

THE RICHES OF THE PROCESSED TRIUNE GOD IN JOHN'S EPISTLES COMPARED TO "PURE RELIGION" IN THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

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The entire New Testament is a revelation of the present and unveiled Lord Jesus Christ. The first verse of the first synoptic Gospel—referring to itself as “the book of the generation of Jesus Christ”—traces the ancestry of His humanity to David and to Abraham (Matt. 1:1), thereby implying that Christ, as the fulfillment of the Old Testament types, is the true Solomon and the real Isaac (cf. Matt. 12:42; Gal. 3:16). In the final verses of Matthew, Jesus promised His followers that they would have His personal presence until the consummation of the present age. Furthermore, He authorized them to disciple the nations and unite them through baptism into the name of the Triune God (28:18-20).

By contrast, the Gospel of John, as a conclusion to the Gospels, describes the steps of the process that the Triune God passed through to redeem fallen mankind so that He could regenerate man with the divine life and ultimately live and be expressed in man. John's Gospel opens with the eternal Word, who was God and was with God in eternity past (1:1-2). In time He became flesh through His incarnation, lived a God-expressing life among men, and accomplished an eternal redemption (vv. 14, 29; cf. Heb. 9:12). In resurrection He became the in-breathed Pneuma to indwell His disciples (John 20:22). In John's concluding chapter the Lord revealed that He remains invisibly present with His disciples whether they live or die, whether they are martyred or remain—until He visibly comes again (cf. 21:19, 22). When relating in his Gospel the path that the Lord took to accomplish His perfect redemption through His judicial death and to achieve His complete salvation by His resurrection, John mentions at least thirty descriptors of Christ.¹

The final New Testament book, Revelation, also authored by John, concludes with the Lord's promise of a prompt return: “I come quickly”; an affirming prayer to this promise by His witnesses: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus”; and the writer's blessing that “the grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints” (22:20-21). Designating itself as the revelation, the unveiling, of Jesus Christ (1:1), this communication to the seven churches further reveals at least twenty-six aspects of Christ.²

The intervening New Testament section between the Gospels and Revelation comprises Acts and the Epistles. Acts, a continuation of Luke's Gospel, provides “a record of the continuing ministry of the resurrected and ascended Christ in heaven, carried out through His believers on earth” (Lee, *Recovery Version*, 1:11, note 2). Both John and Luke, in their unique styles, allude to this ongoing ministry. John testifies that “there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they were written one by one, I suppose that not even the world itself could contain the books written” (John 21:25). Luke seems