

Jesus in the Midst Part 2 - Revelation 1:16-20

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0 : 0 0] Well, you can open your Bibles to Revelation, chapter 1. Set some goals tonight to finish the chapter. It's five verses.

You know, as we started in the book, and then the Lord just kind of did what He wanted to do and slowed us down a little and going through it and really understanding the book, but also understanding how we arrive at the things we're pulling out from the Scripture.

All right, so a really creative title for tonight, Jesus in the Midst, part 2. So we'll finish these last verses. We've come down as far as verse 15. I think last time we did 9 through 15.

So we're just going to do 16 through 20, and that's all we're going to do. But there's a lot there, a lot to look at. As we go through the Scripture, remember our verse, kind of our theme verse, is John 15, 15, where Jesus says, There's no requirement of a master and a servant relationship for the master to give the information of why.

It's just you go and do. But what is it with friendship? It's communication. It's openness. But it's also a mutual respect. Jesus is essentially elevating us to the same position as Himself.

[1 : 2 9] And He's saying, hey, I respect you as an equal. Because as friends we are equals. So Jesus says, I no longer call you servants, but I call you friends. For all things I've heard of my Father I've made known unto you. And Revelation, apocalypsis in the Greek, just means to lay bare.

That God's desire is for us to know what's in the volume of this book. Lo, I come. In the volume of the book, it's written of me. And so in Revelation, you know, we've looked at the opening.

And now we're going to look at some more of Jesus. It's Jesus in the midst. Jesus in the midst of the church. We're going to back up and read from verse 11 to get a running start. But this sets up the rest of the book.

Then we're going to get into 2 and 3, which is going to look at the church. Then we're going to get 4 through the end. Through 22 is of things to come. But you can only understand that after we first looked at Jesus.

After we first understand who Jesus is, can we then understand everything else that's happened. Only after we understand who Jesus is, do we then understand the church. And the place that we have in the church. And the place the church has in this world.

[2 : 2 9] So let's pick up in verse 11. Or 10. John says, I was in the spirit on the Lord's day and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

What thou seest, write in a book. And send it unto the seven churches, which are in Asia. Unto Ephesus, unto Smyrna, unto Pergamos, unto Thyatira, unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

And remember we said how that was churches. He didn't say send it unto the church. But that Jesus himself is recognizing multiple church entities. The one church universal, but local pieces.

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment, down to the foot, and girt about the chest with a golden girdle.

His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire. And his feet like undefined brass, as if they burned in a furnace. And his voice is the sound, excuse me, of many waters.

[3 : 3 6] And so over in verse 20, it's gonna tell us what the lampstands are. It's gonna tell us what the stars are in his hand. Just like we said about the parable of the sower. You can't just make it up what you want it to be. When the scripture, right afterwards, Jesus says, this is what the parable of

the sower meant.

So it's the same thing. We're given the interpretation of what these things are. That Jesus is in the midst of the candlestick, and in his right hand, he'll have seven stars.

So verse 20 says, the mystery of the seven stars, which thou saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks are these. The seven stars are the angels, or messengers of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks, what you saw, are the seven churches.

So let's dive in. Let's back up into verse 15. Remember we said, where it says, and his feet were like unto fine brass, as they burned in a furnace, and his voice is the sound of many waters.

So we're getting a picture of Jesus. The only other place that there is a picture of Jesus, a physical description of Jesus in the scripture, is in Isaiah 53.2.

[4 : 41] It says, for he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He has no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

That's a physical description of Jesus. No beauty that we should desire him, despite what people try and paint, and put in front of us, and Jesus wasn't winning any contest for his, standing out because of his looks, that he has no form or comeliness.

And when we saw him, there was nothing that said, hey, this stands out to me. Whoa, this is Jesus. He's glowing. Whoa, this is Jesus. Now that was, like we said, from our perspective, when Jesus was among us, when he walked among us, that was our perspective.

But this is heaven's perspective, revelation is. And so from heaven's perspective, John is turning, and he's seeing Jesus as he is. He's not on the cross anymore. Not even the Jesus that he saw after the resurrection, when he said to Thomas, you know, put your hands in my, your fingers in my hand and my side.

Does he still have those scars? Yes. But he is in his glorified state now. And so Jesus' feet, they burn like brass. We said that Jesus alone is able to stand in judgment, stand through judgment.

[5 : 55] We will all be judged by sin, but none of us can stand in the midst of that judgment, standing through judgment, and going to the other side. And so Jesus' feet, they still glowed as if he was in the midst of that fire, that it would never be able to overcome him, that he alone can stand in judgment.

And then the voice, Jesus' voice, is a voice that drowns out all other voices in this world. And so in verse 16, we'll pick up there, and he had in his right hand seven stars.

So we've looked at Jesus' face, his hair, I'm sorry, we've looked at his head, his hair, his eyes, we've looked at his garment, and we've looked at his feet.

It's very interesting, the things scripture decides to point out. And so now we're going to look at his hand, his hands, his mouth, and his face are the next three things. Verse 16 says, So we have his hand, his mouth, and his face.

So let's look at that. And he had in his right hand, why does it say right hand? What is significant about the right hand? And yes, I'm doing it again, I'm asking questions. And he's like, whoa. Must not have, his power, his power, in scripture, the right hand, differing from the left hand, or the off hand.

[7 : 23] Psalm 48.10 tells us that, according to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth, thy right hand is full of righteousness. What's in Jesus' right hand? Righteousness.

And he's holding those seven stars in a right hand full of righteousness. Isaiah 41.10 says, Fear thou not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you. Yea, I will help thee. Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. His right hand is righteousness.

Exodus 15. We'll get there in a couple months. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power. Thy right hand, O Lord, is dashed in pieces the enemy.

What's in his right hand? Righteousness. How does God dash in pieces his enemies? Through his righteousness. A handful of righteousness. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father.

[8 : 27] Scripture tells us as well. It says that he ever lives to make intercession for us. That he's seated at the right hand of the Father. Romans 8.34. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

So in Scripture, the right hand is very important. Jesus' hand, it's a hand that has strength, represents a place of strength, authority, like we said.

It's secure. It's safe. And if you're in Jesus' hand, what does that have to mean? You're close to Jesus if Jesus holds you in his hand.

And we know these seven stars. We'll look some more at them. And it says that they're the angels or the messengers to the churches. I personally think it means that they're the leadership of the church, the pastors. I don't think it means that each church has a specific angelic being over it. Because the way he's going to write in chapter 2 and 3, he's writing unto the angel. And so the angel, the messenger, is the one who has to deliver this message to the church. So you think, okay, so in Jesus' hand is, that's great, Jared.

[9 : 34] You know, you're the pastor. You could be in Jesus' hand, it says. But do we? Are we in his right hand? John chapter 10, verse 27, it says, My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.

And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. That's where Jesus holds us. That's where Jesus holds his church. A right hand full of righteousness.

A right hand that has power over the enemy. A right hand that is secure. It's safe and it's held close to Jesus. This is the picture that Jesus is wanting us to see of himself as we go through these characteristics.

It's not just so we can stand there and think, whoa, Jesus has a really bright face and bright eyes and bright feet, bright hair, bright clothes. It's not that he's just really shiny. But it's because each one of these characteristics speaks to us something about the heart of God and who Jesus is among his church, specifically.

So for us, I think, you know, the application, are we allowing God's strong arm to hold secure the things that have been placed into his hands? The things that have been placed into his hands, are we trusting him to hold them?

[10 : 42] Or am I trying to strong arm those things into my own hands? The things that God has specifically held in his hand. One of the things he's held in his hand, it's his righteousness.

I don't have to try and gain this righteousness. He holds it there and he holds me there with it. He holds his church there. I don't have to try and strong arm someone in doing the right thing. Jesus firmly and securely holds his church. So that's his hand and he had in his right hand, what does he have? What does it say? Seven stars.

Remember he said at the end of last week, you know, your homework was? Go home and look up some characteristics about stars. What is a star? What is a star, not scientifically, but what is a star from the perspective of us seeing stars?

What is a star? Characteristics. Light. For times and seasons. Is this good? What does it tell us in Genesis that stars were made for?

[11 : 47] Or what they are? It tells us in Genesis chapter 1. I'm sure you all remember Genesis chapter 1, verse 14 and 16. We were there a couple weeks ago. And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night and let them be for signs, for seasons, for days and years.

And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. So stars, they are a lesser light.

Aren't they? When do we see stars? At night. Are they shining just as bright in the daytime? Technically.

I mean, it's not like they turn off and then they turn on. Right? So stars, they are a lesser light. They only shine at night when they're visible. That's the only time we see them at night.

And then we see there's how many stars in his hands? Seven. That's the number of completion. There's none missing. It's not like, oh well, oops. Except for that part of the church. You know, they're a little too crazy so I'm just going to let them go out of my hand.

[12 : 52] And they tell the seasons. They give direction. Second Peter 1.19 says that we also have a more sure word of prophecy. Whereunto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts.

Who's the day star? It's Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus, the day star. What's the day star in our world? Like, physical world. The sun is the day star that outshines all other stars.

Right? As the day star arises, he outshines all the other stars. But it's in the night seasons that the church shines brightest in this dark world, isn't it? Jesus says in Revelation 22.16, I, Jesus, have sent my angels to testify unto you these things in the churches.

I am the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star. It's Jesus. The stars of the church should be a reflection of the star of the church.

Jesus. Right? We don't try and outshine Jesus. The church doesn't try and eclipse Jesus. We want that star to shine brightest. But we also have a calling, right?

[14:06] As the church, the church is to be a light in this world. But it's a lesser light as Jesus is the greatest light. So for us, we have these seven stars.

It's complete. There's none missing. Jesus holds them tight. And I think, are we content to shine in the space that Jesus has given us? I mean, you know, we were on vacation.

We were out on the pier and we thought it was a plane, but it was a planet. It was like Mercury or something. It was one of those. One of those planets in our solar system.

There's a couple of them out there. And it was really bright and it was much brighter than the rest of the stars. And then it's like, you look over there and there's the Big Dipper. I think out our window at night you could see it was like right there.

You know, imagine if one of the other stars was like, you know, nobody ever looks at me. Nobody looks over here. They're always looking at the Big Dipper. So you kind of see him go across the sky and he wants to be in his own place.

[15:02] That's not where God put him. God put him in his own space. And if he moves, what happens? It's going to change navigation. It's going to change times and seasons. If he wants to be somewhere else, it's going to screw the whole thing up because that's not where Jesus put him.

So where has he put us? Where has he put this church? Where has he put you to shine? Am I content to shine in this space Jesus has given us? He's given us a great space. He's given us many different spaces.

But we shine there. And we can look at other stars and think, well, how come they're a bigger star than me? You know, I don't, I wish I could be in that spot. But if we move, there's somebody who was looking to us that now we've just, we've just changed the whole course of their direction.

The time and season that they were counting on us to be a reflection of, we're not there. So Jesus has these stars in his hand. He is in complete control.

We will look more at those when we get down to verse 20, what they are. But that was just looking at characteristics of stars. Why does Jesus use stars? Well, I think those are the reasons. Because he is the ultimate day star.

[16:07] But we are little lights. So we saw that Jesus, he had in his right hand seven stars. So we have his right hand, we have the stars, and now we have his mouth.

He's already spoken. There's a great voice behind John. Now we have out of his mouth one a sharp two-edged sword. So let's look at this two-edged sword. What are some characteristics of a sword? What? Yeah. It cuts. Sharp. It says it's a great sword. Didn't say it was a weak sword.

Didn't say it was a broken sword. Didn't say it was a dull sword. I think Jesus' sword is very capable. So it's a double-edged sword here. It's a great sword. This is different than we will see in Hebrews 4.12 where it says, The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. That is a smaller sword. That was more like for deft movements. The sword here that's coming out of Jesus' mouth is more like a broad sword. It's a big, large sword meant for smacking down your enemies.

[17:13] For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of sunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, as the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

So Jesus' word is depicted as a sword, but two different types of swords. And what are we going into as we go into Revelation? We're going to see what? We're going to see judgment. We're going to see God's word. God's word's either going to penetrate the heart or it's going to cut you down to size.

It's one or the other. In Ephesians 6, verse 17, we're told to take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

What are some other characteristics of using a sword? Okay, it's sharp. So I pick up a sword and it's sharp. What else should I? You better know how to use your sword. You better be skilled.

How do you gain skill with a sword? You put it on your mantle and you look at it. You go by and you dust it. Maybe you sleep with it under your pillow. No, that wouldn't work. Kind of. Get a close haircut. You use it.

[18:18] You practice, right? Do you practice alone? Well, it's easier if you practice with someone else, right? It's easier to do it with others, to spar with them. As Scripture tells us, the iron sharpens iron, so does the...

As the iron sharpens iron, so does a man's countenance, the countenance of his friend. That's why God puts us in a body. A double-edged sword.

God's word, the sword that comes from his mouth. It's always sharp. Jesus never needs to sharpen that sword. It is always sharp. It goes forth with purpose. This isn't just random, that there is a purpose for this sword going forth that's going out of his mouth.

God's word goes forth with purpose. It defeats the enemy. Nothing's going to stand before this. Again, this is one of... This is a big, broad sword that is just meant for striking down.

It must be used skillfully. We don't go out there just hacking and slashing, right? You may have seen that. People who... Maybe they're saying truth, but the way they're saying it isn't skillful.

[19:23] The way they're saying it is very... Maybe just beating someone down when in that moment they probably should have used that skillful sword. And then it overcomes all. Just as we saw God's voice is the voice of...

Like the voice of many waters. It drowns out all other voices. Well, in the same sense here, Jesus' voice, this word, nothing's going to defeat it. It is the sword of swords, we could say.

So are we giving necessary time to learning to use our sword skillfully? Are we taking the time to learn to use it? Are we taking the time to use it in context with others?

And then are we using it to battle? Or is it just something like, man, I am so good with my sword. I just... You know, it's like the people who take martial arts but never actually use them. Which is great.

I mean, that's a cool thing to do. Or then they use them and they find out they really don't know how to handle themselves. But are we using it? Are we taking what God's given us, the skill he's given us, and going to battle the enemy?

[20:24] Are we doing that skillfully? And am I allowing God's word to defeat me? Right?

Remember what Paul says when he says, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

Those are all things in our minds. Casting down imaginations. Things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. The battles in the mind. Am I allowing God to defeat me? Or am I trying to parry every thrust that comes to my heart?

As God's word comes in, as a sword comes in, it's like, ooh, I've gotten really skillful at blocking all of those thrusts to the heart because I don't want God to discern the thoughts and intents of my heart because then I'm going to have to deal with them.

Do I allow God's word to defeat me? Or do I want to put up a battle? You know, God's given us, this is our only weapon when you go through the order of, the armor of God.

You know, taking up the sword of the spirit, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and praying always. So you can say prayer is, but the sword is the only offensive weapon that we have.

[21:30] And Jesus, when we see Jesus using it, when we see Paul using it, it's never, it's never in a way that attacks. It's never to attack, but it's always for a purpose.

It's always to accomplish an end. He doesn't run out to attack the enemy, but it beats down the enemy. It defeats the enemy. You know, we don't attack people with God's word, but we use God's word to do the work that it needs to do to penetrate a heart.

And so, Jesus, Jesus, he had in his right hand seven stars, out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun in his strength.

So his face, in Jesus' hand, Jesus' words, in Jesus' face. So we already saw his hair. His hair was white like snow and like wool. He's crowned with righteousness, with purity.

That when we look at Jesus, we see that white as snow. We see the same, the representation of what he's done for our sin. But now we see his face. His face, it did shine as the sun shines in his strength.

[22 : 37] We just talked about seven stars, and now we have the sun. We have his face as the sun that shines in his strength. John would have seen this. Already, at one point, in Matthew 17, he's on the Mount of Transfiguration with Peter and James.

It says, And Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. It's interesting, in Revelation, we don't have a description right here of his raiment.

It doesn't tell us it's white as light, but it does tell us his face is shining. Okay. What would be some observations about a face shining as bright as the sun?

You can't really look at it. If it's shining in all of its strength, it's going to be hard to be viewed. But yet, John does look at it.

When we look at the sun, what eyes are we looking at it with? Our natural eyes, right? You can't view the sun with your natural eyes, and you can't view Jesus' face with your natural eyes, but we can view it with spiritual eyes.

[23 : 48] If Jesus' face is as bright as the sun, what does that mean wherever Jesus goes? Man, he lights up the room with his face. You could really say Jesus' smile lights up the room, but it contains no darkness.

And it illuminates whatever it looks at. Whatever Jesus looks at is illuminated. He has eyes like fire. His face is as bright as the sun. You're not going to hide anything when Jesus looks at you. And it contains no darkness.

There's no shadow of turning it. There's no darkness in his face. There's nothing hidden. There's nothing you have to worry about when you look at Jesus and think, well, I don't know. I've heard a lot of good things about him, and my life's been pretty good with him, but maybe he'll pull the rug out from under me.

Maybe there's something that he's just waiting to get me. And lastly, it's not hidden, is it? There's no hiding that face. Jesus isn't, he's not kind of like Moses where he'd pull a veil over his face because that glory faded.

Jesus' glory never fades. He does not need to hide it. James 1.17 says, Every good and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

[24 : 59] So Jesus' face, obviously, is reflecting that light from the Father. 1 John 1.5 says, This then is the message which we have heard of him, declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

So here you have Jesus' face, his eyes like fire, and his face is like the sun. And Jesus, if he is shining like the sun in all of his strength, he's going to outshine any star, isn't he?

Any of those stars are going to be completely eclipsed by Jesus. We need to allow the greater light of Jesus to outshine all lesser lights in our life.

There shouldn't be a light that competes with Jesus. And if there is, what's the solution? If Jesus is over here shining as bright as the sun, and I'm fixated on a lesser light, what's the solution?

Just turn and look at Jesus. It's going to outshine everything else. It will eclipse. I don't think eclipse is the right word because it's a shadow, but it will outshine everything else. It will overpower it.

[26 : 02] Revelation 22.16 where Jesus is, I am, like we said, the bright and morning star. But Jesus' face, that's his face to us.

But there's another face. It's the same face, but there's another reaction to that face. Revelation 6.16 we're going to see where the people of the earth are being judged and they know God is judging them and they're going to say to the mountains and the rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.

Why would they want to be hidden from this face? Why wouldn't they want this face to see them? Because this is the kind of nation that light has come into the world and men love darkness greater than light. And they would not come to the light lest their deeds be reproved.

So they say, hide us from this face. We can't look into this face with our eyes. We don't have eyes to see. The same face but two very different views.

When we look at Jesus' face, we look at it like 1 Peter 3.12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open upon their prayers. That face is always shining down upon us.

[27 : 10] But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Same face just depends on who you are and how you're looking at it. Can you handle that light?

1 Corinthians 13.12. For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face. We don't come to church, sit in the pews or eventually chairs and there's a sample chair in the room back there if you want to see it afterwards.

But we don't come and sit and I'll sit here and wait and wait for a vision of Jesus. We don't wait to hear the voice behind us of Jesus and then to see Jesus.

We see through a glass darkly. We've not seen him face to face but yet we have seen him face to face. We've seen him reflected in his word. I've looked into his face through his word. I've looked into his eyes as I've looked into his word and he's looked into my heart.

2 Corinthians 3.18. But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord.

[28 : 15] He's always shining that face if we would just look into it. And how do we do that? With open face beholding as in a glass by looking into his word. As we look into the face of Jesus our faces will then do what?

They'll reflect his glory. They can shine with that same glory. That was one verse. That's the only physical description that we have of Jesus.

We have one in Isaiah and then we have this one. We don't have a physical description of him after the resurrection. We know we look different because nobody recognized him. And then we have this description now.

John had seen Jesus transfigured. He had seen Jesus resurrected. But he had yet to see Jesus glorified like this. This was a first for him. And when he saw him when I saw him so John turns he didn't say hold on Jesus let me get my pen and write all this down.

This is afterwards he's writing this down. That his first response is what? And when I saw him he takes all this in in a moment his eyes like fire his feet like brass his hair like wool the golden sash and the bright face I felt his feet is dead.

[29 : 23] It's like that was that took me out. Revelation 4.10 says that the four and twenty elders who are in heaven who are before the throne the ones that the four and twenty elders fell down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that lives forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying worthy are you O Lord.

So they fall down before him as well. And here John falls at his feet as dead. 1 John 3 verse 2 tells us beloved now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

There will be a day where we will see him as he is and we will fall down at his feet. And what does he do next? What does it say? And he laid his what hand is that?

His right hand. The right hand full of righteousness the right hand that holds the stars of the church the right hand of authority he lays it upon John. That right hand that's holding the universe the right hand that's holding all of the sheep and the people of God he has a moment to lay it on just a single person.

The right hand his strength his authority and he laid his right hand upon me it's personal it's intimate. Jesus didn't just say come here angel go and tell him to get up it's okay he doesn't need to do that tell him don't be afraid.

[30 : 53] He didn't just stand there and say arise he laid his hand on him before he said anything else. And he says what's he say next?

Fear not. In the Greek that word means fear never. Fear never. That's Jesus' response to us. Fear never. Fear never. There's never a reason to fear.

Jesus personally intervened in response to John's fear. to tell him John there is no reason to fear. Fear never. For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Only after seeing Jesus as he really was was John able to then receive a touch from Jesus. He saw Jesus as he really was. He understood who he was.

He looked into his face and he fell at his feet in response of worship. Only then did he receive a touch from Jesus and only do we receive a touch from Jesus after we see him for who he really is. Understanding who Jesus is to us.

[31 : 55] And here's the reasons he gives for not fearing. He says, fear never. I am the first and the last and I am he that lives and was dead and behold I am alive forevermore.

Amen. And have the keys of hell and death. So what are those the four reasons he gives? He says, I am the first and the last. I was he who lives and was dead.

I am alive forevermore. I have the keys of hell and death. He says to John, do not fear and here's why you should not fear. For these four reasons. He is the first and the last. You know, we've looked at that a bunch of times. I'm the Alpha and Omega. I'm the first and the last and the beginning and the end. What does it mean to be the first and the last? What is he trying to tell us there do you think? I think he's saying that there's obviously there's nothing before him and there's nothing after him which would mean there's nothing greater. There's nothing greater than God. There's nothing greater than Jesus. He's before all. He outlasts all which means he's greater than all. If he was originating, if he was there, had origin, well he didn't have origin, he had existence, before everything and then he outlasts everything, then it means he must be greater.

[33 : 11] There can be nothing greater than him. So he says, John, don't fear. There's nothing greater and I'm alive and I am alive who is dead. He lives who was dead.

So one who is dead and lives again, what does that mean in his relationship to death? It means he conquered death. Only one who has conquered death can live after death. Nobody lives after death unless they've overcome death. He says, I am alive forevermore. Well isn't that the same thing? He says, I am, let me misquote it, oh, he says, I'm the first and the last, where's verse eight, there it is, and I'm he that lives and was dead and behold, I'm alive forevermore.

How's that different? What's the difference there? Well, one who lives after death has conquered death but one who lives forevermore, who's alive forevermore, that's a life that is qualitatively different than the life that existed before death.

The life that existed before death was a life that died, if he lives forevermore, then now he has a qualitatively different life that is never gonna end. So he says, John, do not fear.

[34 : 29] I am greater than all, I've overcome death, and I have new life. Alive forevermore. The life that overcame death is qualitatively different from the life that existed before.

And he has the keys of hell and death. You know, jangle those keys. What does that mean? Well, there's a couple other places we see keys, I was gonna say skis, keys in scripture.

Revelation 3, 7 says, and to the angel in the church of Philadelphia write, these things says, he that is holy, he that is true, he that has the key of David, he that opens and no man shuts and shuts and no man opens.

What's the key of David? What's the key to the kingdom? It's the key to the promised messianic kingdom. And that he who has that key is able to open and shut that kingdom to any man.

Jesus tells the disciples in Matthew 16, 19, he says, I'll give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Keys to the car. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.

[35 : 33] And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. What does that mean? Well it doesn't mean we go out and just bind the enemy out there. That's not what it means. How do we open and close?

How do we loose and bind up? It means we have the authority of God's word. That I can authoritatively, I have the key to salvation. It's the gospel. And I can open that door and I can unlock that lock with that key to anyone who would receive that.

And I can with authority say, you have been bound up unto salvation. You've been loosed from your sin. Or we can just the same say to those who've rejected, man, you have been.

There's no way to loose you from your sin if you reject Christ. There is no other way. We have the key to salvation. We have the gospel. But, here, Jesus says he has the keys of what?

Hell and death. What does that mean? He controls access to the grave. He's the one who has access. He's the one who locks that door or opens that door.

[36 : 34] Jesus controls access to the grave and death. Only key can open and close that door. So John, why should he, John, not fear? Reasons not to fear, John? Man, he's the first and the last.

He's greater than all. He's overcome death. He has new life. And he can unlock the gates of hell. And so as he lays his hand on John, he says, fear not, John.

And we have also been given keys to go and, not that we ourselves unlock anything, but we can go and say, hey, this is what Jesus can do for you.

Write the things now which you have seen and the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter. So remember we said, he said, write not draw. Draw the things. Record the things.

No, he said write the things. The truth comes through God's word. Write the things which you have seen the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter. This is the outline for the entire book of Revelation.

[37 : 33] So there's three things here. There's the things that are or things that have been, I'm sorry, the things that are and the things that shall be. Sounds a lot like verse 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord, that which is and which was and which is to come.

So he's saying, write about what? Write about me. Write about the things that have been, things that are and what shall be. What has been? Well, it's just this vision of Jesus that he's seen. Revelation chapter 1 is the things that have been.

They are now past that John's going to write about. What are the things that are? That's verses 2 through 3, the church age. And then the things that shall be are verses 4 through 22.

And then he says in verse 20, the mystery of the seven stars, which thou saw in my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks which thou saw are the seven churches.

Mystery in scripture doesn't mean like mystery, like ooh, you know, like we need to solve a mystery. It just means something that's hidden. So he's saying the hidden things, something that you didn't know, something that needs to be revealed.

[38 : 40] The heart of God is revelation. God's not trying to hide anything from us. He says in Luke 8, 17 that there's nothing that's secret that shall not be made manifest.

Neither anything hid that shall not be known and come abroad. God desires us to know. We're not supposed to be in the dark. Doesn't mean we're going to know everything now, but it does mean that God's heart is to reveal to us the things that he has given us to know.

John 20, John, Deuteronomy 29, 29 says the secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of this law.

So God's purpose in revealing is so that we may walk in his will. Now, are there secret things we don't know of? Sure, but we will when he in his time chooses to reveal them. God wants us to understand him and his word so that we might live in the light of that revealed truth.

And then we get what we've read a few different times this description. This is the local church from heaven's perspective. This would be heaven's description of Calvary Chapel Charlotte. As they look at Calvary Chapel Charlotte and the other local churches, this is from heaven's perspective.

[39 : 53] Interesting, he says, the mystery of the seven stars which thou saw in my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks, the seven stars are the angels of the churches, not like, they are.

That's why I don't think these are specific angelic beings. Angel, the word actually just means messenger. What is the job of a messenger? Well, one, he receives the message. Two, he passes on the message.

And also, these messengers are held by Jesus, aren't they? Seven stars in his right hand, these messengers. The lampstands, what are characteristics of these lampstands? We looked at those last time a bunch.

The lampstand, it's placed by Jesus, it's supplied by Jesus, and we're going to find out it can be removed by Jesus as we get into the churches. Jesus is the one who places it, Jesus is the one who supplies it, and these lampstands can be removed by Jesus.

Revelation 2, 5, and we'll remove the candlestick or lampstand out of his place except you repent. Speaking of the church of Ephesus, which we'll get into next time.

[40 : 58] Psalm 80, verses 1 through 3, it says, Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that leads Joseph like a flock, thou that dwells between the cherubims, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength.

It's interesting, all of those sons of Israel and grandsons of Israel, they're all of Rachel's line. I don't know what that means, it's just very interesting. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength and come and save us.

Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine and we will be saved. When we look into Jesus' face, what do we see? We see the Jesus in chapter 1, the picture of Jesus to the church.

How should the church see Jesus? How does the local church see Jesus? How do we see Jesus? How does he want us to know him today? Jesus is in the midst of the church, clothed with authority,

crowned with righteousness, his gaze purifies, he stands in righteousness, his voice commands, he holds the reins of the church, his word is victorious, he radiates light, he has conquered death, he brings new life, and he opens the grave, and he's in our midst, isn't he?

And he's caring for us because Jesus has everything in hand, right? He's got everything in hand, he's going to take care of us. So as we go into these churches, and each church is going to have a commendation and a condemnation, right, and a correction.

[42 : 24] As we go into that, this is the picture that Jesus wants us to have of him. Jesus personally caring for his people. Then spake Jesus again to them saying, I am the light of the world, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Jesus really is the light of life as we follow him. We're not in darkness because he reveals. So, we finish chapter one. Let's pray.

Father, thank you so much, Lord, so much contained in your word, Lord. Lord, I think we could probably take another week and come back through all these verses and see even more things that are there.

Lord, I just thank you that there is no end, Lord. You are the first and the last. You are the beginning and the end. There is no end. There is no end of knowing you. And Lord, you've given us everything we need, everything we need to live lives in this world, to live godly, to live fulfilled, to live mature. And Lord, you've given us one another. Thank you for the body, Lord. Lord, you're writing unto the churches. You're not writing to the individual. Now, you are because the church is made up of individuals, but there's also a body. And Lord, if we neglect that, then we neglect a part of our growth and our maturity and our development.

[43 : 43] So, I thank you, Lord. I thank you that you've given us this place and this time to shine, to shine as lights in this world, to be stars, Lord. For you. And not to go out and to star, but to go out and point to the star, to be stars, Lord, that point to the day star, that you would eclipse, Lord.

That if anybody sees us, Lord, if we are truly a light of the world, that men may know, Lord, that we are your disciples by the love we have one for another. If in anything we do to draw anybody to that light, that it would be quickly deflected, Lord, that we point them to the star that outshines all stars. Thank you so much, Lord. Thank you that we can just observe your word, understand your word, and then apply your word. And Lord, I do pray that it would cut our hearts deep, Lord, that we would not fight against that sword when it comes in, Lord.

It's not coming to hurt. It's not coming to bring destruction for us, Lord. Your face is a face that to us is the face of joy. It's our greatest desire. I cannot wait to see you face to face.

To the world, to those that have rejected you, to those who feel like the sword is hanging over them in judgment, Lord, your face is a fearful thing because your face reveals the darkness that's in us.

[44 : 56] So, Lord, we pray that you would cast it out and as we look into your word and as we fellowship with one another, that you would, Lord, you would be in our midst now. We love you, we thank you, and in Jesus' name, Amen.