

The Churches of Revelation

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

- [0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read in the book of Revelation.
- Book of Revelation, chapter 1. And if we read again at verse 1. Revelation, chapter 1, verse 1.
- The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.
- Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy. And blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.
- I want to begin this evening by asking a very simple question. Do you worry a lot?
- [1 : 1 6] Do you worry a lot? Are you the kind of person who worries about almost everything? Do you worry about the past? Maybe what you did?
- What you said? What you should have said? Do you worry about your present circumstances? What you're going through? What's happening around you?
- What other people are going through? Do you worry about your future? Do you worry about what's ahead of you? Maybe your health, your well-being, your job, your home, your family?
- Do you worry a lot? Are you someone who worries quite a lot? Someone once said, Worry is really good for alerting us to the fact that there's something we might need to be paying attention to and to do something about it.
- I'll read that again. Worry is really good for alerting us to the fact that there's something we might need to be paying attention to and to do something about it.
- [2 : 1 9] And you know, when we come to the book of Revelation, it's a book written to Christians who are worried. And they're worried and concerned not about trivial things.
- They're worried and concerned about their own life. And that's because they were being persecuted. The book of Revelation was written around the year 95 AD, which was over 60 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- And the book was written when the Christian church was under severe pressure and persecution from the political powers of the world. Because at that time, many Christians, they were being oppressed and persecuted by the Roman emperor.
- But unfortunately, the book of Revelation, it has often been misunderstood to be this book full of hidden messages and meanings about the end of the world. And there's no doubt that the book of Revelation, it's a book which is full of symbolism.
- It's full of metaphors. But sadly, so many people waste their time trying to work out all the symbolism. And they try to decipher all the metaphors in order to try and understand the hidden meaning of the book of Revelation.

- [3 : 36] But you know, what we have to see about this book is that the book of Revelation is a revelation. It's not meant to be a book of mystery and skepticism. It's a book of revelation. Which means that something or someone is being revealed in the book. Yes, there are difficult parts in this revelation which we struggle to understand.
- But the purpose of the book is to reveal because it's a revelation. And I believe that the reason the book of Revelation is full of symbolism and metaphors is because it was written to persecuted Christians.
- It was written as, you could say, a coded message to the church of Jesus Christ. It was coded or quoted in biblical language.
- That only a Christian would understand if they knew their whole Bible. The emperor would never understand what the book was all about. Because he never read his Bible.
- [4 : 37] But the Christian would know exactly what the book of Revelation is about. Because they know their Bible. And this message, this revelation, it was written as a message to the church of Jesus Christ.
- To encourage them and us. And to challenge them and us. Because the purpose of the book of Revelation is to reveal to us Jesus, who Jesus is, as our glorified and exalted Savior.
- And God willing, that's what we'll see as we consider what Jesus revealed to the seven churches in Asia. But before we look at what Jesus said to the seven churches in Revelation.
- I just want us to look at this opening chapter. And I want us to consider three things that give this letter some context. Three things that give this book some context.
- And they are the sent message, the slave's mission, and the son of man. So three things. The sent message, the slave's mission, and the son of man.
- [5 : 44] So we look first of all at the sent message. The sent message. And you look again at verse one. It says, Now as we said, the book of Revelation, it is a revelation.
- The Greek title of this book is the apocalypse. Which means revelation. It's the book of the apocalypse. It's the book in which everything is finally revealed at the return of Jesus Christ.
- And that judgment is pronounced. And the vindication of God's people is granted. The book of Revelation is a book of the apocalypse. But it's not meant to be a book of mystery and skepticism.
- It's a book of revelation. And as we said, that means that something, or more importantly, someone is being revealed. And that someone is Jesus Christ.
- He is the risen, exalted, and glorified Savior of sinners. Jesus is being made known to his church. And you know, that's the first thing we're told in this book.
- [7 : 17] That this is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It's not the revelation of the Apostle John. It's the revelation of Jesus Christ, which John was privileged to witness and to record.
- This is the revelation of the exalted and glorified Savior, Jesus Christ. But what's fascinating is that this revelation, which John sees, it wasn't given by Jesus.
- It was given by God the Father. It says in verse 1, the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants.
- God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant, John.
- So God the Father revealed Jesus as the risen and exalted, glorified Savior. So that Jesus could make known to his servants, such as the Apostle John.

- [8 : 18] But you know, what I find fascinating about this. Is that when John wrote his gospel, his gospel account. When John wrote about the first revelation of Jesus.
- When Jesus came into the world, not as this glorified and exalted Savior. He came in as one who was veiled in human flesh and humiliated. And yet John says about Jesus in the opening verses of his gospel.
- That the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And he says, we beheld his glory. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Full of grace and truth. But then John says, no man has ever seen God.
- The only God who is at the Father's side. He, the Father, has made him known. And what I love about this is that God the Father made Jesus known.
- First of all, in his humiliation. And now we see in the book of Revelation. God the Father is making Jesus known in his state of exaltation.
- [9 : 25] Because Jesus, he is the full and final revelation of God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh. He is God revealed in human flesh.
- But what's so wonderful is that the revelation that God the Father is now giving to us here. It's not the revelation of a humiliated, suffering servant.
- No, it's the revelation of an exalted and reigning king. And this king, he says, he is coming to destroy his enemies.
- The enemies of sin, Satan and death. And he's coming to vindicate his people. And as we're told at the end of verse 1. These things must soon take place.
- The judge of this glorified. The judge who is this glorified and exalted saviour. He is going to come and judge the world. And it will shortly come to pass.
- [10 : 27] But as we all know. We don't know when. Concerning that day and hour, says Jesus. No one knows. Not even the angels of heaven nor the Son. But the Father only.
- Only the Father knows when the Son will come to judge the world. But what we also have to see. Is that this sent message from God the Father. It's a word of prophecy.
- Because we're told in verse 3. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy. And blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it.
- For the time is near. So we're reminded in this verse. That the book of Revelation is a prophecy. Where God the Father is prophesying about his Son, Jesus Christ.
- And he's prophesying to the church. And the reason it's called a prophecy is interesting. Not only because, well, the Father is described as a prophet. But also because the responsibility of a prophet was always twofold.
- [11 : 31] A prophet was to foretell. And to foretell. A prophet was to foretell future events. And in this case, the prophecy of the book of Revelation.
- It foretells the second coming of Jesus. But a prophet was also to foretell. He was to be a preacher. He was to proclaim God's message.
- That's why they always said, thus saith the Lord. And a prophet was to proclaim God's message. In order to call the Lord's people to live faithful and obedient lives.
- And that's actually what the book of Revelation is all about. It's not this message of mystery and skepticism. The book of Revelation is all about Jesus Christ.
- The exalted and reigning Savior. And he has been revealed to us by God the Father. In order to call the church. To live faithful and obedient lives.
- [12 : 27] In the face of opposition and persecution. And you know, right from the outset, there's this promise of blessing. To those who are faithful and obedient to King Jesus.

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy. And blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it. For the time is near.

Blessing is promised to those who read this book. Blessing is promised to those who hear this book. And those who keep this book. Blessing is promised to those who do all three.

Because it's not just enough. It's not enough just to read this book. And hear the words of this book being explained. We need to keep this book. We need to respond to this book.

We need to live out this book. We need to live obedient and faithful lives. Why? Because we love our risen and exalted and reigning King Jesus Christ.

[13 : 33] And you know, that's how John begins his letter to the churches. He reminds them and he reminds us of who Jesus is. And what Jesus has done for his church.

And John reminds us of these things in order that we will respond to this word of prophecy. By our faithfulness and our obedience. Look at verse 4.

It says, So John reminds us of who Jesus is.

And what Jesus has done for us. And he does it in order to stir us up. And to challenge us. And to encourage us to live faithful and obedient Christian lives.

And the first thing John says about Jesus. Is that he is the one who was and is and is to come. Jesus is from the past, the present and the future.

[14 : 58] He is eternal. He has no beginning and no end. He is the alpha and the omega. The first and the last. The beginning and the end.

And that's the description Jesus gives of himself in verse 8. I am the alpha and the omega. And what John is affirming to us is that the revelation of Jesus Christ.

It's not only of a risen and exalted saviour. It's also a revelation of the eternal son of God. He is the great I am.

He is the I am who revealed himself to Moses in the wilderness at the burning bush. And declared to Moses then. I am who I am.

He is the I am who revealed himself in the person of Jesus Christ. And declared to us all those wonderful I am sayings. I am the bread of life.

[15 : 55] I am the light of the world. I am the door. I am the good shepherd. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth and the life.

I am the true vine. Before Abraham was. I am. And this is who John is speaking about. And Jesus is affirming his identity.

As the eternal son of God. By declaring. I am the alpha and the omega. The first and the last. The beginning and the end.

But John doesn't leave it there. He says that Jesus is the faithful witness. He's the faithful witness because he is the first born from the dead.

Which means that he has been risen and he is exalted. And because Jesus is risen and exalted. He is the ruler over all the kings of the earth.

[16 : 52] His father has given to him all authority in heaven and on earth. But more than that. John not only tells us who this eternal, risen, ruling and reigning king is.

He also tells us what Jesus has done for his church. We're told that Jesus loved us and freed us. From our sins by his blood.

Now if you're using the authorized version. You'll see that it says in verse 5. That Jesus loved us and washed us. From our sins by his blood. And what's fascinating is that the difference.

Between the word freed. And washed. The difference in the ESV and the AV. Is one Greek letter. And that one Greek letter changes the word from freed to washed.

And I raise the point not because I think one is right and the other is wrong. But because just by comparing translations. It makes us understand more about what Jesus has done for us. That Jesus loved us.

[18 : 00] Freed us. And washed us. From our sins. By his own blood. And he has made us a kingdom of priests. To the glory of God the Father.

And so having introduced us to the revelation of Jesus. Of who Jesus is. And what Jesus has done for his church. Having introduced this prophecy to us.

What is our response to be? We have all this information about Jesus. But what is the application of it all?

What are we meant to do with this vision? This revelation of Jesus? And the point that John is making. By drawing attention to this sent message.

Is that our response to the revelation of Jesus Christ. Is faith and obedience. Our response to knowing that Jesus. Is the eternal son of God.

[18 : 58] And he is a risen and exalted king. With all authority in heaven and on earth. And knowing that king Jesus loved us. And freed us. And washed us from our sins.

By his own blood. Our response to this Jesus. Is to bow down before him. And confess that he is Lord. And worship him.

Our response to king Jesus. Is to live as a faithful. And obedient Christian. Why?

He says in verse 7. This king is coming again. Behold. He is coming with the clouds. And every eye will see him.

Even those who pierced him. And all the tribes of the earth. Will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

[19 : 55] My friend. His sent message. Is a call to faithfulness. And obedience to Jesus Christ. And the question you and I have to answer. Is.

I know who Jesus is. And I know what Jesus has done for me. Therefore. Am I being faithful and obedient. To Jesus Christ.

Am I being faithful and obedient. To Jesus Christ. Christ. So that's the sent message. But secondly. We see the slaves mission.

The slaves mission. Now I'm roasting in here. I don't know if anybody else is warm. Do you want to turn the heat off a wee bit? So the sent message.

And the slaves mission. So look at verse 9. It says. I John your brother and partner. In the tribulation. And the kingdom. And the patient endurance.

[20 : 52] That are in Jesus. Was on the island called Patmos. On account of the word of God. And the testimony of Jesus. I was in the spirit. On the Lord's day. And I heard behind me.

A loud voice. Like a trumpet. Saying. Write what you see in a book. And send it to the seven churches. To Ephesus. And to Smyrna. And to Pergamum. And to Thyatira.

And to Sardis. And to Philadelphia. And to Laodicea. And in these verses. John describes the mission. He has been appointed. As a servant of Jesus Christ.

But you know what I find so beautiful. About these verses. Is that even though John describes himself here. As a brother. And a companion. Or a partner. In the tribulation.

And the kingdom. Of Jesus Christ. John describes himself. Here. As a brother in Christ. And a Christian companion. Who is suffering. Persecution.

- [21 : 48] Alongside his fellow believers. But even though this is his self-description. Of himself. At this point. In verse 9. John describes himself. As a servant. Back in verse 1.
- He says. The revelation of Jesus Christ. Which God gave him. To show to his servants. The things that must soon take place. He made it known. By sending his angel.
- To his servant. John. And I highlight this. Because it's so beautiful. And so humbling. Because John's view of himself. Is that before.
- He's a brother in Christ. And before he's. A companion. In persecution. He says. He's first of all. A servant. Of Jesus Christ.
- Christ. But the word. John uses. To describe himself. Here. Is the word. For a slave. He says. That he's a slave. Of Christ.
- [22 : 46] And there's a difference. Because. A slave. Was assigned. An even. Lower position. Than a servant. In the first century. A servant. Would have. Owned.
- A few possessions. They would have. Been protected. By certain rights. A servant. Was more like. You could say. Like an. An employee. He had his own home.
- He had his own family. He had his. His own job. He had an element. Of freedom. But that wasn't. The case. For a slave. A slave. Didn't have a life. Of their own.
- A slave. Didn't own anything. A slave. Was. Entirely. Dependent. Upon his master. To meet. All his needs. And his sole. Purpose. Was to please.
- His master. And the point. Here. Is that. That's how. John saw himself. John. John. Saw himself. As a slave. Of Jesus Christ.
- [23 : 39] Who had been loved. And bought. By his master. To be his master's. Possession. But of course. John knew. That to be a slave. Of Jesus. It didn't mean oppression.
- It didn't mean restriction. It didn't mean. Cruelty. And beating. For John. He knew. That to be a slave. Of Jesus. It meant privilege. Joy. Hope.
- And peace. To be a slave. Of Jesus. It was the great paradox. To be a slave. Of Jesus. Meant. Freedom. And so. What John. Is saying here.
- Is that before. He's a brother. In Christ. Before he's. A companion. In persecution. He says. First of all. I am a slave. Of Christ. And as a slave.
- Of Christ. He says. My desire. Is that my. Whole. Life. Will be committed. To pleasing. Jesus Christ. As my Lord. And you know.
- [24 : 33] It's such a humble. Description. But it's a description. That must characterize. Every Christian. Because if we have been. Redeemed by.
- Precious blood. Just like John was. Then we are slaves. Of Christ. We. And. As slaves. Of Christ. We are to walk. Humbly. Before the Lord.
- And we're to serve him. Wholeheartedly. Because as those. Who have been bought. At a price. And it's a great price. Our.
- John says. Our entire life. Is to be committed. To pleasing. Jesus Christ. As our Lord. And our master. That's what it means.
- To have Jesus Christ. As your Lord. It's to acknowledge. That he is your Lord. He's your master. You are his slave. He is. He owns you.
- [25 : 28] And it's not. The way. We view slavery. With John Newton. And all these things. This slavery. Means freedom. But you're following. In the footsteps. Of Jesus. My friend.
- As slaves of Christ. We belong. To Jesus Christ. And we exist. To serve. And glorify. Our master. And that's how John. Saw himself.

He saw that. As a slave. And as a brother. And as a companion. In the tribulation. And the kingdom. Of Jesus Christ. His purpose. His mission. Was to serve.

And glorify. His master. And the mission. That John was given. Was to. To relay a message. From his master. Jesus Christ. He was to relay.

This message. To the seven churches. In Asia. And John tells us. How he was given. This mission. And deployed. As a slave of Christ. He says.

[26 : 22] I John. Your brother and partner. In the tribulation. And the kingdom. And the patient endurance. That are. In Jesus. I was on the island. Called Patmos. On account of the word of God.

And the testimony. Of Jesus. John says. That he was on this small. Greek island. Of Patmos. Just off. Modern day Turkey.

But notice what John says. About the reason. Why he's there. John says. That he was exiled. To the island of Patmos. And made. Made to do hard labor. By the Romans.

And he was there. Not for being this nice man. And a good neighbor. John was on Patmos. He says. On account of the word of God. And the testimony of Jesus. And you know.

This is. This is. This is testament. To John's witness. And character. As an apostle of Jesus. John was in prison. Exiled.

[27 : 20] To this remote island. Because he refused. To stop speaking. About the word of God. And he refused to stop. He refused to.

Stop testifying. About Jesus Christ. Despite being told. To keep quiet. And not to mention. The name of Jesus. John refused. He refused.

To stop preaching. The gospel of Jesus Christ. Because John knew. From his own experience. That the gospel. Was the power of God. Unto salvation. To those who believe.

And even though. It was difficult. And dangerous. To be an outspoken Christian. It didn't stop John. Speaking about. His savior. And you know. John's witness here. It should be a challenge.

To us. In our day. And our generation. Because we now. Live in a day. And generation. Where we're either. Told. To keep quiet. About Jesus. Or we are tempted.

[28 : 16] To keep quiet. About Jesus. But as John reminds us. We are called. To be faithful. And obedient. We are slaves of Christ.

We're not our own. We're bought with a price. And we are companions. In the church. Of Jesus Christ. We belong to the worldwide. Church of Christ. Therefore.

We're not to keep quiet. About the word of God. And we're not to keep. Silent about Jesus. Jesus Christ. We're not to hide our light. Under a bushel. We're to let our light.

So shine before men. That they may see the glory. And the beauty. Of Jesus Christ. And so what we see here. Is that John received his mission.

While he was exiled. On Patmos. Then we're told in verse 10. I was in the spirit. On the Lord's day. And I heard behind me.

[29 : 10] A voice. A loud voice. Like a trumpet. Saying. Write what you see. In a book. And send it. To the seven churches. So John says.

That he was in the spirit. In the Lord's day. And this doesn't mean. That John was in this sort of trance. Or this. He was having this. Mystical religious experience. What it means.

Is that John. Was worshipping the Lord. On the Lord's day. He was in the spirit. He was spending the Lord's day. Worshipping the Lord.

Despite being exiled. Away from. His home. From his family. From his church. John continued. To worship the Lord. On the Lord's day. He may have been on his own.

But John knew. That on the Lord's day. There were many other Christians. Gathering. Together. To worship. This same. Risen. Exalted. And glorified. Savior. And you know.

[30 : 08] That's one of the great blessings. Of the Lord's day. That as we gather. For worship. Here. In a small community. On a small island. Off the northwest coast.

Of Scotland. There are people like us. In villages. And towns. And cities. Across the world. Even those. In Hyde. And they're all gathering together.

To worship. This same Lord. They're all gathering. To worship. This glorified. And exalted. Savior. And they're all seeking. To worship him. In spirit.

And in truth. And you know. That's what the Lord's day. Should always be about. It should be about. Worshipping the Lord. And that's what we should be. Spending our time doing.

On the Lord's day. That's what our catechism. Teaches us. That we're to rest. On the Lord's day. From worldly. Employments. And recreations. And spend the day.

[31 : 05] In the public. And private. Exercises. Of worship. We're to spend the Lord's day. Focused. Upon. The Lord.

And I know that's hard to do. I know it's hard to do. Don't think that just because I'm a minister. That's easy. It's hard to do it. But it's a discipline. We have to be faithful.

And obedient. And the question is. Is that how we spend the Lord's day? Do we spend the Lord's day? In the exercise of public and private worship? Because that's how John spent the Lord's day.

And John says. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day. And I heard behind me a loud voice. Like a trumpet saying. Write what you see in a book. And send it to the seven churches.

When John was in the spirit on the Lord's day. Jesus spoke to him. Jesus revealed himself. As the Alpha and the Omega. And John was commanded to write down what he sees.

[32 : 07] And send it to the seven churches. And before John receives the next vision in chapter 4. Each of these seven churches are sent an individual letter.

And what we have to note. Is that the number of the churches. The seven churches. That's a symbolic number. And they represent the whole church of Christ.

Which is why the letters to the seven churches apply to us. And why we're going to consider these letters over the coming weeks. The letters to the church. They apply to the whole church.

Not just those of that day and that generation. They apply to us. And they are an important message sent to us. By Jesus Christ. And so we're considering the context to the seven churches of Revelation.

And we've looked at the sent message. The slave's mission. But lastly I'd like us to consider. The central character in this book of Revelation. The son of man. The son of man.

[33 : 08] The sent message. The slave's mission. And the son of man. Look at verse 12. It says. Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me.

And on turning I saw seven golden lampstands. And in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man. Clothed with a long robe. And with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white.

Like white wool. Like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze. Refined in a furnace. And his voice was like the roar of many waters.

In his right hand he held seven stars. From his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. And his face was like the sun. Shining in full strength. When I saw him.

I fell at his feet. As though dead. But he laid his right hand on me. Saying fear not. I am the first and the last. And the living one. I died.

[34 : 06] And behold I am alive forevermore. I have the keys of death. And of hell. And so John describes Jesus. As the son of man.

And as you know. The title son of man. It was often used by Jesus. To describe himself. As one who had a human nature. But the title son of man.

It first appeared in Daniel chapter 7. Where Daniel. He received this vision. This vision of Jesus. Daniel says in Daniel chapter 7.

I saw in the night visions. And behold with the clouds of heaven. There came one like a son of man. And he came to the ancient of days. And was presented before him.

And to him was given dominion. And glory. And a kingdom. That all peoples nations and languages. Should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion. Which shall not pass away.

[35 : 03] And his kingdom one. That shall not be destroyed. And that's who Jesus is. He's the son of man. Who has been given all dominion. Glory and power.

And a kingdom that will not pass away. Or be destroyed. And the description John gives of Jesus. It's of a risen. And exalted. And glorified.

Man. He's the son of man. But notice what John says happened. When he saw this son of man. And the description. It's repeated.

To the seven churches. And we'll look at that. As the weeks go on. The description of Jesus. Jesus. But when John sees. The son of man. Notice what it says in verse 17. When I saw him.

I fell at his feet. As though dead. And what's remarkable about this. Is that John had seen Jesus on many occasions.

[36 : 01] Throughout his earthly ministry. John had walked with Jesus. He had talked with Jesus. He ate with Jesus. He drank with Jesus. He sat with Jesus. John saw Jesus perform miracles.

He saw Jesus heal people. He saw Jesus transfigured. He saw Jesus crucified. John saw Jesus resurrected. And yet. Even though John saw Jesus.

In all these different situations. He never saw Jesus. The way he saw him. In this chapter. Because when John saw Jesus.

He saw him. As the risen. Exalted. Exalted. And glorified. Exalted. Savior of sinners. And when John saw Jesus. He saw the glory.

He saw the purity. The majesty. The holiness. And the beauty. Of Jesus. And when John saw him. He fell to his knees.

[36 : 58] He fell down. As though. Dead. And you know. What John is describing here. It reminds me of what Paul said.

To the Philippians. You know when Paul. He. We'll look at it in a few weeks time. Paul is describing. Jesus. In Philippians chapter 2. He describes him first of all.

As this. Humiliated. Suffering servant. But then he describes him. As one who. Was. Risen. He's exalted. He's the exalted. And glorified.

Savior of sinners. And Paul says. That when. This exalted. And glorified. Savior of sinners. Returns. In his glory. He says. Every knee will bow.

And they will bow. He says. In heaven. And on earth. And in hell. And he says. Every tongue. Will confess. That Jesus Christ. Is Lord.

[37 : 55] To the glory. Of God the Father. And so my friend. When you and I. See Jesus. We will fall down. Before him. As though dead.

When we see. This. Glorified. Risen. And exalted. Savior. When we see Jesus. In all his glory. And all his beauty.

There will be nothing. That will keep us. From our knees. There will be nothing. That keeps us. From our knees. Jesus. But I hope.

And pray. That when you see Jesus. That you are not. Bowing down. Before him. In hell. Because the promise.

Of scripture. Is that every knee. Will bow. And every tongue. Will confess. In heaven. And on earth. And in hell. In hell. I hope. That we are all.

[38 : 53] Bowing down. Before him. Around the throne. Of heaven. And not. The pit of hell. Because as Jesus. Reminded John. In verse 18.

I am the first. And the last. The living one. I died. And behold. I am alive. Forevermore. And I have the keys. Of death.

And of hell. Jesus has the keys. To death. And hell. Which means. That we have to seek him. With all our heart. He is the only one.

We are to seek. And we have to ensure. That when we leave. The scene of time. We are not locked out. For all eternity. And it is for this reason.

The reason. To warn the church. That Jesus says. In verse 19. He wants to warn the church. He writes. He says. Write therefore. The things. That you have seen. Those that are.

[39 : 50] And those that are. To take place. After this. As for the mystery. Of the seven stars. That you saw. In my right hand. And the seven golden lampstands. The seven stars. Are the angels. Of the seven churches.

And the seven lampstands. Are the seven. Seven churches. And so. As. The opening chapter. In the book of Revelation. Concludes.

Jesus explains. The symbolism. Of the seven stars. In his right hand. And the seven lampstands. And what Jesus. Is saying to us. Is that the church. Is in his right hand.

The church. He says. Is in a place. Of protection. And safety. They are in his right hand. The church. Is in his right hand.

And there is no better hand. To be in. Than to be in the hand. Of Jesus. But as we will see. In the coming weeks. Jesus has something.

[40 : 47] To say. To his church. And as his church. We have to listen. We have to listen. To what Jesus is saying.

And we have to respond. In faithfulness. And in obedience. To what Jesus. Is saying. To his church. To his church.

And so. As we begin. Our study. Of the letters. To the churches. In Revelation. We have considered. The context. We have considered. The sent message. The slave's mission. And the son of man.

And God willing. Next Lord's day. We will consider. What Jesus. Had to say. To the church. In Ephesus. So may the Lord. Bless these thoughts. To us. Let us pray.

O Lord. Our gracious God. We give thanks. To thee. For thy word. Lord. We thank thee Lord. That. The word. One who does not leave us. But who gives to us. Words of direction.

[41 : 43] And guidance. A God who provides for us. Light and darkness. And we pray. That as thy word is. Speaking to us.

That we would be attentive. To thy voice. That we would hear. That our soul would live. Lord bless us. We pray. Bless us. As we begin our study. In thy word here.

Father. And we pray. That thou would speak to us. Through it. That it would change our hearts. That it would transform our lives. To live faithful. And obedient lives. To this risen.

And exalted savior. Jesus Christ. Go before us. Then we pray. And do us good. For Jesus sake. Amen. Amen.