



Message **Transcript**

A Vision of Christ

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- Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory, all the honor and all the praise for who you are. And Lord, we ask in these moments that we have together, Lord that you would be helpful to us, that you would be helpful to me, that we would get a clear picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and that you would show us exactly who you are and that how we're called to respond to you. And Lord, we know that Your word is living and active. We know you're gonna make your way among us and Lord as you do, we give you all the glory, honor and praise. And for all those who are ready to hear Jesus this morning by faith, believe what He says and then put into practice what He shows you. Would you agree that you're ready this morning by very loudly saying the word, amen, amen.

They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. Even when you have somebody explain something to you often you wanna picture. Perhaps you're single and you get hooked up on a, quote, blind date. You can hear your friends talk about that person and how wonderful they are, give you their entire resume, tell you how great it's gonna be and then oftentimes if you've had a bad experience you'll say something like this, do you have a picture? I'd like to see what you're talking about.

When it comes to our relationship with Jesus Christ all of us have conjured an image up of what we think that Jesus is or what He looks like or how He is to be. And for many of us, unfortunately, our picture is not a biblical one. And what God would desire is for us to know Jesus in all of His glory and who He is so that we can respond accordingly. We get picture from the New Testament gospels and when Jesus Christ became incarnate, we get a picture of how He loved and showed mercy and

compassion, and He humbled Himself to obedience to the point of death, even death on the cross but we don't get a lot of a picture of what it was like after Jesus rose from the dead. We see Him appearing to His disciples. We see Him going in and out of walls but many may ask what's He look like now? What's it gonna be like when He comes back?

What should be the picture of Jesus that I should have in my head so that I have a true picture of who this Jesus that I serve really is? And if you've ever asked that question God wants to answer that question today by taking a look in Revelation chapter one starting in verse nine and going through verse 20 as we finish that chapter. So I wanna invite you to open your Bible up to Revelation, chapter one, starting in verse nine. And I'd like to read through these verses which paint a picture for us of the resurrected Christ and then unpack some truths about this vision as we see this together. Hear the word of the Lord.

"I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance, which are in Jesus was on the Island called Patmos because 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 the sound of a trumpet saying, "write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, and to Smyrna and to Pergamon and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea. "Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me, and having turned. I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man

clothed in a robe, reaching to the feet "and girded across His chest with a gold sash. "His head and His hair were white like wool, like snow "and His eyes were like a flame of fire. "His feet were like burnished bronze when it has been made "the glow in a furnace. "And His voice was like the sound of many waters. "In His right hand He held seven stars "and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. "And His face was like the sun shining in its strength. "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. "And He placed His right hand "on me saying, 'do not be afraid, I am the first "and the last, and the living one, and I was dead, "and behold, I am alive forever more. "And I have the keys of death and Hades. "Therefore write the things which you have seen "and the things which are, "and the things which will take place after these things. "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw "on 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 churches."

And here we get a picture of Jesus unlike we get in the gospels. And as we've been talking about this book, the revelation of Jesus Christ, we're talking about one revelation. As we mentioned last week, the revelation is the unveiling of the person of Jesus explaining to us a bigger picture of who He is so that we can understand who He is.

And in this section we're really gonna highlight three aspects of this vision that John, is spelling out in this book that we have the privilege of reading today.

And the first is this, that this vision of Christ alerts us that Christ still has a message for His church. The first part of this vision alerts us, makes us aware of that

Jesus Christ still has a message for his church. Notice what John says. He says, "I, John, your brother and fellow partaker "in the tribulation and kingdom, and perseverance "which are in Jesus, was on the Island called Patmos "because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." Notice how John refers to himself. John does not refer to himself as the disciple that Jesus loved. John doesn't refer to himself as a great apostle. John doesn't refer to himself with all these credentials. How does he refer to himself, as what? Brother.

As we've talked about many times that when we trust Jesus Christ as our Lord and savior and we all share the same father that makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. What's John talking about? He's talking about family. He's saying, I'm your brother. And then what does he say? Fellow partaker. He's gonna say I'm a sharer in the things that I'm gonna talk about, that we're all going through the same things.

Did you know that regardless of your role in the kingdom that we all endure all the same things because of Jesus. That a title doesn't excuse you from the other things if God doesn't give you more privilege or less privilege, that all of us in Christ Jesus are family. We're all brothers and sisters in Christ. And so we're gonna experience some things together.

And one of the things that he's telling us he experiences just like us, the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance, which are where, where do we find those? In Jesus. If you're in Christ you're gonna experience the kingdom tribulation and have opportunities to persevere in it. That's just part and parcel to the package. Now, when he's talking

about the tribulation here he's not talking about the great tribulation. We'll be talking about that in weeks to come. The one that Jesus talked about in His Olivet Discourse. He's talking about the tribulation. He's talking about to be human and have a relationship with Jesus Christ you're gonna suffer a little bit. You're gonna go through some tough times a little bit just because you're in Christ.

Second, Timothy 3:12 says, "Anyone who wants to live "a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." In other words, if you pursue your relationship with the Lord and you pursue relationships with others the way the Lord would want you to, and you go full force in that, you're gonna experience some pushback. So like Jesus said in John 16:33 is that, "In this world you will have," what, "tribulation, but take heart I've overcome the world." It gives me good news this morning because sometimes we're falsely promised that if we just trust Jesus, and if we just give our best to Him that everything's gonna be smooth sailing.

Take it on the authority of the word of God, if you trust Jesus and give them everything you have there will be tribulation in your life. You don't get to choose where that suffering is gonna come from. You don't get to choose how the suffering is gonna be. You don't get to choose what direction that's going to come from. That's why it's tribulation 'cause you're not choosing oftentimes, but there will be some, there's tribulation. What else are you part of? You're part of the kingdom.

When you trust in Jesus Christ because He's King of Kings, because He's Lord of Lords, guess what you're a part of? You're part of the kingdom of God. And there's a present day kingdom where Jesus Christ is still ruling and reigning. Ultimately, He's

going to come to planet earth, and rule and reign. There's a future kingdom coming that you get to be part of as well, but we're all part of the kingdom of God. As He's advancing His rule, as He's advancing His reign on planet earth, we get to be a part of that.

And then what's John say, he's also part of what? Perseverance, steadfastness. The word literally means remaining under a trial, remaining under a challenge, remaining under suffering. So when James starts off and he says, consider it all joy my brothers, when you face trials of many kinds, you know, so that the testing of your faith produces what? Perseverance, perseverance must have its work so that it may be perfected. Perseverance is remaining under the trial. John is saying this, because I'm in Christ I'm part of His kingdom and I'm also going through tribulation, and I'm also gonna make it through because Jesus goes with me in the same way that he goes with you. We see this really highlighted in Paul's writings in Romans chapter five, verses three to five where he highlights this thought of why must we go through challenges and trials, and tribulations?

Here's what he says. Romans five, three says, "And not only this 'but we also exalt in our tribulations knowing "that tribulation brings about perseverance." There's that word? "Perseverance, proven character and proven character hope "and hope does not disappoint because "the love of God has been poured out within our hearts "through the Holy spirit who has given to us. " What does it mean? When you go through tribulation, when you go through trials and the Lord God is coming through you, guess what it produces? Proven character and hope.

Why does God allow trials? 'Cause He wants to grow your character and He wants to grow your hope. And your hope friends is not in this world, it's in Him and His kingdom that is coming. And every Christian everywhere goes through tribulations. Every Christian everywhere is part of the kingdom. And every Christian everywhere through Christ can persevere in whatever they have. And John saying, hey, I'm just like you, I'm one of yours.

Now, why is John, going through this? Here's what he says. He says at the end of verse one, "I'm going through this "and I've been banished to the Island called Patmos "which is in the Aegean Sea," because of what? "The word of God and the testimony of Jesus." We saw that earlier in chapter one, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. He was bearing witness to the fact that the word of God, that the scriptures were true, that revealed the Lagasse the living Christ, and he was living for Jesus in every way and testifying that Jesus Christ was the only way to God. He was testifying that Jesus laid down His life on a cross, died and was buried and rose from the dead and in Him, and only in Him, can you have life in His name.

Can you imagine living under such a totalitarian type of government that they would banish you for believing in two things, that the word of God is true and that the testimony of Jesus is the only way. I mean, can you imagine that? I mean, that was the life that he lived. And because he believed those things he was banished to the Island of Patmos where they would send political prisoners to mine and to work, and to do hard stuff, and the only crime he committed is he was testifying and continued to testify

the word of God is true and the testimony of Jesus Christ being Lord is true. That's it, that's his only crime.

Guess what? You're gonna see more and more of that as we continue to unfold in this book and you're gonna see more and more of that in our culture. See this alerts us, that Christ still has a message. And as John is dealing with all this, he's not complaining, he's not whining, he's not doing any of those things. Here's what it says. He says, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day "and heard behind me a loud voice like the sound "of a trumpet saying right in the book what you see "and send it to the seven churches. "To Ephesus and to Smyrna, and of Pergamon, and to Thyatira, "and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

So he's in the spirit on the Lord's day. In the spirit means to be in the realm of the spirit. It means to commune with God through His spirit. We can have different experiences as we do that. We're gonna see that this revelation that John is getting from Jesus it's going to be a longer time in the spirit, it's gonna be a vision unlike any of us I've ever seen, but he's in the spirit. It's on the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day is the first day of the week, that Sunday. So on a Sunday, he's in the spirit. If you've ever had an encounter where you're in the spirit, you're in the realm of the spirit, you're doing Bible study and God begins to reveal some more things, that's what's happening to John. And John, is seeing something he hasn't seen before and he's hearing things he hasn't heard. And he said on Lord's day, he heard behind me, behind him, a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet. Now trumpet is a unique instrument, right? It's unlike any other instruments.

Notice what kind of voice he heard. It was a loud voice, right? So whoever's doing this speaking which we're gonna find out is Jesus, it is a loud voice. Now, why is that important? Because here's why, because I think sometimes we get the picture of Jesus Christ as just having this really soft meek and mild understanding of who He is. And He's really good with kids. He'd be great at hospice care. He's kinda nice. I mean, He'd be good to have around, He's meek, He's mild. He's speaking in a loud voice that sounded like a trumpet.

A trumpet is an alerting instrument, it calls you to action. And the action he's gonna be called to is to send letters to the seven churches. And if you study these seven churches, which we will in chapters two and three, this is in modern day Turkey. It was called Asia Minor at the time. If you take the first church, Ephesus, and you kind of work away clockwise in a circle you're gonna see all seven of these churches. These were on postal routes. They were important churches that he was going to write to.

Now we know that these were seven specific churches in that day so that's who he's writing to, but also understand this, the number seven as we've talked about is the number of completion. What we're gonna see as we study these churches is not only were these seven specific churches but these seven specific churches dictate what the church has looked like from the time of Jesus. We're gonna learn how Jesus feels about different kinds of churches and we're gonna learn about what Jesus wants to do in His church. We're gonna be able to put BRAVE Church over this as a map on chapters two and three and say, hey, are we doing what God wants? Are we not

doing what God wants? Are we gonna be commended or condemned for the way in which we're handling our business? So this is what's going on.

So he heard this voice like a sound of a trumpet. Now in first Corinthians chapter 14 and verse eight talks about the bugle. And it says, "For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound "who will prepare himself for battle?" I mean the trumpet has a way of getting your attention. Now, as I was preparing this week I was thinking about what it was like as a little boy. My mom used to wake me up in the morning. I hated getting up in the morning. She would open my shade. Sometimes she would sing. She would say, it's time to get up, it's time to get up. And I was just so thankful that my mom didn't know how to play the trumpet 'cause if my mom could play the trumpet it probably would have sounded like this as a kid. Wake up, Jeff. All right.

Please welcome, Dan Lovett. He's one of our own here at BRAVE Church, we love Him. Some of you are a lot more alert now than you were three minutes ago, I love that. I was watching you, I knew it was coming. All right, so the trumpet can call us into action like that. Oftentimes a bugle or a trumpet is played at a funeral of military or Arlington cemetery. Tell us what that would sound like. Really good. It's called taps. Some people have referred to that is owed to the Broncos 2020 season. Right, yeah. Then like last year I was in Churchill Downs. And when they report to post, what's that sound like? Yeah, that's good.

- That's the horse.

- Yeah, so I figured it like sometimes the sporting events like athletes and teams,

they get all the praises. Jesus' worth more than athletes and Jesus' worth more, I'm gonna invite you to stand real quick. If everybody would stand, I wanna invite, if you're in Broomfield, even online, you can stand. Let's just see if you can participate in this football. Thanks, Dan. Love you brother.

- Thank you, how was that?

- It was great. You may be seated. I think that's a good way to start every sermon honestly. Pun intended, Dan, that was a blast, yeah.

But this is the picture John's getting behind him. It's a loud trumpeting voice that's calling you to action. I mean, he says, Jesus still has a message for His church. Isn't it good to know that Jesus has abandoned His church, that He still wants to speak to us, that the God of the universe still wants to talk to us. And as we unpack this vision and we see the next side of this vision, not only does this vision alert us that Christ has a message for the church but this vision of Christ provides us with a clear picture of Christ in His church. This vision is gonna provide us with a clear picture of Christ in His church.

Now, for many of you, because your only view of Jesus is in the manger on Christmas, I want you to hear what Jesus looks like today. I'm just gonna read these verses again, just get it in your head and we'll unpack them.

He says, "Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking "with me and having turned I saw seven golden lampstands. "And in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like "a son of man clothed in a robe, reaching to the feet "and girded across His chest

was a golden sash." "His head and His hair were white, like white wool, "like snow and His eyes were like a flame of fire. "His feet were like burnished bronze "when it had been made the glow in the furnace, "and His voice was like the sound of many waters. "In His right hand, He held seven stars "and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. "And His face was like the sun shining in its strength." That's a picture of Jesus many people don't have. So let's just take a look and unpack all this. Like, what's this clear picture of Jesus.

Let's first of all, take a look at where He's positioned. He turned to see the voice that was speaking with me and having turned, he saw seven golden lampstands. And in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man. That's what he sees.

So what do we see? Now in revelation sometimes it doesn't give us what the symbol actually means but if you drop your eyes down to verse 20, at the end we read that the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, which we'll get to, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. So he turns around to hear the voice. He startled by the trumpet. He looks around and there's seven churches. And in the middle of the churches, guess where Jesus is? Right smack dab in the middle of the church. He said he saw one like a son of man. As we talked about last week that's a reference to Daniel seven, 13, "Jesus as son of man is claiming "that He's the God of the universe."

Where does the God of the universe position himself today? Where's God, where is He? He's right smack dab in the center of the church. What does Jesus care about? The church. What's his vehicle that He wants to use to advance the kingdom? The

church, the church, the church, the church, the church, the church, don't miss this. Am I being clear? In case you're wondering where Jesus is. He's in the church, according to the word of God. And He's in all of His glory in the church.

Now that's true really important because when Jesus was on the earth, even when Peter gave testimony and said, "You're the Christ the son of the living, God." And Jesus said, "Blessed are you, Simon, son of John, "for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, "but my Father who's in heaven." It's great that you know this because you're saved once and for all, but He doesn't say there. He says, and you shall be called Peter or Petra, which means rock, and on this rock, in other words, on this testimony that I'm the Christ I will build my church and the Gates of hell will not prevail against it. What you see is this community of people, this team, this gathering of people that trust Jesus Christ alone who are advancing the kingdom in the world and the devil, and all of his demons, can't stop what God wants to do. Ain't that awesome?

Where's He at today? He's in the church. And He's positioned Himself in the middle of the church. When I think about this, we got some guys who go to our church that are UFC fighters. I always picture the octagon and Jesus standing right in the middle and His churches are surrounding. And he's like, I dare you. I mean, I'm the King of Kings and I'm the Lord of Lords, and if I care about anything on the planet earth, it's not politics, it's not education, it's not money, it's my church. That's who I came for, that's who I died for, that's who I rose for, that's who I'm coming back to redeem, that's what I care about and I'm standing right in the middle of that.

Don't miss that. It's important that we understand that, it's the church. And what's He doing in this church? Well, it tells us how He's dressed? He says, "He's clothed in a robe, reaching to the feet "and girded across His chest with a golden sash." If you were to read through the first five books of the Bible you would see that that's high priestly garment wear. He is the high priest.

The high priest was the most important spiritual figure in the Old Testament and what we read about in the New Testament is Jesus Christ took over. Once and for all, He is our high priest. So what does Jesus do? Like who is this high priest?

We read about it in Hebrews chapter, really the whole book of Hebrews, but just a couple of verses from Hebrews. Hebrews chapter four, verses 14 and following says, "Therefore since we have a great high priest "who has passed through the heavens, "Jesus, the son of God let us hold fast to our confession "for we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize "with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted "in all things as we are yet without sin. "Therefore let us draw near with confidence "to the throne of grace so that we may receive mercy "and find grace to help in our time of need."

What's our high priest like? Our high priest became incarnate flesh. God became a man. He was tempted in every way that we are yet was without sin. Which means this. Anytime you're tempted, you can go to Him, and He says this, I get it. I know what that's like. I understand, I went through that. Now I didn't fail because I'm God and you failed but guess what? I'm still dispensing mercy and I'm still dispensing grace, and you

can still come to me because I'm a loving, caring high priest.

That's who He is. And what does He do? Hebrews seven 25 says, "He lives to make intercession for us." He wants to make sure we're saved completely. If you've trusted in Jesus Christ, you are saved and saved to the full because Jesus Christ is going to ensure that you make it all the way to heaven. And one of the ways He's gonna do that, He's interceding for you all the time.

Some people think, well, Jesus is just up in heaven like sitting in at the right hand of God, the Father, like twiddling His thumbs and maybe checking out Netflix, some different movies He hasn't seen. What's He gonna, no, He's interceding, that means He's praying for you on behalf of you. He's going to the father for you. He's interceding, He's making sure that you know that He is working out His salvation in and through you. And He loves you. And He's wanting to offer mercy anytime that you need it. He's willing to offer grace anytime. That's who He is. He's our mediator.

And the Bible says there's one mediator between God and man, it's the man, Jesus Christ. That's what He's doing. He's doing business between us and the Father all the time.

What else is He like? Notice His look. I mean, we get a look at who He is after we see His robe. It says His head and His hair white like white wool, like snow. Yes, Jesus is not bald. Right? White hair, white wool like snow. But it didn't only say His hair, what does it say? His head and His hair, Now, what is it showing a picture of? It's showing a picture of Jesus holiness and His purity because that's who He is.

And I wanna make something very clear that the moment that you trust Jesus, you've been declared righteous by God. It means you don't have to work anymore 'cause you never could work for your salvation. And even after being a Christian, you can't work for your salvation, you are declared righteous by God. And there's nothing you can do to make yourself more righteous. However, being righteous, what God desires on planet earth is to work out that righteousness in your life so that it's aligned with His righteousness so that when you enter heaven, you are more like Christ than you were when you first got Saved.

He's pure. We read through the Bible about Jesus' purity. Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God. His purity is what gets us ready for what is to come. Now, how does He get us ready? Isaiah, one 18 says, "Though, your sins were like scarlet, they will be made white as snow."

In the New Testament, First John one seven highlights some of those same words as John, the author of this book writes in his first letter. He says this, First John one seven, " But if we walk "in the light, as He Himself is in the light :we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus "His son cleanses us from all our sin."

How are we purified? By the blood Of Jesus. When you see Jesus at the transfiguration in Matthew chapter 17 in verse two, what happens? All of his clothes, everything goes to such bright white, everything. What is that a picture of? His holiness. And getting us ready to meet Jesus means that we in our heart need to crave holiness. That's what the Bible says, be holy, therefore, as I am holy, be holy.

This week I officiated a funeral of one of my favorite saints that attended BRAVE Church. Her name was Lorraine, she died. She was 101 years old. We shared the same birth date. At her hundredth birthday I introduced her to the whole congregation. I'll make you a promise. If you're here worshipping at 100 I'll stop the service for you too, all right? Great lady was reading the Lord's Prayer. The nurses could hear her tell Jesus she was ready to go home and went home reading the Lord's Prayer. She died in her sleep. Praise God, praise God.

So I was officiating the funeral but I was out of town this week. So I'd asked my wife to take some things to the cleaners. And unfortunately my wife picked up my suit but I had two different pairs of pants that looked the same. So instead of picking up the jacket and the suit pants we picked up two pairs of suit pants. And so I'm on my way to the cleaners, on my way to the funeral and I'm getting ready to get my suit, which I rarely wear. And I get there and realize, oh man, this shirt takes cuff links. I don't have cuff links. And oh, by the way, sir, there was no suit, there was just two pairs of pants. So then I was trying to make shift my way on the way to the funeral, like what do I do? And what do I wear? And I was piecing things together. I ended up having to do the funeral in jeans, right? Which was okay, I was behind a big podium. I was kind of hiding back there, it was okay. But I was like, you walk into a place where everybody's wearing a suit and it's solemn, and it's good, and you walk in wearing jeans. It's just this, I know I'm welcome there, and I know it was okay, just felt weird like I'm sorry.

When you get to heaven, God doesn't want you going hiding behind a podium.

God doesn't want you going in and saying, I know I'm welcome here, but not ready. God wants you to in saying, I know I'm righteous because your blood has cleansed me and I have a clean conscience before you. It doesn't mean I've been perfect, but I know that you have purified me from all my sin because I'm repentant and I'm confessing, and I'm growing in my holiness. That's what God's desire would be for you, amen.

Now let me be clear, if you've trusted in Jesus, you're declared righteous. I don't believe you're gonna walk around heaven in shame. I don't think there's shame in heaven. What I'm trying to make the point of is that God is trying to grow us in holiness. And you wanna grow in your holiness 'cause when you meet the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, He's completely holy.

So what does the Lord do to purify us? Notice this next part. Not only we hear about His head and His hair being white, but His eyes were like a flame Fire. His eyes were like a flame of fire. What does He do? He convicts us. He convicts us. You ever have a pet When you were a little kid that can just give you a look and you knew, I better straighten up. Maybe you had a coach that you knew so well, they can look at you, you could read their eyes, maybe your spouse, right? She gives you a look sometimes like I know exactly what that means, right? I mean, you know, Jesus has a piercing, penetrating eyes of fire.

Now, if you go down to the DMV and you get your license they're gonna ask you for your eye color. Brown, hazel, blue, green, I've never seen fire. Like I've never seen

that. Jesus's eyes are like fire, why? He convicts us of sin because He loves us. He's showing us areas in our life where He loves us, right? And here's why it's important, because nothing can be hidden from His sight. In Matthew chapter 10 and verse 26, he says, "There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed "or hidden that will not be known." You can't hide your sin from God. Numbers 32:23 says, "You can be assured of this, "your sin will find you out."

When I became a believer, when I was 18 years old nobody explained to me the conviction of the Holy spirit. I wasn't really disciplined. So when I would read my Bible and get convicted I thought God was just telling me I was a really bad person. And I got tired of hearing that 'cause every time I read my Bible, that's how I felt. And I would have people that would say, isn't the Bible awesome? Don't you feel good when you refresh when you read it? I never did.

I had so much sin in my life that God was trying to root out of me. I didn't know that was His gift to me telling me, you have a new identity now, you have a new purpose. I'm showing you what you used to be. You're no longer gonna be. There were times where I just shut my Bible for weeks at a time, like I'm not reading that. I feel horrible when I read that. That's the convicting power of the Holy spirit, okay?

If you're here at BRAVE Church and you're convicted by messages, it doesn't mean you're a bad person, it means that God is showing you areas He's trying to improve. Let me say it another way. If you attend BRAVE Church for say, I don't know, like six months and you never, ever one time leave here and say, man, I felt convicted today, you're probably not listening. And on the weeks where you go home feeling

conviction in your heart, just know you just had to listen to it one time. I was preparing that thing Monday through Saturday, convicted all week, right? I mean, God shows us how much He loves us by convicting us. His eyes are penetrating, they're piercing. He loves us but He says, yeah, that's not where you're gonna stay. I love you, but I want to show you that.

And so many of us spend so much time trying to hide our sin and keep it from people knowing, hey, listen I want to tell you something. You can keep it from your spouse. You can keep it from your friends. You can keep it from your pastor. You can keep it from your church. You can think you've kept it from everybody but the moment that you die you're gonna stand before Jesus and it's gonna be fully disclosed. He knows Everything.

Our first parents, Adam and Eve, we watched Him back in Genesis three, start a clothing company and dive in the bushes 'cause they didn't want anybody to know. God knows. That's why the gift that God gives us is the gift of repentance. He shows us conviction, He convicts us with His spirit so that we can repent. And when we do, it's just freshness all over us again. There's no price tag on a clean conscience friends. There's no price tag on a clean conscience. Be clean before the Lord. And why? Because He judges.

Notice what we read about next. Now we're gonna read about His feet. "His feet were like burnished bronze "when it has been made the glow in a furnace." Now who cares about Jesus's feet? I mean, Jesus came, He washed His disciples feet. We

learn about feet, but these feet are different. These feet are like burnished bronze that had been heated up.

Now, why is that important? Because you need to understand if you were brought before a King what would you see if he was sitting on the throne and you were down in front of him, you know what you see? You see his feet, you'd see his feet, right? That's why in Isaiah chapter 66 and verse one we get a picture of how God views this wonderful world that He created and how He sees it, and how small it is to Him compared to us. In Isaiah 66 one, He says, "Heaven is my throne "and the earth is My footstool." I mean, His feet, why is that important? Because He judges, He judges.

Now, He's gonna judge the wicked and what we're gonna see in revelation 20, which is called the Great White Throne Judgment for everybody that's never trusted Christ while they're alive, they'll be at that judgment. And the books will be opened and their name will not be found. And then they'll be cast in the Lake of Fire for eternity. That's what the Bible says. But for Christians, that's not for us. We're not gonna get to heaven as believers and wonder am I really gonna be let in, or am I not gonna be let in?

We're Christians, but guess what? Christians, you're gonna be judged too. Now your judgment is not a heaven-hell judgment. Your judgment is this, how well did you live for Me from the time that you were saved? How much of your life did you invest in Me from the time that you were saved? How much did you give to Me from the time that you were saved? How much was your life a reflection? So you're not being judged by heaven or hell. You're judged by your works on rewards to be able to give back to

Christ.

We're all gonna stand under the judgment of God. I am, you are, that's why the Bible says, not too many of you should presume to be teachers 'cause you'll judged more harshly. For those who stand in the pulpit and preach something other than the word of God, pity them. It doesn't mean they're not gonna be saved necessarily, it just means that's not what God requires.

So in your life is God getting full effort? If you were to stand before the judgment of God and He say, hey, these are all the gifts I gave you, strength I gave you, weaknesses I gave you, how well have you stewarded them for the kingdom? He judges.

And notice how He speaks. We talked about his voice, like a trumpet but now we're going to hear His voice again. His voice was like the sound of many waters. He speaks, in Ezekiel 43 and verse two, you can see the same thing, when Jesus speaks His the voice is powerful. He calls us like a trumpet, send us out. His voice is like mighty waters. When Jesus speaks there's power.

I had the opportunity to go into Niagara Falls a number of years ago, perhaps some of you have been there. Perhaps some of you have been on Maid of the Mist or whatever where you get close. When you are even getting close to Niagara falls and you see the waterfalls crescendoing down, it's noisy. It's loud. Again, Jesus' voice when He comes back, loud, powerful. Powerful. When He speaks, He speaks authoritatively. That's why, when God speaks.

So when you read the Bible or you hear the word of God preached, or you're studying the word God's not just talking to hear Himself talk. He already knows what He wrote in the book. He's speaking in such a way that would convict your heart for action. This is the God that we're reading about. This is the Jesus that we say that we serve.

And what else does He do? I mean, He's positioned in the middle of the church. He mediates and intercedes for us. He's purifying us, convicting us. He's gonna judge us, He's speaking, what else does He do? He leads, He leads. In His right hand He held seven stars. If we dropped down to verse 20 the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. Well, who are they? Is it possible that there could be an angel that protects every single church? Perhaps, I don't know. There's no other scriptures that really talk about that. The Greek word angelos really means messenger. That's what it means. Oftentimes it's used to describe angels. Oftentimes it's used to describe a messenger. I believe

He's talking about the pastors of these churches, potentially even the elders of these churches. That He's entrusting His church to leadership to lead for His sake. And where does He hold them? Well, He's in the center of the church with all power holding His pastors, His elders, His leader in His right hand.

What's the right hand? That's the power of authority and strength. Jesus is saying, I'm gonna get my work done through fallible people that stand in the pulpit, that will preach my word through men who will make decisions, who are going to seek me and I'll use all their imperfections and I'll build my church, but I'm the one that's holding

it all together. That's important. It gives me great confidence.

I don't feel talented enough to be a pastor. I feel called to be one. I feel entrusted to be one. I feel commissioned to be one. And it's nice to know that it's not me that's doing it, it is Christ who's holding me as I do, amen.

And then get this. He protects His church 'cause notice his mouth, out of His mouth came a sharp two edged, right? Hebrews 4:12 says, "The word of God is like a two-edged sword penetrating to divide both soul and spirit, joints and marrow, judges the attitudes and the intentions of the heart.

Jesus will protect His church with His word, but Jesus will protect His church 'cause He always promised to. He said I will build my church and the Gates of hell will not prevail against it. There's no demonic force on this planet that will stop the church of the living God. And as a matter of fact, as a matter of fact under times of duress and persecution the church flourishes even more than in times of prosperity if you study the history of the church.

So if there's ever a time in your life and I don't know when that time may come where you look around and say what is going on in our world and what's happening, and what's gonna happen to the church, look up and get excited 'cause the church is about ready to flourish in a way the church hasn't flourished before, amen. He loves His church, He protects this church and finally this, He glorifies Himself in the church.

His face was like the sun shining in its strength. Now some of you, when you go outside today are gonna put on sunglasses when you get in your car because the sun

that's 93 million miles away is causing you to squint. Some of you will put a visor down because of sun that's 93 million miles and hour away is causing you to squint. When the son of God appears in all of His glory, that's infinitely brighter than the sun, and you're gonna be standing right in front of Him. All right, that's why you need divine son glasses, which is the righteousness of Christ, or it's gonna be a bad day, right?

I mean, Jesus Christ in the church is where all of His glory is. In His churches where He wants His glory to be seen, In the churches where He wants to be high and lifted up. In church is where He wants to see all people drawn unto Himself. Now, if this is really the picture of Jesus and His church and it's a clear picture of a God who died, who rose, who intercedes for us, who is purifying us, convicting us, getting ready to judge us, speaking to us, leading us, protecting us and glorifying us, why wouldn't every Christian wanna be a part of that.

I'll give you five reasons, you wanna know? This is not an exhaustive list. I was just coming up with ones I used to say, when I believed these lies, and I hear them all the time as a pastor. You need to be aware that because this is who Jesus is and where His glory is, what is Satan's lie in your life? To keep you from being part of a local Church. That's his point. So he'll tell people something like this.

Here's the lie number one. I've been hurt by the church. I've been hurt by the church. You ever heard anybody ever say that? I've hurt by the church. I'm not going to church. I've been hurt by the church. Let me just go on record of telling you there is nobody in the history of the world that's ever been hurt by the Church. Nobody. Nothing

I just read has hurt you. Now are there people who have been hurt by individuals within a local assembly that have done sinful things to you? How many have had that experience? That's it, just keep coming to BRAVE, you'll raise your hand, all right? I mean I'm 30 years. Some of the most significant pain I've experienced had been by people in the church. I'm not saying you haven't been hurt by people in the church, I'm saying you haven't been hurt by the capital C church.

And here's the problem. When there's hurt in your life it leads to what's called unforgiveness. And when there's unforgiveness in your heart the devil makes the unforgiveness towards everybody. So who you're unforgiving toward is not that person it becomes the entirety of Christ bride. But God wants you to be a part of it and satan is lying to you saying no, yes, all churches are that way, all churches, that's not true. You can call it a sin, there are people in the church with sin, I sin. As your pastor, I can promise you, I won't make every perfect decision. And I can promise I'm gonna do hurtful things to my wife and to my kids. I can promise you that I'm not always gonna do what God wants me to do 'cause I still have a sin nature that dwells within me. But you're not hurt by the church. You may have been hurt by a pastor. You may have been hurt by an elder. You may have been hurt by people in the church, the gossip. I'm not saying that hasn't happened but here's what God would say, forgive them. And then go find a church that you can be a part of and plug yourself in, and serve me 'cause I'm in the church.

Lie number one is I've been hurt by the church, therefore I can't ever go to church. If you haven't been hurt by people in the church just join a small group and it'd

be a lot of fun. You'll enjoy it.

Okay, lie number two. I like Jesus, I just don't like the church. I like Jesus, I just don't like the church. I'm saved, I like Him. Jesus is good, people in the church, bad. I like Jesus, I just don't like the church. That's like me saying, I like my wife, I just hate our marriage. I mean, how can you say that? It's one in the same to say you don't like the church, to say you don't like that is to say, I don't like who Jesus is for and I don't like what He's doing, and I don't wanna be a part of where Jesus is at. It's just a lie. To love Jesus is to love the church. To say you love Jesus and you don't love the church is to say, I really don't read my Bible and I don't love what Jesus loves, that's all it is. It's just a confession that you're not spiritually mature, that's all it is. To love Jesus is to love His church. Amen. And I'm not saying every church is perfect. We're gonna read about churches and our BRAVE Church certainly is not, but be part of somewhere some church somewhere.

How about this one, number three, you ever heard this one? Raise your hand if you've heard this one? The church is just full of hypocrites. So that's why I don't go, it's just full the hypocrites. What's a hypocrite? A hypocrite is somebody who pretends to be something that they're not. Are there people who have attended church who pretend they're Christians who are not, yes or no? Yes. Right? What better place for hypocrites to be? What better place for them to hear the conviction of the spirit? What better opportunity for them to hear the gospel? What better place for a hypocrite to come than to hear a place where the risen Christ is fully righteous and honoring, and that you're to give Him your whole life, why wouldn't you bring more hypocrites there?

Here's what I find hypocritical. People that They say they love Jesus, but don't go to church when that's where Jesus wants Him to be. And instead serving the church, they rob the church of everything that God has given them and live completely for themselves. If you don't have a church that you call your home, let me tell you something on the authority of God's word, you're a hypocrite. If you're a Christian and you're not part of a local church you're a hypocrite. And are you really Willing to stand outside and say all those sinners in there I'm not one of them. There's nothing in my life that's hypocritical at all. I'm perfect in every way. Seriously? That's worse than a hypocrite, that's deceived, right? So at the end of the day is church full of hypocrites? Yeah, there's some hypocrites that come. I would also tell you, 'cause I passed there, but there's also a lot of awesome people of God that are here too. And what greater place together than to honor the Lord? Amen.

How about this, have you ever heard this one? Lie number four, don't go to church, be the church. You don't go there, I'm not going to the church, I'm just gonna be the church. That's kind of true. I wanna be the church. The Holy Spirit's inside of me. The church is not in the building, church's inside of me. And when we gather together, He's doing something and He goes wherever I go, I mean, I get that. But usually when people are saying that it's just an excuse to not be in community with other people. I'm gonna be the, how in the world are you gonna quote, be the church when the church by definition is a community of people. We say that in America, because we think spirituality is worked out individually rather than in community. And it is not. The only way you can ever grow in your faith is to have other people in your life

that can mutually minister to you. That means they love you enough to encourage you and they love you enough to point out things in your life that aren't right. So I'm gonna go to church and connect with church, and I'm also gonna be the church, I'm gonna do both, and. But I'm not gonna make excuse to not go to church 'cause I'm quote, being the church. I've never met that person. There's nobody that doesn't have a local church that they're serving that is quote, being the church. Now they're being selfish and individualistic and they don't want what Jesus wants. That's what they're being, okay? I know that's harsh, but I just gotta be truthful with you.

Or how about this fifth lie? Where two or three are gathered. I don't go to church, I just hang out with my family at home 'cause where two or three are gathered. You know, we just go out to the mountains 'cause where two or three are gathered. Okay, let me explain your Bible to you. Just so you know, in Matthew 18, that verse's not talking about where two or three are gathered there God is as if to say, anytime you get together with another Christian there God is. God is with you if you're a Christian, even if one's gathered.

- [Congregation Member] Amen.

- Everywhere I go, there's God. So that's not the context. The context is this, in the context of reconciliation in the church and church discipline for somebody that is continually unrepentant and rebellious, and elders make a decision to remove that person from the church because they're hurting the body, Jesus says, I'm gathered there too. And where two or three are gathered you can count on me, I'm kicking them

out of the church as well. That's what it means. It's not talking about gathering people for worship, right? God, that's just not it, okay? So again, it's just another lie.

Anything you're hearing that would keep you away from the church is a lie of the enemy. And I can list another 10 or 15 that I've heard over the years. Many of that I used to believe and I've repented. And that's why I'm pastoring now rather than doing what I've done. And let me just say this too. I mean, I'm for the para-church, okay? There's para-church ministry. I got saved through young life. I served with Youth for Christ. I helped start the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at the University of Illinois some years ago. I've been involved in all sorts of seminaries that are para-church. I'm been a men's ministry. Some of you women have been in women's ministries. There's nothing wrong with them. But to say that replaces the church is sinful.

The purpose of the para-church is to take a slice of the kingdom, to build it up to push people into the church so that the church can be the full orb part of God that He wants to do the body of Christ that He builds up so that we can go out in the world, advance the kingdom.

The purpose of the church, the purpose of BRAVE Church is to glorify God, to advance the kingdom. It's not to get more people that come to BRAVE Church. It's to build more people up in the body so that we collectively go out and advance the kingdom in the world, that's what it is.

To start a para-church ministry which happens from time to time where I'm just gonna take, man, I'm just gonna take a youth, I'm just gonna take evangelism and do

this, and make that your church is like taking a part of the body, like the knee and just moving it over there or taking an elbow and moving it over there, or taking, you know, an arm and moving it over there and say this is our church. No, that's part of the body, it's not full orb. It's in the church where Jesus Christ is glorified.

And let me just say this. If the church didn't have the Holy spirit, the church would have died 2000 years ago. I've been in some churches where it's like on life support. I'm like, how is this even work? And then you meet some saint that's been there for 40 years praying their socks off, studying their Bible. The church is never gonna die until Jesus Christ gets back. The church is alive because Jesus Christ is in the center of it. The church is where you need to be. And the reason that we separate ourselves is we falsely believe in our culture, that the church is a place for us to come and consume rather than for us to contribute. That's why. 'Cause if you viewed church as I'm gonna check this out, I'm gonna see if I like this pastor, I'm gonna see if I like the worship. Maybe I'll like it and I'll come sit and plop, but don't expect me to do anything, don't expect me to give financially, don't expect me to serve, don't expect, you're missing the point of the church.

The point of the church is you hear the trumpet call of God and the sound of God so that as you're getting fed and built that you're building others so that we can take on the world 'cause there's over 2 million people just in our city alone that don't know Jesus. That should trouble us. And that's what God wants us to get to. God wants us to be a group of people that go after them.

And here's the reality, I mean, you hear it said all the time, you know, the church

is not a country club for sinners, it's a hospital for saints. I don't agree with that. I think it can be at times a hospital for saints. There's times for healing. Some of you are here 'cause you're going through a time of healing, that's good, I'm glad about that. But the church of God is an army. And just like armies have medics, the purpose of medics is to get them healed so they can get back on the field of battle.

The church is doing battle. We are soldiers in the army of Jesus Christ. That's who we are. And God is calling us to be in community and do what He wants us to do so that we can honor Him. That's why it's so that the church gathers and connects. And I understand, I totally understand and hear me clearly 'cause I didn't articulate it well in the first service. I understand if you're home because of wisdom, because the Lord has shown you to stay home, I'm great with that. Some of our finest saints are doing that. This is not intended for you. But I'm gonna tell you right now, you can't enlist an army and send them into battle on a Zoom call. You can't. God has enlisted an army. And because we've already died and our life is now hidden with Christ in God, and we're alive, He's sending us together to go out and do something that only we can do. He's entrusted us with the precious gospel for the city of Denver and for all the places around the world that he's opening up doors for us to do, and we have a responsibility to build out men and women, and young boys and young girls in the body of Christ so that they are equipped in their sphere of influence to God and under the Lord, Jesus Christ in everything they do. Amen.

- [Congregation] Amen.

So I'm telling you that when you hear people talk about the church in a negative way, those people don't have the heart of Jesus Christ 'cause the church is the only vehicle He's ever sanctioned that He promises to bless, it's the church. You may have a sour taste in your mouth about the church, Jesus Christ doesn't. And God wants you to work out whatever He needs to work out in your life so that you can be a great servant in the church.

Let me show you the third part of this vision real quickly. This vision of Christ if you really understand this vision, overwhelms, comforts and commissions us to serve Christ in His church. This vision will overwhelm you, comfort you and commission you.

Now think about John, who's writing this book. He's the one who presumably laid his head on Jesus' chest at the Last Supper. He's the one that talks about love one another. I mean, John has a temperament of a shepherd. John is a loving guy. I mean, John is just a comfort. He's the guy you wanna hang out with when times are down. I mean, John's just so peaceful and he loved Jesus. How does John, respond when he saw Him? "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man." When he saw the resurrected Christ, whoa, dead.

Now the song was at the funeral this week by, MercyMe, "I Can Only Imagine." Many of you've heard that song. What it's gonna be like when we walk by His side, you know, will I stumble, will I fall, will I dance, will I do this? You're going down, okay? I mean, Great song, love the song, but let me answer it for you. You'll be on your face. I mean, you picture this, you picture how powerful nuclear energy is if you stood in the

center of a blast. You picture how strong the most powerful energy is in the whole world. Now you multiply that by infinity when Jesus Christ comes back in all of His glory, you tell me what you're gonna do. Boom, every knee will bow. Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

John, fell at his feet as though he's dead. John, knows Him. John, talked to Him in His resurrected state. John, loves Him and John's like, Whoa! We see the same thing in Isaiah chapter six, where Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up. He says, I'm ruined. I'm a man of unclean lips, I come from a people of unclean lips. So God cleans his lips. What does God do with John? Jesus reaches down with His right hand, the hand of power and what does He say? "Do not be afraid, I'm the first and the last, "and the living one, I was dead "and behold I am alive forevermore "and I have the keys of death and of Hades." What's He saying? I am the King of Kings, I am the Lord of Lords, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life and by the way, when I rose from the dead I took the keys of death and I took the keys of Hades.

What does that mean? Death is physical death. For those of us who trust in Jesus, the moment you breathe your last will be the most alive you've ever been in your entire life. Lorraine, that I talked about earlier today, the night that she left to go be with Jesus, she's alive than she's ever been, right? What's the keys to Hades? Hades is the holding place for those who are gonna be punished by God. For some of you that may have grown up Roman Catholic you've been falsely taught that there's a place called purgatory, where you go and you work off your sins. You can't work off anything. It's only the grace of God that can save you. What does Jesus hold the keys

of? He holds the keys of Hades. He holds the keys of hell. He holds the keys of death. He's all powerful. You never have to experience hell, you never have to experience death, why? Because Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, and He's unlocked both. Isn't that good news?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Therefore He says, "Write the things which you have seen "and the things which are, and the things "which must take place after these things," which is really a theme for this book.

And we see this all throughout the Bible. We see Peter, James, and John, at the transfiguration when Jesus is, you know, close become completely white in Matthew 17 and verse two. And then we see Peter, who thinks he knows Jesus tell Him on the earth, "Lord, even if all people fall away tonight "because of you, I wanna live and die for you." And he betrays Him three times. So what does Jesus do? He comforts him. And the end of John's gospel, Peter has breakfast with Jesus on the beach and he says, do you love me? Three different times He asked him, He restored him, and then what did He do? He commissioned Peter, to go start the church. What'd he do to all the disciples? He sent us all out into the world.

If we have a true picture of Jesus, it should overwhelm us and yet at the same time, we should feel His comfort coming into us as He commissions us to go out. Friends, Jesus is holding the whole world together even if it feels like it's falling apart, it's not. And the one entity on this planet that is solid, secure, unyielding, never, ever

gonna have to worry about is the church of Jesus Christ. And I'm telling you right now, you wanna be a part of that church. Now, BRAVE is not the Church. BRAVE is a church. It doesn't mean you have to go to BRAVE Church but you need to be part of a life-giving church somewhere where you're not only hearing the word of God and worshipping Him but where you're connecting in community, and you're serving the Lord everywhere as He gets you ready to meet Him face to face. Amen.

That's what God wants to do. And if you don't have a relationship that Jesus has just told you about, He's coming back soon and when He does, He wants you to be ready to meet Him. And you don't need to fear Him in any way. You don't need to be concerned in any way. He gave His son so that by His shed blood and your trust in Him, you could have life in His name. Amen.

So I just wanna invite you to stand as we close in prayer. Lord Jesus, we give you all the praise, all the glory and all the honor for who you are. And Lord give us a bigger revelation and bigger picture of who you are, do a work inside of our hearts. And for those of you that are here that have never trusted Christ, here's how you can pray. Jesus, I know I'm a sinner and I'm separated but I believe You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead. Right now I repent of my sins and I trust you. Come into my life and be my Lord and savior. Lord for the work that you're doing, we just say this, you are awesome and you are great, and you are worthy, and we praise you, and you alone, in Jesus name. Amen.

Can we give God some appreciation for who He is?