Revelation 1:7-8 Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

 He’s coming! You know who I’m talking about. No, I am not talking about the mythical jolly fat man. I am talking about someone far more important. I am talking about the person our text is talking about, Jesus Christ, the Lord of all.

 Who is this Jesus guy? Well, it depends on what portion of his life you want to focus on. For many people, when you talk of Jesus they think of the little infant, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in the manger or his mother’s arms. Other people think of Jesus as the wise young teacher surrounded by crowds who really knew his stuff and never got topped by anyone. There are those who think of Jesus as the poor beaten man hanging on the cross of shame. Finally there are those who think of Jesus as the resurrected Lord, the one who rose from death in triumph and glory.

 Of course, all of those pictures of Jesus are true. Each picture of Jesus that I gave you represents a portion of his life that was. But I wonder, “Do you think it wise to consider someone only by what they were?” I ask that in all earnestness. When you think of the Pastor of your church do you think of the man that stands before you now or do you think of the fat little diapered infant he used to be? Even a parent who raised a child doesn’t view the child by what they used to be but rather view them for what they have grown to be.

 In other words, while it is good that we know Jesus’ history, I am not sure it’s in our best interest to think of him in terms of what he was. We need to think of Jesus in terms of what he is. That right, Jesus still is! Ever since his resurrection from the dead and then his ascension into heaven Jesus proved his eternal nature. It is who and what that nature is that we need to consider.

 Our text gives us just the picture we need. It is a text that focuses on what Jesus is. It is a text that reminds us that what he is now, He is in the future. Our theme will be: WHO IS JESUS?

 I think most of you know that our text is from the great prophetic book of the New Testament, the Book of Revelation. What a wonderful book of comfort and joy this work is. Here in this book the Lord God give us a view of the entire New Testament era, from its beginning to its very end. As we look at the words of greeting which the Apostle John writes we note that they are words filled with what is commonly known as a doxology. A doxology is a series of words or phrases meant to give praise and glory to God. Doxologies are wonderful things. Often in just a few words they convey to the reader vast knowledge. So it is with the words of doxology we find before us today.

 And who should these words be praising but the almighty and eternal Triune God? But that’s where our first part comes in as we ask the question: Who is He?

 In verse 4 we find our first description of this being simply referred to as “Him.” We hear, **“Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come.”** One might be first inclined to think, “What a strange way of speaking.” Yet to the Hebrew ear there was nothing strange in this at all. It’s because that phrase is literally the Greek equivalent of his name traced back to the beginning.

 That’s right! Already in the beginning people knew God as the **“who is, who was and who will be.”** This name of God is first formally introduced to us in the book of Exodus, although it is used already throughout Genesis. In the book of Exodus we find the history of a late middle-aged shepherd who happened upon a bush on fire that did not burn up. That shepherd was a man named Moses. God had appeared to Moses to call Moses as the deliverer of His people from their slavery in Egypt. If you remember, Moses offered up a number of excuses as to why he should be not the one to go, excuses that were really just so much hot air! But oh, the wonder and glory those excuses brought forth.

 The second of Moses excuses is the now famed, **“Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you; and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”** God answer was this: **“I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”**

 That section of Scripture has always thrilled me. There was Moses before God and God revealing His name. God’s name is **“I am.”** God actually said to Moses, **“I am, I AM. Say to them I AM has sent me.”** What Moses was told was something today known as the Tetragrammaton. Simply translated that means, “the four letters.” This name of God was composed of four Hebrew letters which in actuality formed a series of Hebrew verbs. The name in Hebrew simply meant: “I am, I was, I will be.”

 Do you understand the connection between that passage of Scripture in Exodus and our verse in Revelation? In one short phrase John has defined that the God he is giving praise to is the God who created the world, who preserves, protects and controls the world. He later goes on and in verse 8 again uses this phrase but in a slightly different way: **“I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”** I hope you notice that really it is the same phrase as before.

 The context of verse 8 is Jesus Christ. The context of verse 4 is God the Father. In other words, they are one and the same. Here is the revelation of the oneness of God the Father and Son. What the Father is the Son is. What the Son is the Father is. They are one in essence. One in purpose. They are the beginning and the end. They are the Almighty God!

 Pretty awesome stuff for such a short little phrase isn’t it? Now we know the first answer to who is Jesus. He is the Almighty God. He is the Beginning and the End, the One who always is, was and will be. Now let’s go on and dig a bit deeper into this Jesus and who he is.

 We continue with verse 5 to answer that question. **“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, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.”** Again what wonderful and revealing words.

 Need I tell you how all of this brings our minds to the history of Jesus Christ and his purpose for coming into the world? Our Gospel lesson reminds us of what Jesus said to Pilate, **“You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.”** Our words called him the **“faithful witness.”** What Jesus revealed can be relied upon and trusted for He has shown his Word to be faithful and true.

 Or consider the phrase **“the firstborn from the dead.”** Do you know that phrase is used of Jesus in six other places in the Bible? It is a reference to his resurrection and defeat of death. It is also a reference to his promise that we too shall rise from the dead just as He did. He was the first. We will follow. Wrapped in those words is glory, promise, hope and comfort.

 The next phrase of praise says, **“The ruler of the kings of the earth.”** Need I remind you of what the book of Hebrews testifies to? **“You crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet. In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him.”** Even Jesus himself told us at his ascension, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”** Or the witness of Ephesians, **“[Christ is] far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.”**

 To me though, the most glorious words of this doxology are those that say, **“To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.”** We have forgiveness. We have been made his children. We have been admitted to God’s heavenly kingdom with the privilege of serving God in all that we do. We could not have done this on our own. We could not have earned this glory. God gave it to us in his Son Jesus Christ and the work Jesus accomplished, the redemption of souls. When God’s love is that wide and deep, you know, as far as the east is from the west, what do we lack? So who is this Jesus? He is the one who died and redeemed us. He is the one who has served us and then given us the adoption of sons, the status of forgiven children of God. He is our Savior who pours upon us His love.

 There is yet one more thing to consider for ourselves. It is the fact that this Savior God is coming again. Verse 7 says, **“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him.”** He is coming again in glory and majesty such as this world has never seen. He comes to bring His judgment on the peoples of the world. Those who have scorned and mocked, he will scorn and mock eternally. Those who have believed in Him, to them He gives eternal life with Him in his Kingdom. All of this because you need to grasp that Jesus is the King!

 I sometimes think we just don’t get this simple and yet truthful fact of Jesus. God has placed him over everything. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. All things pertaining to eternity have been appointed to Jesus. Do we really get that? Do we contemplate that? Jesus is the King. His Word and His way are the only way that counts. He sets the lines and establishes the rules about the lines. He determines what is and what will be. And yet we often, all too often, treat Jesus as if he is some sort of nut case or as if we are the CEO and he is just the guy sweeping the parking lot! Well, be careful dear people, because that guy sweeping the parking lot that you are looking down on and despising in your heart is the owner of all things! He is the King, the almighty, no one will overrule him! He is the King and His word of salvation is going to be the difference in our salvation or damnation. Make sure in your heart that Jesus is your King and not just some puppet ruler you have set up to justify your own ways! Because in truth, this King is going to return! This King we are going to answer to.

 And how do we know he is coming? He said so! In the beginning He was promised and He came. When he was in the world he said he would forgive our sins. He did that. He said they would kill him and He would rise from death. He did that. He said he would ascend into heaven and sit at his Father’s right hand. He did that. He has proven himself to be faithful and true. Know then that He is coming. Know that he is the Almighty King, the Beginning and the End, the Savior of all. Know that we will and must answer to Him. Yes, Lord, to you the glory. To you the glory. Amen.