

## 04. Triumph of the Lamb

*Letters from Jesus*

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**Bible Text:** Revelation 1:7-18

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Revelation chapter 1. I appreciate that song. It was interesting. I think they picked that song before they knew the title of the message and that's always interesting to see how God kind of works all those details out.

We've taken now four weeks to get to this point in the book of Revelation so the next time you hear me preach, we'll get to that first letter to the seven churches which was our goal to get to to begin with, it was those letters. But we've been pausing, for those of you who haven't been here, just to look at Christ because John spends an entire chapter looking at Jesus before he starts telling us what Jesus said and I think that's so appropriate.

I'm going to ask you if you would, to stand in honor of God's word as we begin reading. We're going to begin reading this morning at verse 9,

9 I, John, your brother and co-sharer in the affliction and kingdom and steadfastness in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great sound like a trumpet 11 saying, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." 12 And I turned to see the voice which was speaking with me, and when I turned, I saw seven gold lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching to the feet and girded around his chest with a golden belt, 14 and his head and hair were white like wool, white as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame, 15 and his feet were like fine bronze when it has been fired in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters, 16 and he had in his right hand seven stars, and a sharp double-edged sword coming out of his mouth, and his face was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead person, and he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, 18 and the one who lives, and I was dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever, and I hold the keys of

death and of Hades. 19 Therefore, write the things which you saw, and the things which are, and the things which are about to take place after these things. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands--the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Let's pray.

*Father, we thank you for the opportunity to gather around your word and see yet another vision of Jesus Christ and yet we are completely unable to even comprehend what John puts before us today, that he describes in words the majesty of Jesus Christ and yet no human words can adequately portray the indescribable glory of our Redeemer who is also our Ruler. Father, we cannot do justice today to the King of kings and the Lord of lords but we pray that you would remove from our mind our distractions and help each of us as best we are capable focus on this glorious vision of our Savior. Lord, we often just allow too many frivolities and distractions and things of non-eternal importance take over our lives and our time, Father, forgive us for making such waste of our lives. Occupy our thoughts with our Savior who alone deserves the glory for we pray it in his name. Amen.*

Thank you. You may be seated.

There are a lot of times I get up to preach and I'm happy that there's a clear sermon outline and something that's homiletically appropriate but I feel a little bit today like some people that were described in a poem and the poem was about some blind men who came upon an elephant and they tried to describe this elephant in their best way that they could and each person came upon a different part of the elephant. Let me read you this poem and maybe it will make sense to you.

"It was six men of Indostan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy his mind.

"The First approach'd the Elephant,  
And happening to fall  
Against his broad and sturdy side,  
At once began to bawl:  
'God bless me! but the Elephant  
Is very like a wall!'

"The Second, feeling of the tusk,  
Cried, 'Ho! what have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp?

To me 'tis mighty clear  
This wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear!

"The Third approached the animal,  
And happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Thus boldly up and spake:  
'I see,' quoth he, 'the Elephant  
Is very like a snake!'

"The Fourth reached out his eager hand,  
And felt about the knee.  
'What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain,' quoth he,  
'Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree!'

"The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,  
Said: 'E'en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most;  
Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan!'

"The Sixth no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Then, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
'I see,' quoth he, 'the Elephant  
Is very like a rope!'

"And so these men of Indostan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right,  
And all were in the wrong!"

You know, I feel a little bit like those blind men when I look at this part of Revelation 1 and I think, "I don't know how you begin to describe Christ even when John is giving you a description," because really human words are filtered through everything that we already know and everything we've already seen and everything we've already done and yet they're just inadequate. They are inadequate to really describe Christ and that's the amazing thing and so I think we just need to know that it's very hard to describe Christ. One thing I want to point out for you is just what the whole purpose of the book of

Revelation is because it really starts out as an encouragement to fellow sufferers and that's what I think we need to look at today.

So you notice first of all, that John wants to share the journey with us. He wants to give us an idea of what it is that he has to say to us and he looks at it and he says, "Listen, I am a fellow sufferer with you. I am suffering the same way you are and I want you to know that," and so he gives us this same information. So first of all you notice he says, "I am a brother. Listen, I'm one of you. I'm a brother. We share the common faith together. We have all these things in common. I'm a Christian. I'm a fellow in Christ." Then he's saying that, "You know, I'm experiencing the same struggles you are." John was on an island of Patmos because he was there for preaching the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and so he says, "Listen, I'm in the same problems and things that you are." Then he also says, "I want to let you know," now why would somebody, by the way, tell you that they are in the same boat you're in? It kind of makes them relate to you a little bit better. I think that's the important point here. He says, "You know, we're citizens of a common kingdom. We have a common King. We have all these things in common." He says, "We're summoned together to endurance. John, he says, "we must wait as fellow believers with patient endurance for the coming of the kingdom." Now, in a certain sense, the kingdom of Christ is already here because every one of us has Christ in our hearts but there is a sense in which the kingdom of Christ hasn't been fully realized yet. Why? Because we're waiting on Jesus to return. We're waiting to see him sit on a throne in Jerusalem for a thousand years where he'll rule and reign over all mankind. We're waiting to see that new heaven and that new earth that is coming after that time. We're all looking for that.

He says, "We all have to have some faithful endurance." That's a quality none of us really care about developing because the Bible says it's tribulation that worketh patience. It's tribulation that gives us endurance and yet it's praised. In Revelation 2:2, he says to the church at Ephesus, "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance." In chapter 2, verse 3, "I know you're enduring patiently and bearing up for my namesake." In chapter 2, verse 19, he says, "I know your works, your love and faith in service and patient endurance." In chapter 3, verse 10, he says, "Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming for the whole world." Chapter 13, verse 10, he says, "If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity goes. If anyone is to be slain by the sword, then by the sword must be slain. Here is a call for the endurance of the faith of the saints." Once again, chapter 14, verse 12, he says, "Here is a call for the faithful endurance of the saints." We are called to endure. We're called to faithful endurance.

Then he talks about his own suffering. He was on an island called Patmos. Patmos is 8 miles long, 4 miles wide or its 10 miles long, 6 miles wide. It kind of depends on who you read and how it's measured but it's in the Aegean Sea. It's southwest of Ephesus and between Asia minor and Greece. It's an island that is now off the coast of Turkey but it used to be part of the kingdom of Miletus. Scholars that have studied this century have found evidence that the Roman government operated a rock quarry there and they would send prisoners out there to work in the rock quarry and to mine rock over there and John

was sent to this island by Emperor Domitian. Now, John had been a pastor in the city of Ephesus when Domitian exiled him. By the way, there were two forms of capital punishment in the Roman empire. There was capital punishment in the sense that they took your life but another form of what they called capital punishment was that they took away all your properties, any worldly goods that you had and you were exiled or banished to some location and you were not allowed to ever leave there. It kind of depended on your status. It depended on whether you were kind of a lower caste in which case they probably just put you to death or maybe you were a person of some importance. It doesn't mean that you were wealthy, certainly, John was never wealthy. He was, after all, a fisherman when Jesus found him but he had become kind of a person of notoriety and so he was exiled rather than put to death and when he was on this island, it was a small island but they had a lot going on there. They had a gymnasium there that we know from history. This island was at the entrance to the kingdom of Miletus and it was one of their fortresses because if you wanted to sail up the coast to get to Miletus to attack it, you had to pass by the island of Patmos so the person that they put in charge of this little island was referred to as the Commandant and he ran the prison camp but he was also responsible for the military safety. Some people said that the Romans, the Greeks, I guess the Greeks believed that the goddess Artemis was born there in Patmos and that's where she started her existence. So John worked in the mines there during the time of the Emperor Domitian.

Now, there was a custom that when an Emperor died, sometimes a new Emperor in order to just kind of celebrate his being the Emperor and he wanted to basically get a good name for himself and curry favor, he would often release the political prisoners of the previous Emperor and so when Domitian died, the next Emperor was a man by the name of Nerva. We don't know a lot about him. He only reigned for two years as Emperor of Rome but Nerva released the prisoners that had been exiled under Domitian and so John was allowed to leave Patmos but then later went back of his own accord. I don't know why. Maybe it was because he had spent such a great time with the Lord there. Maybe it was because John was from Miletus and that almost seemed like home to him. I don't really know the reason for that but he went back we're told by early church historians to the island of Patmos on a voluntary basis.

Now, I think what's amazing is that here he is in the midst of the worst possible circumstance. He's basically lost it all. He's in a horrible place. I mean, they sent their criminally insane and the insane and just the plain mean people out to Patmos and they had them work in a rock quarry. These are not good neighbors. This is not a good place to be and yet in the midst of all that, John was able to say, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." That's a phenomenal statement when you think about it and I think what's significant is that ordeal and the view of God's sovereignty often come together. We don't think about this. The scholar, Caird, says, "Ordeal and sovereignty are obverse and reverse of the one calling." In other words, he says there are two sides of the same coin. "For those who endure with Christ also reign with him and reign in the very midst of their ordeal." What he's saying is that one of the ways that we show the sovereignty of God on earth to others is by allowing them to watch us go through suffering and we trust in our sovereign God to take care of us.

Now, suffering isn't good if you're just suffering for doing stupid. I was listening one day to Dave Ramsey and they were having kind of a quiz and you could twitter online, what is your favorite saying of Dave Ramsey? So everybody that has ever listened to him knows that if anybody asks him, "How are you?" What does he say? "Better than I deserve," which is a theologically wonderful answer because we're all better than we deserve, right? What do we deserve? The lake of fire so if we don't have the lake of fire, we are better than we deserve so Dave Ramsey has a good answer. But I thought about that for a little while and I thought, "No, the favorite saying I have of his," and I know it's my favorite because I took one of those little electronic type labeler things and it was so profound I thought that I've got to keep that and so I typed it up and I stuck it on my computer monitor where I could see it every day. I've actually only heard him say this once that I can remember but it stuck in my mind forever and here is what he said, "When you do stupid, you reap desperate." How many of you know that in your life that when you've done stupid stuff, later you reap the consequences in times of desperation? And if you are suffering because you've done something stupid, there's nothing great about that. There is nothing honorable about that but John says, "I was suffering for the word of God," and he repeats this throughout the book of Revelation. Chapter 1, verse 2, "Who bore witness to the message from God that is, the witness borne by Jesus." Chapter 1, verse 9, he was suffering "because of the word of God and my witness to Jesus." In chapter 6 and verse 9 it's "because of the word of God and because of the witness which they have." Chapter 20, verse 4, "because of their witness to Jesus and because of the word of God." There is suffering for having been a witness.

Now, there's also a secret to being a witness and if you want to know what the secret is, there are two passages in Revelation that really narrow this down. In other words, when you are suffering, what is it that people see and take note of that lets them know that you're really giving witness for Jesus Christ? Well, look at chapter 12 and verse 17. He talks about these people suffering and he says, "Who keep the commandments of God and maintain their witness to Jesus Christ." Do you know how you know that someone is a witness for Jesus Christ? It's when things are bad, they're still obeying God. They're still obeying him. Look at chapter 14 in verse 12, he says, "those who keep the commandments of God and maintain faithfulness to Jesus." So it's all about obeying God even when you're in times of duress. Now, I don't know about you, it seems kind of easy to falter when things are not going my way, when bad things are happening. How many of you have ever been on a diet and then had a particularly stressful day where you just threw up your hands and said, "I don't care. I'm going to eat chocolate today"? Or, "I'm going to eat cheese enchiladas today or stuffed jalapenos," that would be my problem is that I would be eating stuffed jalapenos on a bad day. You know, they call it comfort food for a reason, don't they? We all have those days and some days you just think, "There is no solution for my problem that doesn't have a label on it that says Bluebell." So you want to go and solve your problem with some comfort food but the reality is that we just need to obey Christ even when it's the most difficult.

Then we see John seeing the invisible. It says, "He was in the Spirit." Now, that's interesting. This phrase is repeated four different times. It's capitalized in our Bibles "in

the Spirit" but it really kind of has the connotation here that whatever happened to John, these visions were given to him supernaturally. It was like John fell into a trance and God spoke to him and that nothing in the book of Revelation is John just expressing his own opinion except for maybe some of his account of who Jesus is in chapter 1. He is instead, just revealing what Christ told him supernaturally in a series of visions. The fact is, it's interesting that there are three other times that this phrase "in the Spirit" is associated with a call to go up to heaven. In chapter 4, verse 1, an angel says to John, "Come up here. I will show you what must take place after this." Right after that, he says, "I was carried by the Spirit," so it mentions that. Chapter 17, verse 1, "Come up and I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters." Then he talks about being "in the Spirit" as God showed him that carried out. Chapter 21, when he makes that statement, he says that one of the seven angels had the seven bowls or the seven last plagues and he said, "Come. I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb, and he carried me away in the Spirit to a great high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God." He was seeing something that he could not see in his fleshly body. He saw it as God gave him a vision, maybe in a trance. I don't understand all of that but he got to see the invisible. You know, the interesting thing, though, is the invisible is more real than the visible. How many of you know that? For the Bible says, "For the things which are seen are temporal," they are temporary. This pulpit is seen but it's temporary. One day, the Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 3 that when God executes his judgment on all sins, it says that the elements will be loosed with a fervent heat and there won't be one speck of this world still left. God is not doing a retread job on planet Earth. That's why we're getting a new heaven and new earth, not a renewed heaven and a renewed earth but a new heaven and a new earth. So we see that the invisible is what's real and this is what John wants us to focus on.

Then I want you to notice that John is really serving the Lord in worship. It says, "I was in the Spirit," when? "On the Lord's day." Now, some scholars think that maybe this should just be translated "the day of the Lord." The problem is that that's not what it says in Greek. There are plenty of times the New Testament talks about the day of the Lord and it uses a different Greek construction. This is the first time we're really hearing this phrase "the Lord's day" but later the early church fathers, Irenaeus and others wrote about the first day of the week and they use the exact same Greek language to refer to the Lord's day. This is the first day of the week and he's there and what's he doing? He's dedicating that day to a time of worship and this is when he was in the Spirit.

Then John is not only seeing the invisible but he hears the incredible. He hears a voice like a trumpet. The word here is a trumpet, in the Old Testament we would have called this a shofar, you know, the big long horn and it amplified the sound and you blew this horn to signal that a battle was on the way or that you needed to be called to attention. God has often in Scripture spoken with that kind of overpowering voice that you could hear for great distances. Exodus 19:16, "On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain," of course this is Mount Sinai, "and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled." Exodus 20:18, and you remember this is a chapter where we get the Ten Commandments. It says, "Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of

the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were very afraid and trembled and they stood afar off." By the way, I think it's interesting that he says, "I heard this voice behind me." Yeah, it's almost like he's talking like God snuck up on him and how startling is it when somebody talks to you from behind? So, I walked in the kitchen earlier this week and I can already see my girls smiling because they know what I'm going to say. I walked into the kitchen this week and you know, Grace is over cooking and I just went over and I said, "Good morning," but I was behind her and she wasn't aware of it and one thing about Grace, if she doesn't know you're there and you say something to her, you get a reaction. Every time. You know, you're lucky if you can catch her before she hits the floor. I mean, it's just something. She lets out this ear-piercing scream.

So John is startled by that but it's interesting that it happens also in Ezekiel 3:12 where it says that he heard an earthquake behind him; he heard the voice of God speak like an earthquake that was behind him. The fact of the matter is and here is that verse in Ezekiel 3:12, "Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great earthquake, 'Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place!'" What it's really saying is not that God is sneaking up on anybody but that it's a revelation. It's showing you something new. It's catching your attention. It's something that wasn't in your view before and now it is. It's like Grace didn't know I was in the room but then she knew and so John didn't know these things he's about to say. He heard this voice and it caused him to be aware of the presence that he was in, that he hadn't quite gotten aware of yet. Then it says, "There was a loud sound." The words "phone megale" occur 20 times in the book of Revelation. I think what's interesting to me is John is being persecuted, John is suffering and it's in the moment of his suffering that God cries out to him in a loud voice. How many of you know that when you're suffering sometimes, that's when God speaks to you the most? It's when he really gets your attention. It's when you've walked on a cane for 8 ½ years and suddenly God speaks to you and shows you how to be healed of what you're doing wrong with your life. Or that when you're suffering, you suddenly start finding time to get down on your knees more because every day you're made aware through your suffering of your inadequacy without Jesus Christ and you just feel like, "I've got to get on my knees." That's when we really start hearing the voice of the Lord. Sometimes God shouts at us through our suffering.

Then he's given the command to write the Revelation in chapter 1 and verse 11. It's interesting, by the way, that God commands him 12 times in the book of Revelation, "Write this down. Write this down. Write this down." Only one time in chapter 10 and verse 4 is John shown something that was so devastating, so terrific, so terrible, that he's told in chapter 10, verse 4, not to write down those words of what he saw. Part of it we don't know. Part of it we'll have to wait and see it played out. But I think something is important here and that is over and over again, John says, "I was told to write this down. I was told to write this down." He's making it very plain to us that he's not just sharing from his experiences. He's not just writing down what he had seen and heard and his hands had handled and just like he did in 1 John or in the Gospel of John but here he is writing down what Jesus is dictating to him. He wants us to know that this word comes straight from the Lord. And when you say "write and send" it's kind of like in the Old



Testament "go and tell." It's the same call for a prophet but it's a New Testament version of that.

So now John's turned around. He said, "I turned to see the voice." Of course, you know you can't see a voice, right? What does that mean? He says, "I turned to see the one that the voice was coming from." So he sees this glorious resurrected Christ. Now, this is where language fails us. Even John's language fails us. We just can't really wrap our brains around how great this Jesus is but let's do the best that we can and the picture is somewhat symbolic. For example, we're going to hear about the two-edged sword that comes out of his mouth. That's not a physical description, it's a symbolic description that talks about what transcends the personal appearance of Jesus. So he uses the best words he can to portray this indescribable reality that we see.

The first that he sees is one standing among the lampstands. I think of all the things in this vision and this is the one that gets to me the most personally. Chapter 1, verse 13, he says, "In the midst of the seven candlesticks, One like the Son of Man." Now, we can theorize what these candlesticks are. In the tabernacle, of course, in the holy place just in front of the curtain to the Holy of Holies, we had the table of shewbread on the right, we had the altar of incense directly before the curtain and on the left we had the golden candlestick. It was a menorah, a single golden candlestick branched off into seven smaller candlesticks each with a little lamp that contained oil. The lamps had to be filled and the wicks had to be kept trim and the fire was to be burning before the Lord all the day. When they built the temple, they oriented the candlestick so that it would always burn what they said "before the Lord." They wanted that candlestick to burn before the Lord. In the book of Revelation, we see references to the seven spirits of God as being seven flames before the throne of God but here we know what the candlesticks are, they're not the seven spirits because he tells us. Jesus himself interprets it and says, "This is the seven messengers or the seven stars and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." I think what's interesting here is that I think these are individual candlesticks. They are individual lampstands. It's not one with seven branches off of it. It's like a circle and there are all seven there. In the book of Ezekiel, it talks about seeing a vision of a new candlestick and seeing seven pipes going to the seven bowls. I think here there are seven candlesticks and we see that the Son of Man is walking in their midst. It's like they're in a circle around the Savior and they draw their strength and their life and their light from he who is the Light of the world, Jesus Christ. John 8:12, Jesus claimed to be the Light of the world. They are situated to burn before the exalted Christ. In the book of Zechariah, right after seeing this vision of the candlesticks in Zechariah 4:6 it says this, "Then he answered and spake unto me saying," because Zechariah says, "Listen, I don't get this vision. I don't understand this." The angel says, "Then he answered and spake unto me saying, 'This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.'" You see, I think in this part of the vision we need to remember one thing at First Baptist Church, Las Colinas or whatever church you're a part of, we need to remember this: our strength, our light, our source, our sustenance, our needs are all met by Jesus Christ. Yeah, it's not met because a building committee got together and figured out something. It's not met because human machinations persuaded people to do certain things and cooperate. Everything we need

has to come from Christ and if we're here without drawing on the power of Christ, we're wasting our time. We're wasting our time. So I picture that every one of these seven churches, their candlestick is oriented to face the risen Savior. I wonder what would happen if every church when they came in on Sunday morning thought, "We're facing the Savior today. We're looking on his face. We want to see Jesus." That's the way that we should be.

Then in the middle of the candlesticks is this one likened to the Son of Man standing in the middle of it. By the way, the Son of Man is only mentioned twice in the book of Revelation. The other time is in chapter 14 and verse 14 where it says this, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown," that's authority, "and in his hand a sharp sickle." Do you all know what a sickle it? This isn't the thing that comes out of your freezer, okay? No, it's talking about a long blade that you would reap the harvest with. You see, Jesus is coming back and he's going to reap the harvest. He's going to separate those who belong to him from those who have rejected him and that means that there is not only reaping but there's a time of judgment coming and he is the God who does both.

Look at this passage from Daniel 10. This is Daniel 10, beginning at verse 5, "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." All stuff we just kind of heard in Revelation 1. "And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me," he fell like he was dead at the feet of the one that he saw, "for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Let me tell you why I think John fell down at the feet of Jesus: it's because I think the moment he saw the resurrected Christ, now think about this, John was the guy who had leaned on Jesus' breast, it says; he was the one who had been close to Jesus but now he sees Jesus and he's not leaning on him but he's falling on his face before the risen Savior. Do you know why? If you ever meet the risen Savior then you will realize there is nothing good in you. Do you realize when the Bible says, "There is none good, no not one," you'll say, "Yup, and that means Robert." You'll stick your name on the end of that verse because you know. He says, "Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground."

Now, listen how many of those things we're about to hear about Jesus. First of all, it says he was dressed in white, a white robe and a golden sash. These are pictures of the garments of a priest. In Exodus 28:4, "These are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, a coat of checkered work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests." By the way, some people make a big deal over the fact that, "Hey well, this can't really picture Jesus Christ as priest because if it pictures a priest, they talk about all the other

vestments too." You know, when you come to church and you look nice, I might come up and say, "Wow, you really look nice today," and I might even say, "You know, I really like that blouse," or, "I really like that necklace," or something but I don't have to comment on every piece of clothing just because you're wearing more than that. The fact is, in Revelation 14:14, we know he's wearing a crown. In another place it says that he is wearing many diadems or crowns. There is a lot more to the picture here but John is just stunned by the whiteness of the robe and the brilliance of this golden sash and these are items that the high priest would wear but Jesus is called by the writer of Hebrews, "our great high priest." There have been many high priests in history but only one great high priest and that is Jesus Christ. You realize that a priest leads in worship? Jesus is still leading us in worship today if we'll ponder on him. He intercedes for us. He prays for us. He advocates for us. He diagnoses our diseases. All the things that the priests in the Old Testament did, he's dressed in that way.

Then he says his hair was white like wool. I am so glad to find out there's at least one way I'm becoming more like Christ every day because I'm getting this hair white like wool. Daniel 7:9 says, "As I looked, thrones were placed and the Ancient of Days," now this is talking about God the Father and he's pictured kind of as an old man but not just any man. He's certainly strong; he's certainly brilliant; he's certainly magnificent; he's not weak. His capacity is not dulled in any way but he's been around from eternity past and so he says, "The Ancient of Days took a seat; his clothing was white as snow and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire." In Daniel 7:13 it says, "I saw in the night visions, behold with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him." So there are two personalities pictured in Daniel: there is the Ancient of Days and then there is the Son of man and the Son of man comes before the Ancient of Days and guess what? There is a family resemblance. Why? Because God the Father and God the Son have the same purity. It's talking about his total purity. There is not one speck or flaw in our Savior.

Then he says his eyes are like a flame of fire. How many of you have ever had a mom or dad that could give you the look? Do you all know what I'm talking about? Tell me you don't. "I see you right back there, pay attention." You know. They could give you the look and if they gave you the look, that's really all you needed was the look. But how many of you ever sometimes wondered if mom or dad had eyes that could see stuff that you didn't think they were able to see? They knew. Sometimes they'd look at you and they'd know you had done something wrong and you hadn't told them and the evidence hadn't shown up yet as far as you knew but they know. Why? Because they have a penetrating look. They know when you can't look them straight in the eye that there is something wrong. The first thing I ever noticed about my kids when they were off was I would notice that they lost eye contact with me. They couldn't look me straight in the eye. I would notice that there wasn't a brightness to their eyes anymore, it had gotten dull, it had gotten cold. I remember one of my children had this problem for about six months until I finally found out what was wrong and we had some things that we had to deal with because the brightness was gone from their eyes and after they confessed that sin, God

restored that to them. It's so important that you look your kids in the eye and you know that.

But Jesus has a penetrating scrutiny that when he looks at us, he sees the innermost recesses of our hearts and you might be able to fool folks at church, you might be able to fool your own family, you might be able to fool your spouse though that's the hardest of all, but let me tell you something, you can't fool Jesus. He sees down inside the deepest recesses of your thoughts and guess what? His flames of fire can mean judgment too. In chapter 2, verse 18, "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire.'" Chapter 19, verse 12, "His eyes are like a flame of fire." He sees everything. He penetrates everything and there is nothing hidden to his view. There is nothing in the dark when Jesus looks because his eyes have got all the light that he needs to see.

Then he's got feet like glowing bronze. This is probably the hardest thing to translate in this whole passage. Daniel 8:2 calls it "a glowing metal," but this is a weird word. It's a compound word. It's chokolibanon. It's only here in Revelation and it's only twice in this whole book. There are only two times in the whole Bible that you see this word and it's both in this book. "Chalkos" is the word for "copper" but it could be used of brass which is when you mix copper with zinc. It was more commonly used to refer to bronze which was when you mix copper with tin. But then this word "libanos" has kind of a surprising meaning, it means "frankincense." So it's kind of like brass or bronze but it's also like frankincense. Now you think, "Now wait a minute, a metal and a smell, how does that go together?" A metal and an essential oil for some of you and it goes together? But when you harvest frankincense, it has an amber color to it and you can get it in blocks of solid amber and, of course, you can melt it down and you can do other things. Basically what he's saying is that it's kind of like you took metal and you heated it as hot as you could and then when you got it at what we would normally call white-hot, this substance that's left is translucent and you can see through it like amber and it has the color of amber. It's yellow but it represents kind of a molten metal. In other words, this is the most pure molten metal you can possibly imagine and it represents, in this case, judgment of God. You see, brass and bronze in Scripture really picture the judgment of God. The fact is, do you remember the brazen altar? You went to the tabernacle and once you got inside the gate, the very first thing you came to was the brazen altar. It's made of bronze basically and they had a little ramp going up to it and you'd go up there and the priest would offer the sacrifice but the only way that sins could be pushed forward, not propitiated because Jesus did that on the cross, but expiated, meaning they were pushed forward, the dirt was swept under the carpet for another year of history until Jesus could get here, the only way our sins, those sins of the Israelites could be expiated was when they offered the sacrifice of an innocent lamb on a brazen, bronze altar. It should remind us when we see the feet of Jesus that we're to worship the only one who was our perfect sacrifice.

Then he had a voice, a voice like many waters. You know, every now and then, if you're somewhere and you're trying to get their attention and it's hard to do around here. You start that fellowship thing, especially back in Fellowship Hall and I don't have my father-in-law's ability to do one of those amazing whistles. I've gone home and I've tried to

pucker my lips up and do that and I've seen my dad, my dad can do that whistle too and so I've tried to imitate my father-in-law and my dad and do that whistle and all I wind up with is just a little pool of drool wherever I was trying. It just doesn't work very well. I get lots of spit out but that's about it. I can't do this, I'll often get up and say, "Excuse me. Excuse me, can I have everybody's attention?" Meanwhile everybody is chattering away and they keep going and sometimes you just want to go down to the microphone and say, "Hello," but guess what? When Jesus speaks, you will not be able to ignore him. He's the voice of many waters. Ezekiel 43:2, "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory." You see, in Ezekiel it says, "It's not just when he speaks but when he's on his way, he'll make such a noise that you won't be able to pay attention to anything else." I don't know how many of you, raise your hands if you've ever been to Niagara Falls? Has anybody here ever been to Victoria Falls? That would really be impressive. If you've ever been to Niagara Falls or Victoria Falls, you know that when you get there, you can hear almost nothing else but the waterfall, rushing waters crashing hundreds of feet to a river below and somebody has to be right up next to you for you to be able to hold a conversation because you really can't hear anything else and the voice of the Lord is a voice that drowns out all other voices.

Then he has seven stars in his right hand that represent his authority and his sovereignty. The right hand was the place of power and safety and it's fascinating to me that none of this vision is explained to us except for two items and that is he says, that the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the lampstands are the seven churches. The word "angels" there, of course, in the Old Testament "stars," Job 38:7, were associated with angels. Angels in the New Testament often means messengers. It could be the messengers of the seven churches. But the only thing that is actually explained to us and isn't it nice to know that if the seven stars are indeed the pastors or messengers to those churches and the lampstands are the seven churches, that Jesus is in the midst waiting to give power and resources to the churches that are facing him, that are properly oriented to him, who are tied into his power and that he is holding in his place of safety and in his right hand, those who are serving him and who are communicating his word? That gives me a lot of comfort as a pastor. It's also kind of scary knowing the awesome responsibility.

Then we see the seventh thing, that he has a sharp two-edged sword in his mouth. By the way, you don't find this anywhere else in Scripture, swords coming out of mouths, it's only here in Revelation. It's actually in Revelation four times: right here in chapter 1, verse 16; then in chapter 2, verse 16, listen to what he says, "Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth." He is warning you. Repent or else. Chapter 19, verse 15, "From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty." We mentioned a few weeks ago how we love to talk about "Jesus is love" and we love to quote 1 John 4:8 and we love to sing "Jesus loves me" and all that is true but the reality is that God is also a God of wrath and his wrath will be vindicated and unrighteousness will be judged and that's why the Psalmist said that while the righteous are like those who are planted by the rivers

of the water and they bring forth their fruit in due season and their leaf doesn't wither and whatever they do shall prosper but then he says, but the ungodly are not so, they are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. The Lord knows the way of the righteous but the way of the ungodly is going to perish. God is a God of righteousness and we need to make that part of our message if we're going to be honest with those we share the word of God with. Chapter 19, verse 21, "And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse and all the birds were gorged with their flesh."

Now, I want you to notice something: where do you normally put your sword? In your hand. Jesus has got it in his mouth. Do you know why? Because all he needs is a word. All he needs is a word. By the way, there are different Greek words for "sword." This is the word *rhomphaia* which means that it is a long, sharp, two-edged sword. It's a rare word. It's only used once outside of Revelation in Luke chapter 2, verse 35. It was a symbol of war and oppression and anguish and of political authority. It's a startling difference from just the word for a short dagger. But it means one that is going to do war; it's going to execute judgment. When you say the king went to war against someone, he took his sword against someone. Isn't it interesting that the word of God is referred to as a two-edged sword? "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." You see, God's word is powerful to judge and it's also powerful to discern between things.

Then he had a face like the sun. You know, you're not supposed to go out and look at the sun. Why? Because it will blind your eyes. You're not even supposed to go and look at the moon with a telescope unless you put a little piece of green glass there inside the lens of the telescope when you're looking at a full moon because otherwise by the time you amplify the moon's light, you get such brilliant light it can damage your retinas so when you look through a telescope at the moon at night, you're supposed to have a filter there if you don't want to damage your eyes. Yet John said that his face was like white-hot like lightning, the brilliance of lightning and yet it's the size and the constancy of the sun. It means that Jesus is pure power, pure holiness, pure divinity. Then it says the sun in its strength. It means there are no clouds. There is nothing to darken it. It is at the brightness of noonday, not like the sunrise or sunset. It's in its full strength.

Now, what happens to John when he sees all this? He needs some reassurance and so he goes to the reassuring Christ. So he fell down before Christ as one who had died. He prostrated himself on the ground and he fainted. Basically, he saw himself as not being worth anything when he saw Jesus. In the Old Testament, I'm reminded that when Mephibosheth came before King David he said, "What would you have to do with someone who is such a dead dog as I am?" I imagine that's how we're going to feel when we see Jesus except this time we'll not just feel like a dead dog but we'll be too afraid to even speak the thought in front of him.

I want to ask you a question and don't answer, don't throw your hands up: what is your prayer life like? I think most of us as Christians get in a rut. Yeah, we pray before meals, "God bless this stuff." I actually had one friend, pastor, he believed in short prayers. I

remember one time sitting down with him before a meal and he just said, "God bless this mess. Amen." You know, and he got right to it. But I think sometimes we're either praying those kind of rote prayers we do all the time or we're saying, "God, I've got a problem. Here's my problem. Solve the problem." I want to encourage you to do one thing differently this week, I want you to get in a closet by yourself. Now, you don't have to be in a physical closet but it needs to be somewhere where there's nobody else this week for at least an hour. Get in there and get on your knees and just think about how great God is, maybe read this chapter. But when you pray, don't ask for stuff. Just tell him how great he is. Ponder his magnificence. Ponder his majesty. By the way, some of you I'm sure over the years have wondered why we don't have a lot of contemporary Christian music and we don't have recorded tape music and other things, it's because I want to make sure that we have music that will maybe help us think on the majesty of God. There are some songs that do that more for me than others but, "Raise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation." What an awesome song.

Christ reassures John. He reaches down and touches John with his right hand. I wonder what that was like? Jesus had touched John a lot of times before: he had had his arms around him when they were walking down by the Sea of Galilee; he had let John lay on his chest when they were reclining at the table when they were eating dinner but now he's laying his right hand on him and it's commissioning him. It's investing him with power but most of all it's just comforting him, letting him know that he was still loved. That is the amazing part of grace. The amazing part of grace is that this one who is dressed in white and his hair is white and his feet are like burnished brass, whose eyes are like a flame of fire and his voice like the voice of many waters still loves Robert. That's the amazing part of grace.

Jesus reassures him and then Jesus reassures him with some words. You know, there is nothing like when you need reassurance somebody putting their arm around you but you also need some words to let you know that things are going to be alright. John has been exiled permanently to the island of Patmos he thinks, by the Emperor Domitian and maybe never will get to see other people he loved and cared for ever again. He has absolutely no worldly resources to his name and he knows that those that he loves at Ephesus where he had been the pastor are now suffering horribly for their faith and Jesus says to this one who is so distraught, "I am the one who died. I am the one who rose again. I am the one who is alive forever. I am the one who has the keys of Hades and death." By the way, if you don't know, the Jews referred to the place of death as Sheol. You'll see that a lot of times in the book of Psalms, he'll refer to something dying and it being in Sheol. The Jewish theology was that in Sheol there were two compartments: there was Hades and there was paradise, the Greek word "paradiso." Remember what Jesus said to the thief on the cross who accepted him and asked his forgiveness, he says, "Today thou shall be with me." He didn't say in heaven. He says, "Today thou shall be with me in paradise." In other words, it was one of the two compartments of death but it was the compartment reserved for the saints. Then the other compartment is Hades which we commonly refer to as hell. We read about that in Luke 16 where Jesus tells not a parable, he doesn't say it's a parable, he doesn't use the word "like," he says, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every

day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom." That was the Jewish name for paradise, "The rich man also died and was buried. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off," apparently they can see from one to the other and he says, "Father Abraham, send someone to dip his finger in water and come and cool my tongue for I am tormented in this flame and Abraham said, 'Son, in your lifetime you received good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou are tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.'" There is no passing the divide. By the way, paradise no longer exists. Guess where you go when you die right now? You go to be in the presence of God. Do you know how we know that? In Ephesians 4, "He carried away captivity captive." That means he took paradise. No one could go on to be in the presence of God forever until Jesus had paved the way with his resurrection from the dead and he carried away captivity captive and now the place of Sheol only has one compartment and it's hell. Some people will tell you you'll spend eternity in hell without Jesus Christ and I understand what they're trying to say, that's not theologically accurate because in the book of Revelation chapter 21, it says, "And death and hell and the sea gave up the dead which were in them and these were cast into the lake of fire and this is the second death." It's not hell, it's the Lake of fire. We use the term "hell" kind of generically but it's the lake of fire. But Jesus, aren't you glad he's got the keys? because he was able to open paradise and take those saints with him and now when I die, he has the keys to make sure that I get into heaven. It's a promise to me but it's also a warning to those without Jesus Christ.

Then he gives us a commission and he tells John, "There are three things, John, that I want you to write down." By the way, if you're going to study the book of Revelation, this is the outline for the book. Jesus outlines the book himself so, you know, Bible scholars come up with lots of clever outlines but I don't think I'd ever feel comfortable trying to put an outline to a book that Jesus had already outlined. I think we ought to stick with his. He says, "Write down what you have seen. Write down what things are. Write down what things shall be hereafter." That's the outline for the book. Again, I feel like that blind man that just cannot do justice to John's description but I think, quite frankly, John couldn't do justice to Jesus. I think there just weren't words in human vocabulary so maybe we ought to get on our knees this week in a closet by ourselves and ask God for some sanctified imagination to get this picture of the risen, resurrected, glorified Savior in our heads because, you see, I think most of the times we think about him as that fellow sitting at the table with the disciples or we see him carrying the cross to Calvary but I've got news for you, he's no suffering servant anymore. He's a sovereign King and he is glorious beyond our ability to describe him.

Would you stand as Richard comes to lead us in a song? I don't even really know what to ask you. I would love it if God had laid on your heart that you just need to become a permanent part of this church and you came up and took the pastor's hand today and told



him that. But do you know what I want more than anything else? It's just for us to commit that when we pray and when we think about Jesus, that he's not just somebody at our beck and call to do our bidding but he's somebody we ought to fall down on our faces and worship. Maybe you would take that opportunity this morning to tell him that.

Hymn 355, "Jesus Paid It All."

"I hear the Savior say,  
'Thy strength indeed is small;  
Child of weakness, watch and pray,  
Find in Me thine all in all.'

"Jesus paid it all,  
All to Him I owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow."

1

2  **Revelation 1:9-11**

*I, John, your brother and co-sharer in the affliction and kingdom and steadfastness in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great sound like a trumpet saying, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."*

3  **Revelation 1:12-15**

*And I turned to see the voice which was speaking with me, and when I turned, I saw seven gold lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching to the feet and girded around his chest with a golden belt, and his head and hair were white like wool, white as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame, and his feet were like fine bronze when it has been fired in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters,*

4  **Revelation 1:16-18**

*and he had in his right hand seven stars, and a sharp double-edged sword coming out of his mouth, and his face was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead person, and he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, and the one who lives, and I was dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and of Hades.*

5  **Revelation 1:19-10**

*Therefore, write the things which you saw, and the things which are, and the things which are about to take place after these things. As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands—the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.*

6  **Encouragement to Fellow Sufferers**

7  **Sharing the Journey**

- John refers to himself as:
  - Brother
  - One who shares in the patient endurance of suffering
  - One who faithfully has proclaimed the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
  - Who shares with you in Jesus.
- He is experiencing the same struggles they are.
- They are citizens of a common kingdom with the same King.

8  **Summoned to Endurance**

- John and his fellow believers must wait with patient endurance for the coming of the Kingdom.
- This quality is praised in the letters to Ephesus (2:2, 3), Thyatira (2:19), and

Philadelphia (3:10);

- We are called to ENDURANCE
  - See Revelation 13:10; 14:12.

#### 9 **Suffering in Exile**

- Patmos
  - Small island (8 miles long, 4 miles wide) in the Aegean Sea southwest of Ephesus and between Asia Minor and Greece.
    - One of the Dodecanese islands off the coast of Turkey; the island was part of Miletus.
    - Scholars of the first-century period have found evidences that the Roman government maintained rock quarries on Patmos to which prisoners and banished troublemakers were sent to live out their lives.
    - John was sent to this island as a prisoner following his effective pastorate at Ephesus.

#### 10 **Suffering in Exile (2)**

- John worked as a prisoner in the mines on this small island under the sentence of Emperor Domitian.
- The island was well-inhabited but its chief function was the operation of a Roman penal colony.
- John was freed from Patmos in A.D. 96 when Domitian died (because Emperor Nerva who ruled for 2 years freed all previous captives).
- John later returned to Patmos voluntarily.

#### 11 **Suffering and Sovereignty**

- “Ordeal and sovereignty are obverse and reverse of the one calling; for those who endure with Christ also reign with him, and reign in the very midst of their ordeal.”
  - Caird

#### 12 **Suffering for the Word**

- 1:2
  - ὁ ἔμαρτύρησεν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ
  - who bore witness to the message from God*
  - καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅσα εἶδεν
  - that is, the witness borne by Jesus, as much as he saw*
- 1:9
  - διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ
  - because of the word of God*
  - καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ
  - and my witness to Jesus*

#### 13 **Suffering for the Word (2)**

- 6:9

διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ  
*because of the word of God*  
καὶ διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἣν εἶχον  
*and because of the witness which they bore*

- 20:4  
διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ  
*because of their witness to Jesus*  
καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ  
*and because of the word of God*

#### 14 **Secret of being a witness**

- 12:17  
τῶν τηροῦτων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ  
*who keep the commandments of God*  
καὶ ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ  
*and maintain their witness to Jesus*
- 14:12  
οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ  
*those who keep the commandments of God*  
καὶ τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ  
*and maintain faithfulness to Jesus*

#### 15 **Seeing the Invisible**

- John was “in the Spirit”
  - John was projected forward in his inner self in a vision, not bodily, to that future day of the Lord when God will pour out His judgments on the earth.
- The phrase ἐν πνεύματι, “in the spirit,” occurs four times in Revelation (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10).

#### 16 **Serving the Lord in worship**

- The Lord’s day
  - Greek grammar favors the interpretation that this is Sunday. The early church Fathers referred to Sunday as “the Lord’s day.”

#### 17 **Hearing the Incredible**

- Voice like a trumpet
  - Shofar (announcements, call to battle)
  - Exodus 19:16 -- *On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.*
  - Exodus 20:18 -- *Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off*

18  **Announcing the revelation**

- "Behind me"
  - Ezekiel 3:12 -- *Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of the LORD from its place!*
  - Emphasizes the revelatory character of this voice
- "A loud sound"
  - φωνή μεγάλη occurs twenty times in Revelation (1:10; 5:2, 12; 6:10; 7:2, 10; 8:13; 10:3; 11:12, 15; 12:10; 14:7, 9, 15, 18; 16:1, 16:17; 19:1, 17; 21:3)
  - God often shouts His message during our suffering

19  **Writing the revelation (1:11)**

- This is the first of 12 commands in this book for John to write what he saw, a command which seems related to each preceding vision (cf. 1:19; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14; 14:13; 19:9; 21:5).
  - These reiterated commands are important for the book as a whole, for John presents himself not as the author or originator of his message but rather as a mediator of the message revealed to him.
- This message is for the 7 churches.

20  **The glorious Christ**

21  **Standing among the lampstands**

- 7 Lampstands (1:13)
  - Hearing the voice behind him, John turned ... to see its source.
  - What he saw was seven individual lampstands.
  - The lampstand in the Temple was oriented to "burn before the Lord." Here the lampstands – representing the churches – are situated to burn before the exalted Christ.

22  **Standing among the lampstands (2)**

- The Son of Man standing in the middle of these lampstands (the Light for the lamps!)
  - The "son of man" is mentioned in Revelation only twice: here in 1:13 and in 14:14.
  - 14:14 -- *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

23  **Daniel 10:5-7**

- *Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.*

24  **Daniel 10:8-9**

- *Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in*

*me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.*

25  **1. Dressed in a white robe and golden sash**

- Exodus 28:4 -- *These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests.*
- Christ is our great High Priest
- Do you realize that Christ still works for you?
  - Interceding for you
  - Advocating for you
- Matches description in Daniel 10:5

26  **2. Hair white like wool**

- Daniel 7:9
  - *As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.*
- Daniel 7:13
  - *I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.*

27  **3. Eyes like a flame of fire**

- Penetrating scrutiny and fierce judgment
- 2:18 -- *And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.*
- 19:12 -- *His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.*
- His eyes see into the deepest recesses of your heart
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28  **4. Feet like glowing bronze**

- A glowing metal (Daniel 8:2)
  - The difficult compound word χαλκολιβάνω, "bronze," is found just twice in Revelation (here and 2:18)
  - χαλκός = copper, brass (alloy of copper with zinc), most commonly to bronze (alloy of copper with tin)
  - λίβανος = "frankincense" – amber in color; used in worship to God
  - Picture feet like hot melted metal with a translucent amber quality

29  **4. Feet like glowing bronze (2)**

- Brass / bronze in Scripture is a picture of the judgment of God
  - The "brazen" altar was a picture of God's judgment upon sin that had to be paid by

an innocent sacrifice

– Jesus was our supreme Sacrifice; but now He is the judging Sovereign.

- The “frankincense-like” amber glow of His feet reminds us that we are to worship Him who alone was fully acceptable as our Sacrifice

30  **5. Voice like many waters**

- Ezekiel 43:2 -- *And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory.*
- Psalm 93:4 -- *The LORD on high is mightier Than the noise of many waters, Yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*
  - Ever been to Niagara or Victoria falls?
- A voice that drowns out all other noise

31  **6. Seven stars in His right hand**

- The right hand represents authority and sovereignty. It is the place of power and safety.
- Jesus explains to John what the 7 stars are:
  - *The seven stars are the angels [messengers] of the seven churches (1:20)*
  - The stars and the candlesticks are the only part of this vision that are explained for us.

32  **7. Sharp 2-edged sword in mouth (1:16)**

- This image found only in Revelation (4 times)
  - 2:16 -- *Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.*
  - 19:15 -- *From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.*
  - 19:21 -- *And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.*
- Sword in mouth = The power of Jesus’ Word

33  **Hebrews 4:12**

- *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*
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34  **8. Face like the sun**

- Allusion to Daniel 10:6 – White-hot like lightning
- Sanctity, pure holiness, divinity
- Sun in its strength – not impeded by clouds – the full radiance
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35  **The reassuring Christ**

36  **John's response**

- He fell down before Christ as one who had died
  - Prostrate
  - Fainted; saw himself as nothing worthwhile and became like a corpse before one so glorious
- How do you approach Christ in your prayer life?

37  **A reassuring touch**

- Christ laid His right hand on John
  - Commissioning, investiture, calling
  - Comforting
- Jesus knew John – the beloved disciple – needed reassurance
  - Take note of the fact that this is the disciple who once laid on Jesus' chest
  - But now John falls on his face before Jesus

38  **A reassuring identification**

- I am the One who died
- I am the One who rose again
- I am the One who is alive forever
- I hold the keys of Hades and death
  - Power and a promise to resurrect those who die in Christ
  - Power and a promise to punish eternally those who reject Him

39  **A commission**

- Jesus outlines the message He is about to give to John. His outline is the only one that should ever be used for this book:
  - What you have seen
  - What things are
  - What things shall be hereafter

40  **Conclusion**

- If nothing else, this description should make us fall at our feet in worship!
- How long since you have really done that? Really prostrated yourself before Christ and were awestruck by His glory?