

Devotion: September 3, 2020

Revelation 1:4-8

⁴ John,

To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷ “Look, he is coming with the clouds,”
and “every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him”;
and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”
So shall it be! Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Aaaah, the "good old days." Depending on your perspective, that phrase could mean virtually anything. As time refuses to do us any favors and relentlessly marches on, it creates new "good old days" out of what we thought were the "worst of times" just a few years ago.

For example, it took the political and social radicalism of the 60s to turn the 30s and the 40s _ the years of a Great Depression and a World War _ into the "good old days" for the Greatest Generation. It took the thirst for greed and lust for status and success of the 80s to turn the 60s _ the years of Viet Nam and rampant nuclear arms proliferation _ into the "good old days" for the Baby Boomer Generation. It took the social insecurity and technological advancements of the 90s to make the 70s _ the years of economic stagnation at home and terrorism abroad _ into the "good old days" for the Buster Generation. It takes the 2020 year of Covid and lockdowns and riots in the streets to make this year..... well you can fill in that blank to whatever “good old days” work best for you.

Instead of wishing for some mythical, never-were, "good old days," Christians should be celebrating the fact that we are living in precisely that moment in history in which God has chosen us to live and love and act. We can know this and proclaim it boldly because of the reminder we read today from John's Revelation: "*I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty*" (v.8).

God is acting in the world today because "God is." We are called to minister in "this present age, our calling to fulfill" because the spirit of God is as vitally present today as it was in the "good old days" or as it will be in the astounding future John's Revelation foresees.

How can we claim for God in this social media, 24/7 bad news age in which we live and not be afraid of it or long for some "good old days?" The answer is; let God be present in this age by claiming each piece of this world for God, not abandoning it to the demons of greed, poverty, violence, neglect, abuse, pollution and despair.

Let God be God ... in you.
Let God be God ... in your church.
Let God be God ... in your neighborhood.
Let God be God ... in your job.
Let God be God ... in your family.
Let God be God ... in your world.

Because God is yet to come, today makes a difference. Because God is yet to come, all the saints who have gone before us have made a difference. Because God is yet to come, the way we "live and breathe and have our being" makes a difference.

Are you making a difference? Are you incarnating the God who is, who was, and who is to come, in this age, in your life, today?

This advice, once given to young preachers by W. H. Griffith-Thomas, applies to everyone who is about to do something for God:

Think yourself empty
Read yourself full
Write yourself clear
Pray yourself keen
Then enter the pulpit
And let yourself go!

Will you let go and let God be God in you? If you will, God can. But if you won't, God can't.

We thank you, heavenly Father, for calling us your children. It gives us such comfort to know that this is exactly what we are. Continue to work in us, Lord, to purify us and to draw us closer to you. Strengthen our faith, our hope and our love, so that when Jesus is revealed we will be like him, and we will see him as he is. In his holy name we pray. Amen.