

Christ As He Appears Today

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Christ as He Appears Today. Revelation the first Chapter will give this testimony of an eye witness. The Apostle John describes to us exactly what he saw, and we are prepared to accept his testimony. I would like to ask you what would have happened if you had been with John on the Island of Patmos on this particular Lord's Day. What would have been your response? Would it have been that you, too, were in the Spirit, and in the Spirit you would have seen and understood what was said? Or perhaps it would have been in your case, as it was with those that accompanied Paul. All they supposed or surmised — that it had thundered. And thus it is in my mind this evening to ask you, "What does it mean when you hear the words, In the Spirit? I was in the Spirit." This we hope to find out. This we will see as we proceed with our study.

Now what John saw, and what we are about to consider was not a transient thing, not just something that happened and ceased. It was a transient revelation, however. He saw the Lord Jesus Christ as He is. That is why I have dared to say, The Lord Jesus Christ as He appears today. He is the unchanging, the unchangeable Christ. And what John saw then, He is now. Now remember this.

First we will get acquainted with the one who had this vision. Verses 9 and 10 of the first chapter of the Book of Revelation: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." I John. Such a frank, a specific designation ought to settle forever the author of the Book, and the testimony of the one we have here. This very same man who was with James mending the nets the day Jesus Christ called him. The one who leaned on Jesus' bosom the night that He instituted the Lord's Supper. The one who beheld Him after His resurrection. I John. This one who had walked with the Lord Jesus Christ for three years of earthly ministry now brings the authority of a personal witness. This is what he has seen. This is what he has experienced, and he is putting his whole life and reputation on the line for the truthfulness of what he states. I, John who also am your brother. He is not separating himself by some vast gulf saying, I am here and you are there. Your brother. Brother in sin, for he too was in need of salvation. Nothing could meet the need of John's heart but the cleansing Blood of an all-sufficient Savior.

"I John, your brother, under the sentence of death condemned with you. But I met Jesus Christ, I saw Him. I beheld Him. It was on that day that I heard John the Baptist say, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' And I am your brother now through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, born into the same family, partaker of the same grace, washed in the same precious Blood." Whatever age, whatever period down across the centuries this ever will be read, and everyone to whom in which it has been read, John has identified himself with us as one of the heirs of salvation, and one who is dedicated to serving the Lord Jesus and thereby glorifying Him. Your brother.

Then notice. He doesn't stop there. But your companion in tribulation. Your companion in tribulation. John had been tested. He had been persecuted. The record tells us. Many of you have Fox's Book of Martyrs. Perhaps I had better ask how many of you read it, if you have it. So many books, you know, grace our shelves and disgrace our minds because we fail to appropriate them. Have you read Fox's Book of Martyrs? Oh I would urge you to do it real soon. And let something of this testimony of these who loved not their lives unto death lay hold upon you. "I John, your brother and your companion in tribulation." I have mentioned it several times recently how John had been sentenced, to die and spared and delivered. And then he said I was, for the testimony of Christ, exiled to the Island of Patmos.

Reading of this just this week, I have been reminded that Patmos had mines, lead mines. And the exiles often were forced to work as slave laborers, mining lead. We have no evidence that John was engaged in such servitude. But by the same token, we have no proof that he was not. And so if you wish, you can imagine John the elderly one who worked with the Lord and toiled at drawing fish from the Sea of Galilee now is there taking his place in the morning with the other slaves, exiled to the island of Patmos. These were noble men often, Tribunes, Senators, wealthy men that had been put in this place, thus confined and

protected, sort of a Devil's Island to the Roman Empire. And John is there. And he says your companion in tribulation. I know what it is to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your companion in the kingdom. You see, when Jesus Christ takes us, He not only receives us in terms of forgiveness for a heavenly kingdom, but right then and there He translates us from the kingdom of this world into His own Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is in you. In this sense, that when Jesus Christ owns you and possesses you, you are the extra-territorial rights of the Sovereign Son of God. And in you He has a place where His banner flies, where He rules. The kingdom of God is in you. The Kingdom of God is not in meat and drink, but it is in righteousness and in peace, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost. He says, "Your companion in the kingdom."

Then, your companion in the patience of Jesus Christ. Generally speaking, when the word patience is linked with the Name of Christ, it is that patient waiting for Him to return. John was with that company on the Mount of Olives that day when our Lord was caught up by a cloud. John heard the Angel say. "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go." And so he says, I am a companion in the upward look, a companion in the anticipation that the Son of God is going to come, cleaving the clouds to gather to Him His own. I am a companion in the patience of Jesus Christ. So this gives us some little insight into the man himself.

But then we ought to consider the source of his certainty about the vision. I have mentioned in the past John of Ruysbroeck, this dear man. And if you want a book that will really bless your heart, get his Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage. I am sure the bookstore will get it for you. It is hard to read, but oh it is so lovely if you can take the time to do it. But John is telling us now he had a vision. Do you believe in visions? Well it depends on who it is that has it. There are some people, they came to me and said they had a vision, all I would say is, "Well." But somebody else, it is another matter. It depends on the man. It depends on the person. It depends on how they live and walk. Old Uncle Bud Robinson said, "I don't care how high you jump when you are happy. Just so you walk straight when you come down." And the vision — this is important. Don't make any difference — sure I believe in visions. I believe in — believe the same Jesus is able the same way to speak as He has in the past. But tell you, I want to know the character and the conduct and the attitude of the person who has it. I John. He has walked steadfastly, all these decades. 95 A.D. - possibly 98 A.D. The Lord Jesus left, went back to Heaven, in 30 A.D. That means that John has been walking alone for 65, 68 years. Now when this man has a vision, you had better pay attention. Better pay attention. When he speaks, it is a different matter. Not just some enthusiast, but this is someone that knows the Lord.

So in the 10th verse, he describes how it came about. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Waiting, worshipping, in the Spirit." What does this mean, in the Spirit? Well it means not necessarily that he was in a state of ecstasy, but he was walking in the conscious fullness of the Spirit. He was aware of the Spirit's presence. And he was withdrawn. He recollected. I love the way the Quaker writers in of other days have spoken of recollection, recollecting. You know we get so scattered. Our minds, our attitudes, our enthusiasms, our zeal, all get outside. And the ancients talk about being recollected, calling in. Calling in your thoughts, calling in your emotions, and calling in your fears, collecting them. And then in the inner sanctuary, the secret of the Lord is in the sanctuary. And you are the Temple of God, and the place that God speaks is here. Now, in the heart, in the inner man. When he says, "I was in the Spirit," I believe that he was just quietly there, not in some ecstasy in which he was physically gyrated. That is not it. Withdrawn, and quiet, just happily, humbly, and sweetly in fellowship with the Lord. And he said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." He remembered this, the Lord's Day. The first day of the week, waiting. Perhaps it could have been he was in chains. Perhaps it could have been he was mining, for there certainly would be no regard for the Lord's Day in a Roman Mine. But is it not true that chains do not a prison make? And John could be in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.

He said, "I heard a voice as of a great trumpet." I heard a voice. You know, he was not a stranger to this voice. He had heard that same voice before. For he could recall the day that he had seen one standing on the shore of Galilee. The boat was in against the shore, and tied to the little wharf. He was out there sitting, weaving and mending the nets. And he hears a voice, John, Come. Follow Me. And he heard a voice, but he recognized the voice. For he tells us who spoke. He tells us that it was the voice of the one who said, "I am the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega." This is the voice of Christ. The voice that John would recognize. But notice something. He says, "...the voice was behind me." This gives us a little insight into John's character. The voice was behind me.

I think we are to see this in the manner in which I am about to present it, have presented it. First it was called to my attention, our attention, by our Brother Bakht Singh when he was here two years ago this month...perhaps this very same night. Do you recall how it was when he told us that John was looking backward to the good old days. In the Spirit meditating on the days as he walked with Christ, and the days of the early church when he had been with the other Apostles. Oh my, how prone we are to this. How often all of us do it. To make a distinction between the sweetness of the memories of yesterday, and the glorious privileges of today, and the victories of tomorrow requires wisdom indeed. How is it that we can take all the value and the meaning and the sweetness from the past, and yet turn that all to good account for the present, and use the past and the present as the resources for the future?

Unfortunately too often, people sit in the present, lose all interest in it in a sense — and oh this is an academic disease in America. I think you could almost call it Americanitis — this inflammation of the human spirit that loses the meaning of the present. Child goes to High School, and he works so hard to graduate with honors so that he can go into College, so that he can work so hard to graduate with honors, so that he can go into Graduate School, so that he can graduate with honors, so that he can get a job, and get a promotion. And all of his life he is like somebody running uphill inside of a squirrel cage. He's just going. And nothing gives any pleasure. The High School Diploma did not give any pleasure because the College Diploma loomed ahead. And the College Diploma did not give any real pleasure because there had to be Graduate Work before they could go on perhaps. And that did not give any real pleasure because now he had to put his training to work in order to secure a standing in his field. And so it is a constant climbing. Then of course the whole of life is wished away in this anticipation.

I have suffered from it from my earliest day. I think we that were the children of the Depression, who saw everything around us, disintegrate, and were not old enough to meet it as adults, and just were young enough to feel the terror of it, have particularly strong emotional problems in this regard, because we remember how jobs disappeared, and poverty, and seeing strong men stand in line to get a box full of grape fruit and some butter and carry it home. It was a terrifying experience. And to have it happen to your own family as it did to many my age, when you look back on it as youngsters then, and so constantly pushing, constantly climbing to keep ahead of this thing.

This is a tragic thing because this is the day the Lord has made. We are to rejoice in it. Now. This is life. Right now. We are always getting ready to live, always. We are going to be supremely and sublimely happy in some beautiful tomorrow. Of course when tomorrow gets here, this is not quite the day. It has got to be pushed further ahead. In all our lives, we are pushing this day when we are going to take time to be friends, and take time to pray, and take time to live life to the full. Always pushing it ahead. Oh, it is a disease.

But there is another disease almost as bad, and that's the disease of looking back to some yesterday. Time has made all the unpleasant parts of it disappear and you were so happy to get out of it when you were there, and now that you are out of it it looks so beautiful, and you just think. Oh this was the...this was it.

Now this is what John is suffering from. He is an old man. It often comes with age. I am beginning to find out that we have sort of lived our life, and — What can these youngsters do coming up? How are they going to be able to handle the problems we faced? Things are just going to get worse and worse. You know. And John is sitting there in exile, thinking of those Churches, and those boys that he had to spank and had to discipline, and now they are the Pastors of the Churches in Asia Minor, and they are the ones carrying responsibility, and leadership. And,... He is looking backward. And he hears a voice behind him. He is looking back toward the good old days. Oh I am mad at the good old days. They were not good enough for the people that were in them. They were still looking at the good old days. They did not even know they were good. Do you know that these are the good old days for our great grandchildren? Honestly. These are the good old days for them. And they were not good enough for them, and now we look back and say, Oh wasn't it wonderful? Wasn't it? This is what John was doing. I believe in spite of all that he has, and all, he is looking backward. And he hears a voice, but he hears a voice behind him.

You know, you may find that beauty is in the past, but the Lord has a more wonderful future than the past has ever been. I absolutely refuse to believe that for the child of God that walks in obedience to his Heavenly Father that the best is behind us. I cannot believe it. Now if you go into sin and disobedience, and rebellion against God, believe me the best is behind you.

Because there is going to be severe chastening in the future. But if you love God, and your heart is abandoned to Him, and your purpose is to please Him, the blessedness is ahead. It is in the future. The future is just as glorious as God is great. It is just as bright as He is able. Now when I say future, I am saying the future not in terms of material terms. It may mean that all of us go into concentration camps, or persecution. I am not talking about sensual comfort when I am talking about blessedness. I am talking about the only thing that counts to a Christian, and that is the Glory of Jesus Christ. I refuse to believe that Jesus Christ got all the Glory He wants yesterday. I think that He is waiting for you and for me today to meet Him on His terms, and bow before Him, and surrender to Him, and that He will do something for us and our children that will bring that Glory to Him that He yearns for.

And John heard a voice behind him. But we find in verse 12 that he said, "I turned to see the voice that spake with me." He heard the voice, and he is overwhelmed by it. And he listens. What is it that we hear Him say? What is this that John hears? "I heard a voice behind me saying I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" (Rev. 1:10-11a). Who is this one? He is the One who says: "Before Me there was nothing, and after Me there will be nothing. All things are by Me. All things consist in My Power. I am the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe. I am the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega." God is speaking. This is how He chooses to identify Himself. And God says to John, I am using you as the vehicle of blessing to the Churches for which you are concerned. I believe that every one of us that are in the will of God and filled with the Spirit of God and walks in obedience to the Word of God will be to the blessing of the Church. The Church is God's instrumentality. The Church is God's method. The Church is God's program. And now John is on the Island of Patmos, alone with the Lord, and the Lord says to him, John I am using you to bless the Church. And everything that God does through us will be for the edification, the exhortation and the comfort of the Church. I love Thy Church, O Lord. Do you love the Church? — so much that you cannot harm it. You cannot hurt it. You cannot...But you can only minister in longing prayer for it. Do you love the Church? The Body of Jesus Christ. If you do, it is going to make you exceedingly sensitive. John loved the Church. And if you read over here in his little letters, the 2nd Epistle, verse 1, "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth;..." The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. How great is his concern for the Church. How deeply does this Apostle of love minister to the Church. And now we find the Lord saying to him, "What thou seest, write in a Book. And send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:11b). I want you to be the vehicle of blessing. I want you to receive this message from Me, and pass it on to them, and thus they are to receive it as from Me through you, and find it binding upon them. The Message is from Christ. This One who is the First and the Last. This One who has supreme authority. He is the One that is speaking, but He is speaking through the Apostle. And He is speaking in such a way as to bring blessing.

Now we have considered the one who saw the vision and the ones for whom the vision was intended. Now just let us give ourselves to the One that was seen in the vision. Verses 12 - 19; "I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;" — The first thing John saw was a representation of the Church under the emblem of the seven candlesticks (Rev. 1:12). The church, I say, the church is represented by the candlesticks because the light of the candlestick is not from the candlestick. It is from another, source. It is simply sustained by the candlestick, and revealed by the candlestick. And the church has no power in itself. All the light that comes through the church is from the presence of Christ. And thus the candlestick becomes a very effective and appropriate representation of the church. The Church is represented as holding forth that light which is found in the person of the Son of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is represented as confining the revelation of Himself to His Church. I want you to get this point. There are people who talk against the Church, and who criticize it. They should criticize everything that hurts it and injures it, but they should always do it in love. You know, maybe when your child has a mosquito on his forehead you want to brush it off, but friend don't take a hammer to do it. Do not kill a mosquito with a baseball bat. You will succeed in killing the mosquito, but your baby may be pointed headed all his life, and injured, and twisted and warped. And this is what, I think, so often happens when people come and they criticize the church, and they bruise it, and they hurt it, and they injure it. No. No. No, No. You cannot do that and not get into trouble with Jesus Christ. He loves His Church. He loves His Church. There may be the necessity from time to time to take a stand against that which is wrong. We are to stand for the truth. We are not to be swept about by every wind of doctrine, by cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love. Always to speak the truth in love. And this is where the Lord Jesus shows Himself. He shows Himself through the Church.

Now the candlesticks were made of gold. This reveals to us the purity of the Church. It is to be pure. If we are going to show forth His Light, and we are to be the revealers of His character, there must be purity. And I submit to you that in a sense the Church is no more pure than you are if you are a part of it. Because you are part of a candlestick. And it is therefore imperative that everyone that has been bound together by the Spirit of God in any Church, and you are here tonight though you may never have been here before, but if you are here in Christ, for this gathering, this time, you constitute part of a unique group. We will never be together again the same way we are now. We are here as a company of people, and I would believe supernaturally sovereignly banded together. Let it be understood that this Church of which we are a part now is no more pure than you are. If you have unconfessed, un-forsaken, unforgiven sin in your life, then the gold is filled with dross to the degree to which you are filled with sin. Therefore we are to have consciences void of offense toward God and toward man, because we are part of the Church, the candlestick that reveals the Glory of Christ. The gold had to be put on the fire and it had to be melted. Then the dross would rise to the surface, be scraped and drawn away. And then it was pounded, shaped and molded in order for it to be a candlestick. The gold of course also speaks to us of the fact that the Church is without price. He purchased it with His precious Blood, and again I come back to you and say that all of God's method is the Church, all of God's program is the Church.

Now how do I use it? Do I use it in the sense of the Society such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance? No. Do I use it in the sense of the Methodist Church, a great denomination? No. What do I use? How am I thinking when I use the word Church, so we understand each other? I am thinking of that local company of believers that ought to be banded together by the Holy Ghost, one mind, one heart, and one Spirit...this local group of believers is the Church of which we speak. There was a Church at Ephesus, and Smyrna, and Pergamos. Didn't say the Churches in Ephesus, because you know this, that if you wish to speak of New York City every member of the Body of Christ in New York City is a member of every other member of the Body of Christ. Do you understand that? Let me repeat that. Everyone in central, midtown Manhattan that is a member of the Body of Christ is a member of every other member of the Body of Christ in this same geographical area. Now unfortunately the Body of Christ has been divided into a myriad of fragments and in a sense the Lord does not have a Church in New York. If we could see what God sees we would have to view that in any geographical area every member of the Body of Christ is a member of every other member. And in a sense our fellowship ought to be on that level, on the geographical level. I am not optimistic enough to believe that it will come, by any engineering or programming or machinations of men. I do not expect it to come that way. But I refuse to change my thinking because it is Scriptural that in any geographical area every Christian is a member of every other Christian. Now we are split four ways from Sunday — 312 Protestant Denominations, and probably all of them have their representation here in Manhattan. But at Ephesus there was a Church. At Pergamos, there was a Church. The Church at Thyatira. Not churches. The Church. Now there may have been many groups, but they met on a geographical area, on the basis of their proximity to each other. One day perhaps the Lord will bring it back that way. I hope so. I trust so. But in the meanwhile, if we cannot deal with the ideal, if we cannot have that which is absolute in its Scriptural perfection, then let us understand this, that wherever you meet a Christian, whether he wears your brand name or not, he is in Christ. He is part of you. You are members of the same body. And for this reason, I caution you against speaking ill of bodies, of any groups where God may have some of His children.

I hate to find people speaking ill of the Society of which I am a part, the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Occasionally I find people speak in great derision and great contempt of us. I do not think we deserve it. I do not think it is fair. I do not think it is honoring to the Lord. It grieves the Holy Spirit. But you know something. I think He is equally grieved when we speak in derogatory manner of other groups as such. I do not think we should do that. I think we ought to recognize that God's poor, poor sheep have been gathered in a myriad of places and scattered, but they are still His sheep, His Body, isn't as He wants it. Someday, let us believe and trust He will bring it together. But right now, let us join one to another by the Holy Ghost, so live in abandonment to Jesus Christ, so walk in the fullness of the Spirit, so live manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, that Jesus Christ can have in us a vehicle to manifest Himself as He wishes here.

This is what we find him saying now. Christ was in the midst of the candlesticks. He is revealed through the Church. That is why the satanic effort has always been directed toward the Church. The enemy has bruised it. Satan has tried to infiltrate it, to corrupt it, to hurt it, to injure it, and has found every possible means that he could to do it. But nevertheless we know that He

has said, "I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat. 16:18). And when we stand on the victory of Calvary, and lock the gates to the enemy, then at least for the working out of His purpose locally here He can do that. It is in the Church that Jesus Christ is manifested. I would rather be speaking to a company of people here or in any other city in one sense one final sense than to speak to 5 thousand people if they did not represent a church. That is why I am never troubled about the size of the congregation ... If that congregation consists of responsible people that are joined to each other in a testimony.

Let me explain why. You get ten thousand curious, ten thousand seeking entertainment, ten thousand that represent every kind of group, and you communicate to them. They are not capable of taking that truth and implementing it and putting it into a testimony, bringing it to life. But if we can get a group of elders and deacons, a church, and get that church to lay hold of truth and get that church to walk in truth, then through that Church Jesus Christ can have custodians of truth that He can bless with it. And I would rather get a group of ten people that are a church, part of it, leaders of it, and talk to them than a hundred people that are from ten churches and have no particular interest in the custody of truth.

Now of course, this involves something else. You get a church, and they do not take the responsibility of truth then you might as well be speaking to the fencepost. But if you can have a Church of men and women who love Jesus Christ that are joined together by the Spirit of God...And give to them the revelation of God. This is what John is doing. Send the Message to the Church. Send it to the Church. I am going to use them. I am going to bless them. Everything that He does, He does for the Church. Everything He does, He does through the Church. It is His unit of operation. When the Church becomes unblessable, when it comes to the place that the Lord has to wash His hands of it, He casts it out like salt that has lost its savor, and be trodden under foot of men. And then He just starts over again. But you can absolutely predict what Jesus Christ is going to do until He comes again. The unit He is going to work with is The Church.

Should it be that this Church that has such a remarkable history, and has been so blessed of God should in some unthinkable impossible day come to the place where they close their heart to the Will of God, the only thing it means that Jesus Christ is going to do it over again, somewhere else. That is all. But He has set the Church as the unit. That is why I do not like men that, for instance, take the message of healing and make and exploit it around their ministry. Now I believe that Jesus Christ is Healer. And that He heals. But I believe the place for this truth is in the Church, not in some man using it to exploit and develop and build his own personal ministry. I believe it is in the Church.

I believe the unit of evangelism is the Church. I believe the place of comfort — I actually would go so far as to say that I believe that the unit of relief for the poor is the Church. And care for the young is the Church. I think all of these other agencies that have been raised up of necessity — the Gideons, and the Christian Business Men, and the YMCA, and all the long list of auxiliary agencies — exist because of the failure of the Church. That the unit God has ordained, and the unit He employs is the Church. I am Church centered in thinking, because it is the Unit that God has established. There are only two agencies, two units, two organizations that God has ever started and that He has blessed. The first is the home. He started that. And the second is the Church. And we have started a myriad of other agencies and groups and Societies and organizations. And they all represent the failure of the home to be what He intended it to be, and the failure of the Church to be what He intended it to be. Well, let us keep this here. This is what He is showing.

Now, whatever the vision is, it is going to have its purpose for blessing to the Church. Take this message to them. Carry this word to them. Write it, put it in a book, and send it to them. What was it that he was to write? Write what you see. And what did he see? He saw One in the midst of the candlesticks like unto the Son of Man; Jesus Christ was seen. And He wants the Churches to know that the place of His revelation is there in the Church. And He wants the churches to know the kind of a person He is. And so the first thing John saw was that the Son of Man was clothed with a garment down to the foot. Here was the robes of a Prince. Here were the robes of majesty. The robes of splendor. The robes of authority. And He stands before John now with this insignia of all of the authority in Heaven and earth that has been committed unto Him. I saw Him with a robe down to His feet.

It speaks also of the robe that He wore as our High Priest, for He is there with the priestly garment. Righteousness and honor, mercy and truth robed Him. And He is to be seen now as this One that is there robed down to the feet. Remember how they stripped Him of His garments, and left Him in shameful nakedness, and buffeted Him, and beat Him and bruised Him, and in humility they scourged Him, and then took Him to the Cross, that most ignominious and shameful of deaths. And to John said, "You tell the church that you saw Me in a robe." A robe. Not one of Pilot's cast off robes. Not something that has been patched together. But that you see Me in a robe of majesty.

Then He said, you tell them that you saw Me girt about with a golden breastplate. A golden girdle. This belonged to the High Priest. It speaks to us of Aaron who had the breastplate on which were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes. And it tells us that Jesus Christ is there with a golden girdle, a golden breast plate, and He is ready for His work as Redeemer, and Mediator. You tell them at Thyatira and at Pergamos, and at Philadelphia that when you saw Me, I not only had on a robe of majesty, but I had on the golden breast plate, and I have their names over My Heart. Remember the song we sing, "My name is written on His Hands." Well your name is written on the golden breastplate. And He is there as your Redeemer, presenting His Blood, as your Mediator, as your Advocate. And so said Christ to John, "Tell them that I am still continuing as their High Priest, representing them, that I have an unchangeable priesthood, and their names are over My Heart."

Then notice His head and His hairs were white like wool. White like wool. White hair speaks of age. Not of senility, not of decay of power in this case. But He is the Ancient of the everlasting days, the Eternal Son. Remember what His Name shall be called? His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father. And here He is, the Alpha — the Beginning. The Ancient of days. The Eternal Son. Without beginning, without end. Tell them that you saw Me thus with My hair white.

And tell them also. Tell that Church, those Churches also, that the white hair was the crown of My Glory. For remember that He loved His people with an everlasting love. In the fullness of time He had become flesh and dwelt among them. He died for them. His beard had been plucked from His face. His hair had been pulled. He had been bruised, indescribably bruised. But now, with a robe of majesty, and a breastplate of Redemption, and the Crown of Glory, He is to be seen. And His eyes were as a flame of fire, piercing, penetrating into the very hearts of men. What is He saying? Tell the church at Philadelphia that they are not deceiving Me. I know them. I know all about them. In a little while, those eyes that are as the flame of fire are going to describe just what He saw in Ephesus. Just what He saw in Thyatira. Tell them how My eyes were. Nothing was held, and nothing was hidden, nothing was covered, and nothing was shielded. I saw into the deepest intents of their heart. I saw everything that they did, and why they did it. Eyes as a flame of fire. Tell them that those eyes are going to scatter terror among the adversaries. Everyone that opposes Me...Everyone that hinders Me will find that these eyes pierce through to the deepest secret hiding places of the human spirit.

His feet were like unto burning brass. Strong. Steadfast. Supporting His eternal purpose. No vacillating. No wavering. Feet of brass. "The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let everyone that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Tim. 2:19). You can bring in the unsaved into a local Church, but the feet of the Son of God are the feet of brass. You cannot disturb it. Oh this particular group will go to oblivion, go into death, will have Ichabod written over them, but His purpose stands sure. Tell them this. Tell them that they need not fear. Tell them that My feet were like burning brass, polished, firm. Nothing is going to move them. Tell them also that these are the very feet that are going to subdue my enemies, that are going to tread them to powder, tread out the winepress, bring the judgment that is so justly deserved.

Then John said, "I heard that His voice was as the sound of many waters." Here said Jesus Christ, I want you to write and tell them that My Word is going to go forth. And Nero is not going to stop it. And Marcus Aurelius won't stop it. My Word is like the flow of waters. It is going to be heard over all the din of men. It is going to go. And I rejoice tonight that — to realize that His voice is as the voice of many waters. And someone has said, "Well of course we know that in China the testimony of Jesus Christ has been extinguished." I do not believe it for a moment, not a moment. Not until you can change Jesus Christ can you stop the going forth of His voice. The Church as it was known before the bamboo curtain closed certainly has disappeared. But I do not for one moment dare to believe that the voice of the Son of God, which is as the voice of many waters, has ceased

flowing in China. I do not know how it flows. I do not know where it flows. But I believe that that flow cannot be stopped, for He said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." They tried to stop it in Russia. But it failed, signally failed. For the history of Russia for these years since the conquest by the Communists has been the history of the triumph of the Church in the spite of most severe persecution. I think of those young people there in Russia that had come to them, smuggled in, a Bible in the Russian language. And tenderly took the threads away and lest anything should happen gave to each one a page, a double page, not as you would expect—four in a row. No. It would be from one Book, and from another Book, just as it came apart. And then they would gently put it away, and carefully keep it so that it would not be crushed and the print obliterated, and they then would memorize it, and feed on it. And then they would exchange. Try to get as near as they could to where theirs had been. But fed on the Word. No. No. You cannot stop Him whose voice is as the voice of many waters. There is a river flowing that nothing can dam, nothing can stop. The message of His Word is a great stream of salvation and is going to flow. And I believe it is flowing, and He is making the wrath of men to praise Him. We do not see it. That is all right. I am sure it is flowing.

Then He had in His right hand seven stars. I believe that these seven stars speak of faithful servants. One for each Church. Stars that were there. Men that would speak as John would speak, and others. How strange it is that Elijah said, "I, only I remain. I am the only one left." God has faithful men tonight. Wherever you turn. Wherever you go you find those that are standing on the testimony of Jesus Christ. And I believe that when He writes to this Church and says, You tell them that you saw seven stars in My hand, He is saying that I have witnesses that have stood for me in spite of all the inducements and all of the blandishments, and the siren voice that would woo them away. They still are standing for Me. And I believe this is true today, as it was then.

Out of His mouth went a two edged sword. Again the picture of the Word. First the Word that wounds, that brings conviction, that causes us to see our sin. Then, having slain, brings life and heals. It strikes at sin, and condemns the sinner, and then to the pardoned, repentant sinner it brings the message of forgiveness and eternal life. Two edged sword.

His countenance was as the shining of the sun. Too bright. Too pure. Too strong for mortal eyes. Here is the Son of God in His Glory. And what did John do, and what must you do? at seeing this vision. Verse 17 describes it. "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead." This is not the first time this has happened. If you will go back to Joshua, you discover that the day that Joshua saw the Captain of the Host of the Lord, he fell at His feet as dead. You come again, and you will find that Daniel saw the revelation of Jesus Christ and he fell at His feet as dead. Isaiah saw the Lord, high, and lifted up and fell at His feet as dead. This is what men do when they see Jesus Christ. This is what you have done, if you have seen Him thus. Dying to yourself, and your own will, and your own plans, and your own program, and your own whims, and your own fancy, you have come to Him this way. Have you? Oh I trust you have. Have you come seeing yourself under the sentence of death, getting some glimpse of His holiness, and in the light of what He is seeing yourself. Overpowered by the revelation of Christ's Glory, so that you're overpowered by the revelation of your own unworthiness.

I was talking just the other day with a group about the dealings of God through John Wesley. John Wesley preached on Bristol Common to 20 thousand people. Such anointing of the Spirit of God was upon him, such power in the service as he spoke for three hours that day concerning the majesty of Christ, that when the crowd had departed there were said to be over eighteen hundred people that were lying on the ground unconscious. The revelation of the majesty of Jesus Christ had caused them to fall on their faces as though they were dead.

The same phenomena accompanied the preaching of John Wesley Redfield in New Haven, Connecticut, in the Yale Bowl. There, the Bowl then holding about 30 thousand people, speaking to a capacity crowd, when the crowd had dispersed and had left, there were several hundred, someone said as many as 900 people lying there on the tiers at the Bowl of the Stadium unconscious, because of the overwhelming revelation of the Glory of Jesus Christ.

Have you ever seen Him in His Glory? Have you ever seen Him in His splendor? Seen Him in His majesty? Have you seen Him so that you have fallen on your face before Him? I believe a lot of problems in a lot of lives would be solved by a revelation of Jesus Christ in His Glory. Have you seen Him thus? Have you seen Him, like Peter did, "Depart from me from I am a wicked

man, a sinful man." John saw Him, and fell on his face as dead. This man who had leaned on His bosom. This man who I believe was the one who fled leaving his coat in the hands of the soldier on the night Christ was taken. This man that saw Him after the resurrection. When he sees him today, falls on his face as dead. I think John remembered Jesus Christ in His humility, Jesus Christ in His work, in His walk. I believe, my dear friend, that you and I make the mistake of seeing the Son of God, the meek and lowly traveler of Galilee. And we get too pally, and too familiar with Him, as He is presented in His humiliation. And we fail to see Him as He is, high and lifted up. I believe there is a high call of the Spirit of God to you to see Jesus Christ, not as He was, but as He is...And to fall on your face before Him. He is no longer the meek and lowly Jesus. He is "King of kings, Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:15). There is only one place that anyone who professes to loves Christ can ever properly stay, and that is on his face at His feet. This is Jesus now. This is how He is today.

His countenance as the sun shining. Too bright. Too pure. Too strong for mortal eyes to see. And when in that day He is seated upon the Throne, and men are forced to come before Him, they will call for the rocks and the mountains to cover them and hide them from the face of the wrath of the Lamb. This is the Jesus of today. This is how He is today.

And then Christ touched Him. I do not believe that Jesus Christ has a touch for anybody until they are on their faces before Him. You want a touch from God. There is one place to be sure to get it. You get on your face before Him. He will touch you. You break before Him. He will touch you. You bend before Him. He will touch you. This is where He has the touch. No other place. And He touched him and He gently spake for him. And the Hand that touched him was the nail pierced Hand. And He said to John, "Fear not." But you know the only one that should not fear the Son of God is the one who fears Him, to the place where he falls on his face before Him, abandoning all sin, all uncleanness, acknowledging what he is. That one who fears Him is the only one who need not fear Him. It sounds like a contradiction, but the one who has no fear of the exalted Son Of God is the one, who ought to fear Him, and the one who fears Him because of who He is and all of His worthiness is the one who will hear Him say, "Fear not." For those hands were nailed to the Cross. And that side was pierced by a spear. I was dead, said He. I was dead, and am alive for ever more. I was dead, speaks of His suffering for our salvation. The redemption that He purchased with His precious Blood. I was dead, but I am alive. His resurrection. And His power. And I have the keys of death and hell. The only one in this universe that can open the door to Heaven and lock the door to hell is Jesus Christ. Here He is the Son of God as He appears today.

Oh, if somehow these words could serve by His anointing and His power to bring you to His feet, broken, bowed and bent. Then together we would hear Him say, "Fear not. I am the First and the Last. I was dead, but am alive for evermore." There is cleansing, there is pardon, there is forgiveness, there is life. Have you see the Son of God as He is today? Not as He was on the Cross. But as He is on the Throne.

Let us bow before Him in a moment of disciplined silence, trying to remember what you have heard, and read, and asking God to open the eyes of your heart to see Him, and telling Him that you are prepared to fall at His feet, that you want to see Him as He is, and see yourself as you are, and learn to fear sin, and love holiness and righteousness, that you want to feel His touch, His forgiveness, His cleansing, His pardon.

Oh, Thou Son of God, Thou who art alive for evermore, open the eyes of our hearts, so blinded by the world that still holds Thy Name in derision. Grant, Lord, that we as a people shall see Thee high and lifted up. We shall see Thee as Thou art. Lord, our eyes have too long beheld Thee on the crucifix. Thou art not there. Beheld Thee walking, teaching in the paths, plains of Galilee. Thou art not there. Grant that we may see Thee as Thou art now, exalted, enthroned, glorified, and that like John of old, we shall bow before Thee, hating sin and uncleanness, and offer to Thee the only thing that can ever be a token of our love, our ransomed personalities as a living sacrifice.

With our heads bowed and our eyes closed, this invitation. You are here tonight unsaved. You have come in for some reason, and you know that you are without Christ and without hope, without God. And you want Jesus Christ. You have heard that He died for sinners and rose again. He was dead, but He is alive for evermore. And you want this same Jesus to wash away your sin and make you every whit whole. And tonight you are opening your heart to Him and inviting Him to become your Savior and your Lord, and you would like to seal it and be remembered in prayer. Would you raise your hand right now, wherever you are,

saying, "Pray for me." I am taking Jesus Christ as my Lord and my Savior tonight. Would you put your hand up? Take it down again. Anyone? Perhaps there is someone who would say. Pray for me. I know I ought to. I am not to the place yet where I am willing, but I want prayer. Pray for me. I need prayer. God bless you. Yes. I see it. Anyone else?

We pray, our Father, for that one whose hand has been lifted, and for the heart behind it. And we ask that the Holy Spirit will not cease in loving labor until this one has come to bow at the feet of Jesus Christ. Might it be that even tonight while we wait, solemn before Thee, the revelation of Thy Son that there shall be in this heart a glad willingness to say yes. I do now give over. I do take Jesus Christ to be Lord and Savior. I renounce my right to rule and declare that henceforth He shall be my Redeemer and My Lord. I do open my heart's door to Thee, Lord Jesus. Come in. Might it be just now, as we pray. We do release him unto Thee Lord. We stand against the enemy in every holding, blinding effort. Oh God, set him free. Set this person free. Let liberty come. Deliverance come. Joy and peace come. Through Jesus Christ. We pray for everyone else, Lord, that ought to have made known their need. We pray, our Father, for everyone who is here that names the Name of Christ. Might it be like John, we shall fall on our faces before the Son of God. Now Lord, we go. May we go quietly, prayerfully, solemnly. Go to our homes to think, to meditate, to pray, to read the Scripture. Oh God, break in upon us. Do something wonderful to glorify the Son, to magnify Him. All we ask of Thee, the only thing we want of Thee for this church, is that He, the Son of Man, may be seen in the midst of the candlestick, and may get the Glory that is His due. And so to that end, seal this Service. Amen.

Let us stand for the Benediction. To the one whose hand has been raised and to those who might wish to be given the privilege of a time alone in conversation and prayer, I invite you to remain behind or go into Wilson Chapel so that we can talk together.

Now may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, the Communion and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost be and abide with us each one now until we meet again. Amen.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, November 27, 1960 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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