

SERMON: ALPHA AND OMEGA: DELTA AND OMICRON

Revelation 1:8

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Introduction

Credentials are important. They disclose the skills, qualifications and experience of an individual. Titles such as doctor, lawyer, CPA, registered nurse, and pharmacist can reflect these credentials. Individuals have to pass competency tests before credentials are bestowed upon them. Credentials grant credibility and give us reasonable assurance that the individual can perform as expected or at least to an established standard. You have more trust in a surgeon, plumber, truck driver, or mechanic when you have verified his or her credentials.

Likewise, Jesus wants us to know His attributes and credentials so that we will trust Him fully. However, we can only know some of His credentials when He discloses them to us through divine self-revelation. We cannot know some of them by our own intellect, research, and logic. This is why many times Jesus used the "I Am Statements." They are recorded seven times in the Gospel of John. In John 6:35 He discloses Himself as the Bread of Life. In John 8:12 He informs us that He is the Light of the World. He describes Himself as the Door in John 10:9. In John 10:11 He is the Good Shepherd. In John 11:25 He tells Martha, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." In John 14:6 He tells Thomas, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." In John 15:1 He tells the disciples, "I Am the True Vine."

In the Book of Revelation He adds a new "I Am statement." He says, "I am Alpha and Omega." It is common knowledge that alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. "Alpha and omega," like "beginning and end" and "first and last," is a figure of speech stating extreme opposites which emphasizes all that lies in between. The phrase implies totality or completeness.

This phrase "Alpha and Omega" alludes to a common practice of that day. During this time period, paper-I use the term loosely- was very expensive and difficult to manufacture. People wrote on parchment, papyrus, and animal skins. Because of this scarcity people wrote on a piece of paper until there was no more blank space left on it. Thus, a single piece of paper could easily have several different documents written on it. For example, a letter and an inventory would be written on the same medium. At the end of one letter or document, another letter or document would be written. To distinguish between the different writings, at the beginning of a particular composition they would place a big "alpha" and at the end of this writing they would place a big "omega." It was common for a big alpha to be placed directly below a big omega. This was to clearly demarcate the two different writings. Paper was so expensive and scarce that they did not put spaces between words, or spaces between lines. One had to

mentally separate the words. This was not as big a problem as it appears, because ancient languages did not have vocabularies as extensive as our modern languages.

In the past few years, we have heard a lot about the Greek letters. Hurricanes have been named after them, and, of course, we have heard of the delta and the omicron variants of Covid19. As we embrace a new year in which there will be great opportunities, but also great challenges, let's see how this divine self-revelation of Jesus can give us the hope and the courage to thrive in this new year.

Exposition

1. Jesus Encompassed All Time And Eternity.

(Eternity Past Is A Beginning That Never Began.)

(Eternity Future Is An Ending That Will Never End.)

(Time Is The Interim Between Eternity Past And Eternity Future.)

2. He Is The Alpha And Omega Of The Life Of Every Believer.

(He Is The Author And Finisher Of Our Faith.)

(He Has Singular End-To-End Responsibility For Our Well-Being.)

(This Business Principle Can Apply to Our Personal Lives.)

3. When One Good Thing Ends, A New Good Thing Begins.

(He Keeps On Blessing Believers, In Spite Of Challenges.)

(He Puts An Alpha After Every Omega.)

(He Blesses Each Stage Of Life.)

4. Since He Is The Beginning And The End, We Should Not Worry Too Much About What's In The Middle.

(Delta Is In The Middle.)

(Omicron Is In The Middle.)

(Omega Is At The End.)

5. Please Don't Forget To Praise Him While You Are Struggling In The Middle.

(Psalm 34:1; Ephesians 5:20.)

Closing Thoughts

Jesus is "Alpha and Omega." Jesus is everything that can be said about God from start to finish. He is the Originator and the Consummator of all good things. He is the Creator of all things, and He will be the Final Judge of all things. He is Lord of all. When you hear of the delta and the omicron variants mentioned, just remember neither is the last Greek alphabet. Omega is the last Greek alphabet. God is still in control and He has the

last word. Let us continue to trust God in this new year. No matter what comes your way, God can handle it. Let us embrace the changes God has for us as we walk in our individual destinies. Likewise, let us hold fast to the eternal principles which God has revealed to us through His Holy Written Word. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scriptures

Isaiah 41:4

Isaiah 43:10

Isaiah 44:6

Revelation 1:11

Revelation 21:6

Revelation 22:13

End Notes

1. The translators of the King James Version kept meticulous notes. They documented their challenges and debates about the best words to use. One of their debates was whether to use the English letters “a” and “z” and use the order of our English alphabets or use the Greek letters. Thank God they decided to use the Greek letters. To me, it just sounds better to say “alpha and omega” rather than “a and z.” Maybe this is true because this is what we have heard all of our lives. Be that as it may, it still sounds better. It sounds more liturgical.

2. In my sermon preparation I always try to read the text in the original language. My Greek and Hebrew are getting rusty. I may need a refresher course. There was something in this text that blows me away every time I read it. I am not sure about the theological implication. In the original Greek alpha is spelled out, but omega is not. “I am a-l-p-h-a and O.” Why? Was John trying to save space? Could it be John was saying that Christ is the beginning, and the beginning has already been completed, but the ending is yet to be? When I get to heaven, after I praise God for a billion years, I will ask John.

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