoicing and excited and happy. They understand that they will no longer see and walk with Jesus as they have for the last three years. Nevertheless, it's clear that they understand the implications and importance of what has just happened. It's clear that they know that Jesus now reigns as Lord of Lords, and that He will come again. This is clear because they return rejoicing.

They are happy because they understand that He has not left them that He has ascended to His throne. They understand that now He rules all things for the good of His people. It's like that scene from Star Wars where Leia, Luke and Han are walking up the aisle to receive awards. Or the scene from Lord of the Rings where Aragorn comes walking into Gondor to be crowned king. The people are rejoicing because the victory is theirs, their king reigns.

It is hard to be sad when we remember that Jesus reigns.

Jesus' ascension means that Jesus *is*, not that He will be, but that He *is* victorious. It means that He does reign, that His kingdom has come, and that we reign with Him.

In our text Jesus rides victorious upon a white horse and we ride with him. In verse fourteen the host arrayed in fine white robes follows Him. We have already heard in chapter seven who this host arrayed in white is, these are the saints who have been saved from death by the blood of the Lamb. This is the church militant. This is you and me. We don't often think of ourselves as great warriors riding valiant steeds in glorious combat upon pure white stallions, yet that is exactly the picture that Jesus uses of us.

Revelation 20:6 they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him

It's hard to be sad when we remember that not only does Jesus' reign victorious but that we ride and reign with him.

Jesus reigns with a name that is too wonderful to be known.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who rides victorious on a white horse, is described in our text as "He who has a name written that no one knows but himself."

This might seem a little odd at first since our text gives him three different names:

He is called faithful and true.

His name is the Word of God.

The name written on His thigh is "Lord of Lord, and King of Kings."

Although these three and many others name do belong to Jesus, they are only a part of the fullness of who He is. The complete full totality of Jesus' name is something that we cannot at least for now know or understand.

In judges 13:18 the Lord said to Manoah "**Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful.**" That is, it is too wonderful to know or to understand.

The Lord said to Jacob as well "why do you ask my name?"

And to Moses God said no one can see my glory and live.

It is hard to be sad when we remember that Jesus' name is too wonderful even to be known or to understand. Those parts of His name which we do know, Savior, Redeemer, Lamb Who Was Slain, Good Shepherd, teach us some of the vastness of His love, but these things are only a part of the love with which He has loved us.

You also have a name that no one knows.

In Revelation 2:17 "I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

No one knows your service. No one knows you sin except you and God alone. Your life, your character, that which is good and that which is bad is known fully to no one except you and God.

We love to judge one another. We humans think that it is our right to criticize, and gossip behind others back. We are so certain that we know what is good and/or bad about other people. No one can judge except God. Our name who we are and what we have done it is known to Him alone.

What difference does it make if the people of this world try to judge or criticize you? You have already been judged by God. He knows the name that He has given to you.

It does not matter what name others give to you, what matters is the name that God has given to you. He has given you a name which is between you and God, a name free from sin through Jesus.

1 Corinthians 13:12 "Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known."

It is hard to be sad when we remember that Jesus knows our name. He knows our sins and forgives them. He knows our service and our sorrow. His name is even more wonderful than we can understand.

Jesus reigns victorious, having destroyed all our enemies.

His garments are dripping with blood. This blood is not the blood of the lamb. This is not the blood which was poured out for us for the forgiveness of our sins. This is the victorious warrior, the king who crushed his enemies. His garment is red with their blood. He is the one who treads the wine press of God's wrath.

The imagery that John sees here is taken from Isaiah 63

Isaiah 63:1-3 Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?-- "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes.

Edom was the ancient enemy of Israel. Remember that Jacob had a twin brother Esau. Those two fought even when they were in the womb. They fought when they were kids. They fought when they were growing up. Later, Jacob was given the name Israel and Esau the name Edom. The people of Edom were the ancient enemy of the Israelites, God's people. An enemy Israel had been fighting even before Israel was born.

The one who is faithful and just destroys the enemy of his people.

We would love to take this passage and believe that this means that Jesus will ride against our enemies. He will destroy the Russians, or He will destroy those in favor of abortion, or he will destroy the democrats or the republicans whichever you think are the enemies.

But He is the faithful and true king. He sees beyond the outer appearance of enemy to the deeper enemy within. The enemy that He has slain, the enemy that we have fought with from before we were born is our own sinful nature.

It is the devil in all his works and all his ways that He destroys in our baptism. It is our sinful nature which he does battle with when we receive the Lord's supper.

It is true that He will ultimately destroy not only the devil but also those who insist on remaining on Satan's side. However right now our enemy is not the neighbor living down the street who disagrees with us about politics. Our true enemy is the sinful nature within us and the temptations we face every day.

This is the enemy whom Jesus has destroyed, and whose blood covers the Lord's garment. Our own sinful nature and Satan, the adversary. The Lord has destroyed him by His death and resurrection.

It is hard to remain sad when our greatest foe lies dead beneath his feet.

This is the Lord of Lords, the king of Kings. This is the rider on the white horse. This is the ascended Lord. This is the reason to be glad and to rejoice with great joy. Amen