

Brother Rick Renner taught from **Revelation chapter 1**.

I added a few comments from, "A Light in the Darkness," which is Rick's book on the first three chapters of Revelation.

There was no location more horrible than the temple of Artemis, and John lived just a stone's throw from there on the top of a hill. In fact, from where John lived, he looked down at the temple of Artimus from his Hilltop home. He could see the smoke billowing into the air from the temple; and John lived there for a very specific reason. If he had lived in the city of Ephesus, he would have had many problems doing ministry because **Domitian** was the ruler at that time, and Domitian was very much against the Christian faith. **Domitian had already declared that he was Lord**, and he was god, and required the entire empire to worship him. It was for this reason that the church of Ephesus and Timothy were having many problems inside the church. But John as an Apostle and as a Bishop, had to meet with many church leaders who came to see him from all over Asia.

If he had lived in Ephesus, it would have been very troublesome for those leaders because of political persecution. So, John lived in a remote spot, a place where you would not think to find an Apostle or a Bishop - just above the temple of Artemis on the Hill from his residence. He could look down at this evil site. There, no one would have suspected that he lived there, and it was outside the city limits. The authorities basically left him alone and from this remote location, he entertained church leaders who came to see him from all over Asia and the Roman empire.

John took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus until the time of her death in this hilltop location. In 67 AD when the Apostle Paul was executed, John took over in his role.

John was already an old man in his 90's, ministering to the pastors and the bishops and the leaders from all over Asia who came to see him. He provided guidance for all the churches for nearly 30 years without a problem and then in the year 93 John was arrested.

Now we can only assume why he was arrested. Probably because **he refused to burn incense to a statue of Domitian**. This was a requirement. Domitian had declared empire wide that he was lord and god and required everyone everywhere to worship him. Part of that worship was burning incense to his image. If you walked into a market before you could walk into a store, you had to burn a pinch

of incense. If you were walking through a region of the city before you could enter the next region of the city, you had to burn a pinch of incense.

If John had come into the city of Ephesus and had to pass one of those statues and refused to burn a pinch of incense, it would have been noticed. Something of this nature must have happened because suddenly the police are knocking on John's door. John is arrested for some political reason and John is dispatched to the city of Rome. Imagine that here he has served for nearly 30 years on that Hilltop, outside the city of Ephesus without any kind of problem, without any disturbance, just faithfully doing his ministry. Now, John has been arrested, and he's dispatched to Rome where he is going to stand in front of the emperor Domitian himself.

Why would Domitian require John, an elderly man to come to Rome?

Because he was the last living apostle of Jesus Christ.

When Domitian heard the last apostle of Jesus was still alive and had been arrested, Domitian wanted to see him, and required the John be carried by ship to the city of Rome. So now John is in his early nineties, he's walking through a corridor in Rome into the throne room where he stands in front of the emperor Domitian who requires John to reject his faith and to worship him. John refuses, and because John stands by his faith and is devoted to Christ, Domitian says, you're going to die.

Many very serious writers, including Tertullian, tell us that John was gradually lowered into a vat of boiling oil. This was a method of persecution and torture, which was regularly done by the Romans. Sounds unique to us, but it was not unique to the Romans. They did this very often when they wanted to really create a horrific death for somebody, as you would watch your feet, your calf's, your legs, your waist, etc. slowly be lowered into the oil and cooking while you scream and experience your slow death.

Normally the oil was so hot that it would have cooked John and caused his flesh to fall off the bones. But when they drugged the flesh hook through the oil to bring up the skeleton, the early Christian writers tell us, John came out of that oil completely unburned, unscathed, sustained by the power of God.

When Domitian saw that John was unscathed, unburned, supernaturally preserved. He was so terrified by what he had seen that he said, take this man, get him out of my sight, exile him to Patmos.

Patmos was 24 miles off the coast of what is today modern Turkey, or 60 miles from Ephesus. Patmos was a horrible place.

It had been occupied by several previous civilizations, and they had stripped it of all its trees. So, there was nothing left on Patmos but rocks. There was no vegetation whatsoever. There was an ancient temple on the very peak of Patmos, and guess what? It was the temple of Artemis. John, when he was released on Patmos was released as a political prisoner.

There were two kinds of prisoners. There were regular criminals. Regular criminals were treated worse. But if you were a political offender who was sent to Patmos when you were released, you were treated with a degree of respect.

Rather than be treated as a common criminal, you were released to just roam the Island. You could fend for yourself. You were given no clothes, no water, no food. You were there and you had to fend for yourself. We know that when John went to the isle of Patmos, through historical sources, he went with a secretary whose name was **Procuress**. You can first read about Procuress in **Acts 6**, who was later chosen to be one of the first deacons. In those days it was very common for notable individuals to travel with assistance or to travel with secretaries.

The two of them found a cave to live in. **The cave was just below the temple of Artemis**. In that cave (known today as the cave of the revelation) is where John had his revelation of Jesus Christ. He was there. He was suffering for his faith.

What's also interesting is that early Christian writers tell us there were so many political prisoners exiled to Patmos, those who roamed the Island, that they formed communities.

There were entire families that were exiled there. And by the time that John arrived on Patmos, there were small prison communities on the Island of Patmos and John wasted no time before he began to evangelize. And it's very well documented by early Christian writers. John established a church on Patmos, several local churches, and had a thriving faith community in the short time that he was there. And John was there until the death of Domitian in the **year 96**. **Amnesty was given to political prisoners**, bringing freedom to John from the isle of Patmos, who had been there for **18 months**.

While John and Procuress were in the cave, Jesus Christ stepped into that cave and John had a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Suddenly the curtains were pulled apart in John's eyes. John saw into the realm of the Spirit and saw Christ as he had never seen Him before. And that is when John received the book of revelation.

When John returned to the city of Ephesus after 18 months, he moved again into his hilltop home, just above and behind the temple of Artemis. And John as an elderly man in his mid-nineties continued his Apostolic Bishop ministry to the churches of Asia. And in that home, he wrote the gospel of John, along with first, second and third John; and that is why in First John 5:4 he says; we have a faith that overcomes the world.

He had a testimony he could personally declare that faith is our victory that overcomes the world, and your faith will overcome anything you are facing too.

While he was on the isle of Patmos for 18 months, his voice had been silent. The church has not heard from him, but they need to hear from their general in the faith. So finally, when John writes to them, he says in verse nine I, John, it's me. It's really me.

This is the voice you're needing to hear from. And now I have something to say to you. This is me, I John, and certainly the readers must have stood up straight when they heard John was writing to them and notice how John identifies himself in verse nine, he says, **I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the Kingdom and patients of Jesus Christ was in the aisle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.**

In verse nine, John Identifies himself in several important ways. First, he says, I am also your brother. John really could have said I, John, the illustrious Disciple of Jesus; I John, the last surviving Apostle. John could have really leveraged who he was. However, at this moment, John is writing to people that are suffering, and John comes right down to their level rather than boast of how great he is, he says, **I am also your brother.**

He comes right down to their level and really this is a mark of real spirituality and maturity.

When you're mature, you don't need to prove how great you are. When you're mature, you can come down to the level of the people to whom you're ministering to.

This is what God did in the incarnation. God came down to earth and became as a man. This is a mark of spiritual maturity, and now we find John not boasting of how great he is, but he says, **I John, who also am your brother.**

This word “brother” is the adelphos, which really is a medical term.

The word delphus describes the womb of a woman, but when it becomes a word adelphos, it means one born out of the same womb, and John by using this word, adelphos here translated as brother is saying to his readers, you and me, we're out of the same womb.

- We have the same emotions.
- We faced the same problems.
- We feel the same things
- We were born out of the same womb of humanity,

but not only that, he was saying you and me were both born out of the womb of God.

This word “brother” was not popularized the way we find it in the New Testament until the time of Alexander the Great. and Alexander the Great was the greatest soldier that had ever lived up until his time. He was adored by other soldiers. He would have huge award ceremonies where he would bring together many adoring soldiers. And when he knew of one soldier that was especially brave, a soldier that had really paid the price and had gone the extra mile, he would call that soldier by name. And would summon them onto the stage, they would stand next to him. He would wrap his arm around them, embraced them, and would say to all the other soldiers watching. Let all the empire know that Alexander is proud to be the brother of this soldier.

By calling him a brother, he was saying **he and I - we're the same.** We're out of the same womb. We feel the same thing. We faced the same battles. We have the same victors, but in addition to that, it became a military word which really carried the idea of a **comrade**. He and I are comrades, and that is the way the word brother is used in the New Testament. When the saints greet each other and call each other

brethren, they're really referring to each other as comrades.

Now, John is writing to his readers that are suffering. They may feel like they're failing because they're having struggles, but John says to them, "I'm proud to be your brother. As long as you're in the fight, as long as you're still slugging it out, as long as you're still going for the victory, I want you to know I'm proud to be associated with people like you."

You're not just my brethren, but you're also my comrades in the Lord. This must be a great boost to those that were hearing this letter.

But then John goes on and says, I John, who also am your brother. Now you understand it has a militaristic meaning who also am your fellow comrade, you and me, we're in this together. He said, and companion in tribulation and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. He uses the word companion.

The word companion is a Greek word, Koinonia, which means to share something in common or to have a common experience. But when you connect to the word soon, it means the two of US-- joint partners. We have a joint experience. It was the equivalent of saying what you are experiencing is not unique. I also have experienced it, and of course John was on the isle of Patmos suffering for his faith, exiled there because of the emperor Domitian believers everywhere are suffering because of the emperor Domitian and now John says, hey, it isn't just you.

I'm in the same condition that you were in.

So first, he says, we're brethren, the equivalent of saying we're comrades in the faith.

Secondly, he says, don't feel that your situation is so unique. We're all going through the same thing. In fact, I am your companion and again, he's coming right down to the level of his readers so he can connect with them, but then he continues to say, I'm your companion. In tribulation.

Tribulation is the Greek word Thlipsis. The word Thlipsis is a word most often used in the epistles of Paul. The word thlipsis describes a heavy pressure situation. Someone who feels pinned against the wall, a crushing situation you would say as debilitating and in fact this word thlipsis means to be nearly suffocated.

The Apostle Paul uses this word very clearly in Second Corinthians 1:8 when he says we were under great pressure.

That's the word, the thlipsis, and John uses this word to describe what he has experienced in his walk of faith. It hasn't all been a bed of roses.

He's come up against many things, as he's tried to walk out his walk of faith. Great persecution has come against him and in fact he calls it tribulation.

He said, companion in tribulation and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. John never lost sight of the reason why he was suffering. It wasn't just because of him. It was because of the kingdom. This word kingdom, the Greek word **basileia**, it describes the rule of God.

John remembered all of this was because he had taken a stand for the Kingdom of God and likewise when difficulties come against you don't always personalize it. Remember you are advancing the Kingdom of God, and the enemy is against the kingdom. **It's not so much you as it is for what you stand for**, and John said, I stand for the kingdom and because I stand for the kingdom, I'm also experiencing the patience of Jesus Christ. The word patience is the word **hupomene** from the word hupo, which means to be under as to be under a very heavy load and the word Mene, which means I abide, or I stayed.

When you compound the two words together, it forms of Greek word hupomene, which the King James version translates as the word patience. This word means endurance. It's a picture of Meno - **in his spot, although he's under a very heavy load, he's decided that he's not going to budge, or flinch. He is not moving for any reason. He refuses to surrender his territory. This is his spot. He will not relinquish it to anyone else.**

This was the equivalent of John saying, it doesn't matter what life does, what the emperor does or what any form of persecution attempts to do. I've made up my mind. **I'm not surrendering. I'm not moving. I'm not budging** in my commitment to Jesus Christ.

John says, I was in the isle of Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. When he says, **I was**, this word was, is ginomai = something that takes one off guard or by surprise.

In this verse, it's the equivalent of going through a strange set of circumstances that I don't know how they happened. I don't even know how they could ever be repeated. I somehow came to ginomai, I find myself in the isle of Patmos.

When you're going through a difficult time, it's important for you to remember why. **It's because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus**, it's not all about you. The devil is after the Word in you.

The Devil's after your victory testimony. John didn't give up and you shouldn't give up either. Take your stand, decide you're not budging, you're not flinching. You're not relinquishing your territory. You stand fast!

V. 10 John says, I was in the spirit on the lord's day and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet. The word **was** is again the word ginomai, taking something off guard or by surprise, which means John did not anticipate this was going to happen on this day. It took him completely off guard and by surprise, a great example of this word ginomai in Acts 10:10, the Bible says Peter's on the rooftop waiting for lunch and while he's waiting, he fell into a trance.

John says in Revelation, on the lord's day, **Lord's Day does not refer to Saturday**. It's not the sabbath and it does not refer to Sunday, which is the Christian Day of worship. It is the Greek word kuriakos, a technical term used by the emperor coined by Domitian to describe a day each month in which Domitian required all citizens in the Roman Empire to set aside time specifically to worship him.

On that day when the lost world was worshiping a fallen depraved leader. On that very day, I John came to find myself in another dimension, and while the world was worshiping a false commander, the real commander stepped into the cave where John was residing and revealed himself to John in a new way.

V. 11 I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

I am Alpha and Omega. The first and the last while Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet or Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. But when you find this formula Alpha and Omega, it's the equivalent of saying, **I'm the beginning, I'm the end, and I'm everything in between**. It is the equivalent of saying **I am all that there is. I am all sufficient to meet your needs**.



## **Background:**

The city of Ephesus was the largest church in ancient history, a church which was founded by the apostle Paul in the year 52 AD when he sailed into the harbor of Ephesus, the gospel was preached, the church was born, and Paul's ministry headquarters was established in the city of Ephesus.

**Nothing in the plan of God happens by accident.** Ephesus was called the gateway to Asia. It was the most illustrious of all cities. It was the most intelligent of all cities. As the saying goes... "If you can make it big in Ephesus, then it became a gateway for you into the whole of Asia."

Holy Spirit sent Paul and his team into Ephesus knowing that if the gospel could take root, it would open the gateway for the gospel to go from Ephesus into all of Asia. And the church was established in Ephesus and **Paul was there for two years** (Acts 19).

For example, there was a church established in the city of Smyrna, which was just about 35 miles away. Just beyond the city of Smyrna was the city of Pergamum. The city of Pergamum was the official seat of the governor or the pro council of Asia. And so this was a very critical city and the church was established there. And then the church was established in Thyatira, which was a city that had been built to defend Pergamum. And then beyond Thyatira, the church was established in the city of Sardis, a very wealthy, a very legendary city. And then the church was established in the city of Philadelphia and in Laodicea in all seven of these cities.

Now, sometimes we may wonder, I wonder how God is going to send us to start the church. How will he direct us to do what we do? Well, in this case, it was very simple. These seven cities were all situated on a single road. It was a circular road. Sometimes it was referred to as the postal road. And if you began in Ephesus and followed the road, this circular road would take you next to Smyrna. Follow the road. It takes you next to Pergamum, keep following the road. It takes you to Thyatira, ...the circular road will bring you back to the city of Ephesus.

So when Paul and his team received a divine commandment on how to evangelize Asia, the commandment was very simple. **Follow the road.**

Sometimes the Holy Spirit's instruction is very practical, and they simply followed the road. These were the major cities along the road.

We know that when Paul left Ephesus, it was pastored by Timothy, who served as pastor until he was about 80 years old when he beheaded in 68 A.D. in the city of Ephesus. After Timothy died, the apostle John himself became the pastor of the church and Ephesus.

There was a great relationship between these churches and how Jesus knows that by speaking to them he'll identify not only the problems in these churches. By addressing these seven churches and their seven particular needs, Jesus is going to address the universal needs in all the churches that existed at that time and that will exist throughout the entire church age.

I am alpha and Omega, the first and the last and what thou see is right in a book and send it into the seven churches which are in Asia.

**Fell into** is the same Greek word. Peter on the rooftop was not anticipating that he was going to fall into a trance. He was waiting for lunch. Peter found himself in another dimension, in a trance where he had a vision.

The word spirit in the King James version is capitalized. However, there is no capital for the word spirit in Greek. In Greek, this is a lower-case **s** it just says, I came to find myself in spirit. John is describing the **spiritual dimension**. It really means I never anticipated it. It completely took me off guard and by surprise, but I found myself in a spiritual dimension.

Revelation is an epistle written to the church.

When you have a knowledge of what God is doing, you are not going to be fooled by circumstances or moved into fear. Rather, you have peace knowing God cares for you & provide your needs daily.

1:3

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things...”

John is writing to the whole church for the whole church age. (not just to the seven churches mentioned)

1:4

John says “**grace be unto you and peace.**” We are not to be in fear about the future.

1:5

Jesus was the first one ever to be Born Again (begotten of the dead) He is the prince of the kings of the earth. (that means us according to V:6)

1:6

He has made us kings and priests unto God. As priests He made us worshippers - those who would serve Him and do His will in the earth. As kings, He gave us dominion over all the things in the earth.

1:7

Describes Jesus' return to earth, or His second coming when He takes control of all governments in order to fulfil the prophecies of Isaiah 9:6. He sets up His 1,000 year reign, a time of peace and righteousness.

Clouds = the Born Again raptured saints

Tribes of the earth = unregenerate people

God is just. When Jesus returns, there will be those who will rejoice, but there will also be those who will wail or mourn because they had every opportunity God could give them to receive the truth, but they rejected it. (The world calls this day "doomsday." God knows when all who will choose to accept Him have done so).

James 5:7

Precious fruit of the earth = spirits and souls of men

1:8

Jesus is Alpha & Omega the beginning and the end.

**Let's pick up the story again.**

1:9

John, the disciple of Jesus, his brother James, Peter, and Andrew were all partners in the fishing business before they became disciples of Jesus. John was the son of

Zebedee who was also a fisherman in Galilee. John's mother's name was Salome, and some say that Salome was the sister of Jesus' mother, Mary.

John owned a home in Jerusalem. Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD, John moved to Ephesus.

John pastored a church in Ephesus. He communicated with other churches in the area as stated in the book of Revelation. He advised and counseled many people who would later become believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

By order of the Roman Emperor, Domitian, John was exiled to the island, Patmos.

The government became uneasy with him because he wouldn't acknowledge the emperor as a god. He acknowledged him as head of state but not the one true living God. They decided to kill him. They even tried to boil him in oil, but he emerged unharmed just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego survived the fiery furnace. Seeing it was impossible to kill him they decided to exile him to an isolated island called Patmos where there was nobody there for him to influence of importance.

However, his popularity and influence in the Christian community continued through correspondence with all the churches. John wrote the book of Revelation during his exile in approximately 96 A.D. The Book is addressed to the "seven churches which are in Asia." By Asia is not meant the great continent of Asia, or even the whole of Asia Minor, but only its western end. Neither were the seven churches names the only churches in the district, for there were at least three other churches: Colossee, Colossians 1:2; Hierapolis, Colossians 4:13; and Troas, Acts 20:6-7. It was the seven churches that were on the "postal road."

When John was released from exile, he returned to Ephesus (in Asia Minor, now part of Turkey). John founded and built churches all through Asia until he died in Ephesus (100 A.D.), at the age of 93-94 (scholars are not certain which one).

Near the end of his life, it is said that he constantly repeated the phrase, "*Little children, love one another!*" He did that because he believed it was the Lord's most important commandment.

**Patmos:** An Aegean island south of Samos, where prisoners were exiled by the Roman authorities. The island is 10 miles long, and about 6 broad along the Northern coast.

1:10

John was an overcomer. No matter what happened to him, his attitude was one of "I cannot be defeated and I will not quit!" John was in the spirit and had a vision. "loud voice as of a trumpet" = has the same effect as a trumpet i.e.: you can't miss it.

The trumpet does not sound like a literal trumpet

1:12-13

- Gold always symbolizes God's own character.
- Lamp or candle = light giving i.e.: understanding
- Golden lampstands = churches
- Seven = fulfilment and completion
- Son of man = His humanity
- Girded about the chest with a golden band = His divine, priestly position as Son of God and the Son of man.

Notice Christ's location - in the midst of the churches.

V. 12 says; And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. I turned is a Greek word, which literally means to physically turn around. This tells us this was not just a vision, there was a physical dimension to what John was experiencing.

He heard a voice literally coming from behind him. And when he says in this verse, I turned, it means John literally physically turned to see the voice that was speaking to him. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me and being turned. I **saw seven golden candlesticks**. He's already identified Jesus in verse 11 when he said, I am alpha and Omega, the first and the last. We know this is the voice of Christ himself.

It's possible that John recognized that voice because John had heard the voice of Jesus so many times earlier in his life and he'd carried the memories of Jesus in his soul for all of these years waiting for that moment when he would see Jesus again. Now he hears a voice.

The Bible tells us in verse 12 he recognizes the voice and in haste he physically turns around. He knows that voice. He's expecting to see Jesus, but what does he say?

Verse 12 says, and I turned to see the voice that spoke with me and being turned. I saw **seven golden candlesticks**. Rev. 1:20 tells us these seven candlesticks are the seven churches.

But when John saw them, he didn't just see candlesticks. He saw seven **golden** candlesticks. Now when we hear the word candlesticks, we think of a candle with a wick that was dipped in wax -- not manufactured widely until the 14th century.

Candlestick in revelation chapter one verse 12, it is a Greek word, Luchnia and the word luchnia does not describe a candle stick like this but is actually the Greek word for an **oil burning lamp**.

There were no two lamps that were the same as they were fashioned by hand. Every lamp had its own unique characteristics. And this is very important because we're talking about the church. There are no two churches that are the same. **They have the same basic function**. They are to be filled with oil, which is the oil of Holy Spirit, there to **have a handle** so they can be directed by the Lord as needed.

And there is a mouth through which a wick is to be placed into the oil. And when the wick becomes saturated and lit with fire, then it could begin to give light to everyone that is in the house.

Likewise, the church is intended to be God's oil lamp in the world. The church is to be filled with the precious oil of the Holy Spirit. We are to be directed by the Lord to shine the light where we need to shine it. We have a mouth for declaring the gospel. And when we are saturated with the Holy Spirit and set on fire with the power of God, we become a bright, shining lamp to give light in darkness. That is the purpose of the church. However, a lamp in the Roman world, in the Greek world was made of clay. It was very fragile.

It was very breakable, very replaceable. But when you come to this verse, we find the church not pictured as a clay lamp, but as a lamp **made out of gold**. Seven golden candlesticks or seven golden lamps would be a better translation. The word gold is the Greek word **chrusos**. And this word chrusos describes the most valuable metal. There was nothing more valuable in the first century than chrusos than gold. And this word describes pure gold. Wow.

## Gold and not clay.

- There are 34 references in the Old Testament about God's people being clay, being formed, molded, shaped.
- There is only one reference in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit is housed in this clay body, 2 Corinthians 4:7
- Primarily in the New Testament (the Church), we are seen as refined gold, costly, where we are molded this time by the fire of the Holy Spirit.

When John turned to see Christ, he saw the church and when he saw the church, the church was symbolized as a golden lamp, seven of them. Because we are pure gold to Jesus. Even though the church has defects, and though the church has problems; in the mind of God, in the mind of Jesus, the church is absolutely golden. He gave His blood for the church, He redeemed the church, He died for the church. And even though the church has problems, even now, Christ loves the church, and Christ is in the midst of the church. It's golden to Him.

Christ who is the head of the church, who gave His life for the church is not ashamed of His church.

Jesus was not distant from the church. He was not shunning them because of their defects in their problems. Jesus was proud to be associated with them, even though they had internal problems, they were golden to Him. He loved them. They were the containers of the Holy Spirit. They were the ones giving light in darkness. They were His people carrying out His mission in the earth, and Christ in this verse is seen in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks and notice what He looks like standing in the midst of them. The lampstand shows we are not only lights, but that God has elevated the lights (His church) to be seen by others.

One likened to the son of man, "liken to" is a Greek word, which means he had the resemblance of the son of man. Just the resemblance. But John has seen him so differently. For example, in these verses, he sees him as the son of man, a resemblance of the son of man.

In a certain way, he looked like Jesus that he had known in the flesh, but in another way, he looked different.

V. 14 His head and His hair was white like wool, as white as snow. Whereas a flame of fire, His feet like fine brass, His voice as the sound of many waters. He had in His right hand, seven stars and out of His mouth went a sharp two-sided sword. His countenance was as the sun. So, in one way John says it was the form of Jesus. I recognize the form he had assemblance; He had a particular countenance as the son of man, and yet there were so many elements that were different than John had never seen before.

**First and foremost**, above everything else. The first thing John says he saw, **He was clothed with a garment down to the foot**, and this particular phrase describes our garment, which goes all the way down to the foot and the foot is uncovered. There is no shoes. He is standing barefoot. This is exactly the **clothing of the high priest**, which is described in Exodus chapter 28. And in Revelation one, Jesus' feet are like fine brass.

**Brass represents judgment** and Jesus was definitely coming with judgement to the churches who would not repent. You're going to see this is very merciful. This is really wonderful, but before Jesus is seen as one coming in judgment before he is seen as a judge. First, he is seen as a priest.

Jesus is standing in the middle of the church. He is dressed like a high priest because He is THE high priest. The book of Hebrews tells us He ever lives to make intercession for us and standing in the midst of the seeing their problems, seeing their challenges and yet knowing that they're golden, not shunning them, not standing away from them, but right in the midst of them. **Christ stands as a great high priest where He is praying for these churches. He's praying for them to hear His voice. He's praying for them to repent.**

What was most significant to John above everything else? That's what we find in verse 13 one like unto the son of man and now he begins to describe what he sees. Clothed with a garment down to the foot and gird about the paps with a golden girdle.

From the Lord's chest, He had a golden belt. What does this mean?

Kings and emperors at that time wore golden belts, and usually if they were lowly Kings, they were belts around their waist, but the more powerful they were, the more majestic they were and the richer they were. They elevated their belt higher and higher and higher, and there was a reason for this. First of all, everyone saw



their wealth. Secondly, it caused their gown to move in a more sweeping motion. It was very majestic. So now when we see Christ with a golden belt around His chest, it tells us that His robe goes down to the foot, is moving in a very sweeping motion. Christ here is portrayed very majestically. However, even wealthy Kings at this time did not wear belts that were solid gold, and yet that's what Christ has in this verse. This Greek word that is used describes a very broad belt made of solid gold. Very few Kings could even afford this. Most Kings wore strands of gold that were woven together with other kinds of fabric. You could just see slithers of gold.

But now we see Christ is so powerful. Christ is so majestic. Christ has so much supply. He has so much wealth, vast wealth that He doesn't just have strands of gold, but He has a broad, wide gold belt wrapped around His chest. And why was this important for John? Because John had been exiled by a wicked King named Domitian who was ruling in Rome and it seemed that Domitian had power overall. But now when John sees Christ, he understands, first of all, Christ is the high priest praying for the church. And secondly, Jesus appears as the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords. He's the emperor of all emperors with a golden belt around his chest to demonstrate **how powerful, how majestic and how vastly wealthy He is.** No one compares to Christ and that is still who He is today.

**Christ is all majestic. He has everything that we need.**

He is all sufficient to meet every single need in our life.

But then the Bible goes on to say in verse 14 His head and His hairs were white like wool. What? When you see how artists paint this, trying to create renditions of this text, very often they paint Jesus with pictures of white hair. That's not what this means. When the Bible says, wool, it is the same phrase used in Matthew chapter 17:2 to describe Christ shining with glory at the mount of transfiguration, or in Matthew verse 28 to describe the angels who were present the day of the resurrection.

The Bible says they were shining like lightning. It's the same Greek phrase that is used here. So now when the Bible says His head and His hairs were white like wool, **it's really describing the glory of God was beaming from Christ.**

So now we see He is the great high priest. Secondly, we see He is the great emperor. He is the emperor of all emperors. And next John says, I could hardly look into His face because His head were shining with glory like I've never seen before.

And John said his eyes were as a flame of fire. They were as a flame of fire, a flame that is flickering, swirling, twirling as it arches and bends.

When you look in a fire, you can nearly get lost looking into the fire as suddenly you're captivated by the flames as they've bend, twirl and swirl. There's an intelligence in that flame of fire and by saying His eyes were as a flame of fire. John is telling us what he saw when he looked into the eyes of Jesus.

John is totally fixated, completely captivated by the eyes of Jesus, mesmerized as he looks into the eyes of Jesus Christ.

Then he continues and says His feet were likened to **find brass as if they burned in a furnace**. Verse 13 that His feet were uncovered.

But when you read verse 15 it says his feet, plural. Both of them were like fine brass as if they burned in a furnace. The Greek word here is very strange, a compound of two words. The word **Chalkolibano**, which is the word for brass or bronze and bronze in scripture **represents judgment**.

It represents judgment, but second part of the word is "Banos" and the word banos is the word for frankincense, and frankincense was the incense or the perfume which was used in the temple, particularly in the Holy of Holies by the high priest. **And it represented prayer**. If you were to enter into the Holy of Holies, which you could not do, but if you did, you would have found the smell, the aroma **of frankincense because it was symbolic of prayer**. The temple, the Holy of Holies was filled with the aroma of frankincense. And when you compound the two words together, it forms a Greek word **chalkolibano**, strange word because you cannot mix bronze and frankincense. These things do not mix together. They're not alloys. How do you mix perfume with bronze? But that's what you find in this text.

Why would Jesus' feet be symbolized in this way? Why are His feet seen as bronze that are doused with frankincense? That's really what the Greek means. Bronze doused with frankincense, the King James translators didn't know how to translate it, so they translated feet liken to find brass as if they burned in a furnace.

Christ in a certain sense is coming with judgment to deal with the things that are wrong inside the church, yet Christ is not in a rush to judge.

Bronze is very heavy. The fact that Christ's feet are made of bronze tells us even

though He is walking in the direction of these churches in order to judge what is wrong, Christ is moving very slowly in their direction.

Christ is never in a rush to judge. If you think about your own life and the things that have been wrong, God has always given you **time to repent**. He's always warned you in advance that He's going to deal with you and then giving you a significant time to self-correct and now we find though Christ is about to deal with the churches that are in error. The word frankincense is the picture of judgment doused in prayer. Christ is praying for them. We've already seen Him in verse 13 appearing as THE great high priest.

Christ is praying for them that they'll hear His message and self-correct before He arrives. We see a perfect example of this in chapter two.

In chapter two Jesus addresses the church of Thyatira, and there is a woman seducing the church, a false prophetess whose name is Jezebel.

Jesus says in verse 21 I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not. Then Jesus says, I gave her **space, I gave her time**, he warned her, but He did not quickly judge her. He gave her space. And now that's what we find in revelation chapter one even though Christ is coming to deal with what is wrong in the church, Christ moves very slowly, very steadily in our direction, sending the message, telling us what we need to change and praying doused in frankincense, believing that we will self-correct so He doesn't have to appear and apply judgment.

And in fact, it continues to say His feet were like fine brass as if they burned in a furnace. This describes the bronze that is not set yet. It's in the process of being set, but it's not hard yet.

Then John says, and His voice was as the sound of many waters, this must have been easy for John to write this because John was living on the isle of Patmos in a cave and in the cave where John was living, he could hear the sounds of the sea and if there was a storm, the storm sound was nearly overwhelming.

And now John says, when Christ spoke, His voice was like that. When Christ speaks, no one else can be heard. His voice is overpowering, His voice is heard above everyone else's voice. And then John says in verse 16 and He had in His right hand seven stars and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was as the sun shining in his strength. First of all, he says in verse 16

he had in His right hand, seven stars, right hand always represents a position of authority or power. So that's very important in this verse. So the right hand here, power, authority, and what does he have in his right hand?

Seven stars. When the Bible says he had in His right hand, the word had the Greek word "echo." It means a firm grip, whatever these seven stars are, they are in the control of Christ. What are the seven stars? Rev. 1:20 tells us these are the seven churches.

The word angel, the Greek shows us a better translation is messengers, or pastors. We find Christ has in His hand the leadership or the pastors of the seven churches, they are in the grip of Christ.

These pastors do not belong to the deacon board. They do not belong to the advisory board. In fact, they don't even belong to the church. Remember fivefold ministry, our gifts of Christ to the church, and now we find them in the right hand of Christ, the ruling authority of Christ, the power of Christ. But that also means they are answerable to Christ.

John had been exiled by Domitian. Domitian declared that he was God. When Domitian's son died. He minted a coin. On one side of the coin was the image of Domitian, and on the flip side of the coin was the image of Domitian's dead child and the dead child was sitting on a globe of the earth, playing with seven stars.

The Domitian says my dead child is now deified. He is as great as the gods. He is so great. He's playing with the seven stars of the universe and by minting this coin and his child being equal with the god Jupiter, equal with the god Zeus. He was saying, Hey, if my child is God, who do you think I am? I'm greater than God himself. I am THEE God. I'm the greatest of all gods. And he portrayed this as he and his son playing with the seven stars, having authority even over the universe.

And now Jesus shows up and Jesus opens His right hand, and says, "Hey, John, look what I have in my hand." I'm the one with the seven stars. If you want to know who is the Lord of the universe, look no further. If you want to know who really the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, the real God of the universe is not this demented ruler setting on the throne in Rome who exiled you to this Island.

But look, John, I'm the one with the seven stars. It is a declaration by Jesus about His own deity and then the Bible says out of His mouth went a sharp, two-edged

sword. The word used here is the Greek word romphaia. The word romphaia was a very deadly sword and in this verse, Christ is portrayed as coming with a sword, a sword to excise disease that was trying to invade the churches. We know in revelation chapter two that the church of Ephesus was dealing with the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. We know from revelation chapter two the church of Pergamum was also dealing with the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. These were deadly diseases, deadly teachings. Jesus didn't hate these people. He hated their teaching, and He hated their work.

Jesus Christ loves His church so much that He doesn't ignore the problems, but He comes to lovingly correct, to carry out a surgical procedure to excise those diseases from His church.

And likewise, Christ still loves the church, and from time to time, Christ does what He has to do as He removes from the church elements that needs to be removed. And that's what we now find in Revelation 2:16; and his countenance was as the sunshine it then all of His strength.

Here we have the picture of glory, so brilliant that you nearly cannot look into it. This is the picture of you looking into the sun in the most intense moment of the day. The same Greek word here is used to describe what happens in the winter when the sun is out in all its glory and in shined on the snow and it reflects on the snow and the snow becomes a blinding light. You can't look into it because it is so glorious!

As the Lord shows us more of His glory, let us be changed and reflect that glory back to Him, in honor and humility.