

**Revelation 1:12-14**  
**Who Jesus Is To Me**  
**Pastor JD Farag**

KAPONO: Lord. Lord, thank You so much. We don't deserve one bit of it, and yet You so freely give. And this morning, Lord, would You take away any distractions, Lord, that's in our body via anxiety, or stress, or worries, or whatever it is, Lord, that may be holding us back from letting You in this morning?

Lord, would You rid of those things and draw us close and focus us on You this morning as we get into Your word, Your powerful, Your living, Your wonderful word, Lord. So speak to us this morning. We thank You for this time together in Your word. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and Amen. And good morning and welcome. And you can be seated. So glad you're here. Those of you online, we're so glad that you're joining with us. On Sunday mornings we're now going through the *Book of Revelation*, verse-by-verse.

And just as a reminder, on Thursday nights we're also going through the *Book of Daniel*, verse-by-verse. And this Thursday, Lord willing, we're going to be in *Daniel Chapter 3*, a very well-known and powerful chapter, not just in its prophetic implication, but in its personal application. It's the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego being thrown into the seven-times hotter fiery furnace because they refused to bow down to this gold image that Nebuchadnezzar had made.

So we really want to encourage you to join with us on Thursday nights for Daniel. It's like a bookend. Daniel has been referred to as the Old Testament *Book of Revelation*. Here we are on Sunday mornings, as only the Lord could time and do, we're in the *Book of Revelation* and the *Book of Daniel* simultaneously. And that is — I mean, it just doesn't get any better than that. I hope you don't tire of me saying that. I keep saying that because it doesn't get any better than that.

So our text today is *1:12-14*. I'll ask you to stand if you're able. If not, where you're seated is fine. But you can follow along as I read.

Now John is continuing to describe this vision of and Revelation of Jesus the Christ, and he says, *verse 12*, **“I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, and [Verse 13] among the lampstands was someone “like a Son of Man,” dressed in a robe, reaching down to His feet and with a**

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**golden sash around His chest. His head [Verse 14] and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were like blazing fire.”**

Let's pray. Lord, thank You just for this portion that we have here before us in Your word, in this amazing *Book of Revelation*. Lord, thank You for the Revelation, the vision that You gave to John, this vision describing You and what You're going to be like. Oh Lord, it's a fear and tremble but yet a holy anticipation of what it's going to be like and what You're going to be like.

So Lord, thank You for this. We know that there's so much here that You want to show us, reveal to us, and more importantly, apply to our lives because we don't want to be just hearers of Your word. We want to be doers of Your word. We want to be like those, Jesus, that You spoke of in that parable that build their house, the house of their Christian lives on the solid rock foundation, not the sand, the solid rock of putting into practice and applying Your word to our lives, so that when the storms come, we're unmoved.

Lord, I know that as I'm praying, even now, before we get started, that there are many who are going through the storm of their lives right now, and truth be made known, they're barely hanging on by a thread. They're so downcast and discouraged, and that discouragement is turning into despair.

So Lord, will You, through this passage, as only You can, lift us up? You're the lifter of our heads. So thank You, Lord, in advance for what You're going to do in our time together today in Your word. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you.

So after spending quite a bit of time seeking the Lord about the passage that's before us today, I'd made the decision actually early on — this is even as early as Monday to teach only *verses 12-14*. And the reason is that John's revelation of who Jesus is, and even what Jesus will be like, has powerful implications for all of us. I know that's kind of a big and bold way to start.

But let me say it this way. John is writing about his vision of who Jesus is to me. You know how we say, “Who are they to you?” Oh, that's my brother. That's my brother from another mother.

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[ Laughter ]

Sorry. Oh, that's my friend. Oh, that's — so what are they to you? How do you know them? Well, who is Jesus to you? Oh, I know Jesus. Yeah, but does Jesus know you?

How about *Matthew 7*, a chapter that many, myself included, try to stay away from, in as much as we can get away with it because it's in that chapter that Jesus speaks with such strength about those who are protesting, saying, wait a minute, we cast out demons in Your name. We fed the poor in Your name. We did all of these good works in Your name. And You're saying to us, **“Depart from Me, for I never knew you”**? Man, that's hard. That's strong. And it needs to be.

So when I say, Who is Jesus to you, who is Jesus to me, it's in the sense that Jesus has revealed to John who He is and by extension, who He is to me when He comes for me. Now this is interesting because this is actually a problem. Let me explain. The vision that John receives of the revelation of who Jesus is represents a stark contrast to who Jesus was in His First Coming. Stay with me.

At the First Coming of Jesus, He was the suffering Savior. At the Second Coming, oh, conquering King, eyes blazing fire! You got to put the growl into that one. Well, now you got my attention. Good. Because it's for this reason we have this revelation of who Jesus is to me now at the end and when Jesus comes back for me in the end.

Remember now, this was written and sent. We talked about this last week. John was not just told to write that which he had seen, that which is now, and that which is to come, meta tauta, here after, after these things, beyond these things, he's also told not only to write it down, but to mail it, to send it to specifically seven churches representing the completion, the number of completion, the church in its completion.

Why, pray tell, would John A) be given the vision, B) be commanded to write it down, and C) send it?

How many times have you written something and not sent it? Oh, how many emails I wish I wouldn't have push “send” on? You know, you're write the emails. Yeah! Talk about blazing fire coming off. Oh, I'm sorry. You young people, it's this. (Pretend texting) Whatever.

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But then you don't send it. You just wrote it down. Sometimes you just need to write it out and get it out. And that's one of the reasons why I keep a prayer journal. I write stuff out, and sometimes I can go back — sometimes I don't want to. It's kind of painful.

But you go back to your prayer journal from two, three — I've been doing it for many years, decades, actually — and you go back to that season in your life when you were going through such a difficult time. And you have this prayer journal along with your prayer list, and you see how God was so faithful to you when you thought for sure this is how it ends. I'm not making it out of this one.

And then God shows up at the 11th hour, not before, something about the last second. It's not just the 11th hour. It's 11:59 and 59 seconds. And He shows up, and He delivers you from that fiery furnace, which, by the way, is the title of Thursday's Bible study, *'God Will Deliver You From That Fiery Trial.'*

Okay, just real quick. Just a little... You're not going to get it out of me. That's the only thing you're getting out of me for Thursday night: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Nebuchadnezzar: Hey, you guys, come here. I'm going to give you a second chance. I understand you didn't bow down the first time. I'm going to give you a second chance.

And they say to him, Neb, (Chuckle) we're not going to bow down to this gold image that you made in defiance of God who gave you a dream about an image with a gold head. You want the whole thing gold because you want your kingdom to last forever. And you're going to make us bow down to this image, 60 cubits by six cubits with six instruments?

That was too much. I'll give you one more. There's so much more. I love what they say to him. **“Our God is able to deliver us from you. But if not...”** Doesn't that sound like Esther? **“If I perish, I perish.”** Or Job, **“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”** In other words, even if He doesn't... He will deliver us from you. We just don't know how. We might be burned to a crisp, but we're still delivered from you. He still delivered us.

Or He might just deliver us another way, like have Jesus, pre-Bethlehem, appear in the midst of the seven-times hotter fiery furnace and deliver us and save us from you. But the bottom line is we're going to be delivered whether you like it or not. We will be delivered.

Okay. That's it. Thursday night.

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[ Laughter ]

So back to the sermon already in progress. These churches at that time, like us at this time, need to know how it ends because things are getting very difficult right now. And it puts the heart at rest and settles us knowing, wait a minute, things are very difficult. A lot of us are being put to death. We're being persecuted in unthinkable ways. And so, John, I want you to get this to them to give them hope.

Because what does Jeremiah say? **“My plans for you are not to harm you.”** I don't want to hurt you or harm you. **“My plans for you are to give you a future and a hope.”** And so God wants them to know ahead of time what He has planned for them, so that they can just settle down, calm down, be at rest, be at peace, and just trust.

Okay, yeah, this is bad, but I've read how it ends, and it ends very well for me. Thank you very much. You? I don't know, not so much. But this would have settled them. And this was much-needed encouragement for them because they were in such despair.

And we're going to see this in *Chapters 2 and 3* with the letters to these seven churches. But it's all about who Jesus is to me and when Jesus comes back for me because that's what *Revelation* is. It's a revelation of Jesus Christ: who He was, who He is — I want to be very pastoral when I say this — and what He's going to be like when He comes back.

There, I said it. All right. You ready? Did we pray? We did? I prayed? Oh, after I read the... You prayed. We're covered. Okay. Let's go.

*Verse 12.* Number 1. Jesus — yeah, this is bad, I know — Hey, listen, be nice to me. I had a really rough week — Jesus is my only source. This is interesting. Okay, so John describes very detailed, by the way, how, you know, he hears this voice — we saw this last week — the voice like a trumpet. We're going to see that trumpet, commanding trumpet sound. And he turns around to see who it is. And when he does, what does he see? Seven lampstands.

Wait, what? Seven lampstands. And by the way, these were stand-alone lampstands, not like the menorah which has the center from which the other lampstands are sourced. Did that — was that okay, the way I just did that? Should I have gotten a graphic?

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You know what a menorah is, right? So you have the main center source of supply, and from that you have the branches of the other lampstands. That's not what John sees here. He sees seven stand-alone lampstands.

Why?

I'm so glad you asked. Stay with me on this. And think through this with me. A lampstand is just that: It's a lampstand. Deeply profound, I know. But a lampstand in and of itself does not produce light. It has the potential to, but absent the source of the light, it's only a lampstand.

So what's the source? Well, in this case, it's oil, which is a type of the Holy Spirit. In other words, Jesus is my only source of light vis-à-vis the power of the Holy Spirit who empowers me in this life and seals me for eternal life. That's the source. I think about Zachariah.

Oh, I can't remember the chapter. He's shown a vision. Two huge — I think it's 14. (4) Don't look it up right now. I'm preaching. Just wait.

[ Laughter ]

So he sees two huge olive trees, and there's these, like, you know, mechanisms, for lack of a better word, that are supplying, continuously uninterrupted, the flow of the olive oil to this light, this lamp. And it never goes out.

In the tabernacle and subsequently the temple, the priest could never let that lampstand in the holy place ever go out. How's that for a job description? You got one job: Make sure there's always oil in that lamp, and the light is always shining. Because if it ever goes out... Never mind. You can fill it in. Use your imagination.

The showbread, the table of showbread, of course, the bread, the bread of life. He is the light of the world. Every furnishing, of which there were seven, the number of completion, in the tabernacle and subsequently the temple, all painted a poignant and profound prophetic picture of the person of Jesus Christ down to the color of the threads used on the tabernacle. I mean, it's such a fascinating study, and one for which I don't want to take the time to get into today.

But let's talk about this light source. He's the light.

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Well, wait a minute. I thought we were salt and light.

Yeah, but what's the source of that salt that flavors and creates thirst? Jesus. We're to be the light. We're to be light in darkness.

Yeah, but where's the source for that light? Jesus.

Okay, wait a minute. So I thought you said it was the Holy Spirit.

Yeah, that's the best part. We talked about this last week too. Remember when Jesus was trying to settle down the disciples who were freaking out about Him going to the cross? I have to go. Actually, you want Me to go because if I don't go, then I can't send you the Holy Spirit.

So you've had God with you, but I have to go so you can have God in you, which is — again, I'll be very pastoral, not — that's way more better. Because see, if I've got God the Holy Spirit indwelling me, and He's still with me, but now He's living inside of me — the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit is — that's actually terrifying if you think about it.

Because if the Holy Spirit is indwelling me, my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Then everywhere I go, I take the Holy Spirit with me. Everything I watch, the Holy Spirit is wincing and grieved and, God forbid, quenched.

But I have God the Holy Spirit indwelling me. And the Holy Spirit is the source, sole source for a holy life, the Holy Spirit. And that's not all. The Holy Spirit's the comforter. And if there was ever a time that these Christians then, like us now, needed comfort, it's now, to comfort us, to settle us.

And this is the source of that comfort and encouragement. It comes by way of the Holy Spirit. That is the sole source, the light source. Can I use an illustration? I heard this really good — you know it's good because I didn't come up with it.

You know how we say, “Hey, I gotta get my batteries recharged”? Oh, come on. Just, will you just nod? Of course you have. Well, the problem is, is that you might just, you know, I just need to get recharged and get my batteries recharged. I'm kind of burning out and, you know, running out.

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So you get all charged up, and you go to a conference or buy a book or, you know, do whatever you do to get charged up. And you're all, yeah! Rah, rah, rah! Here's a better idea. Instead of getting your batteries charged up, why don't you just stay plugged in to the electricity?

Okay, well, anyway, I'll just leave that between you and the sole source of the Holy Spirit. That's your source. That's your power source, the power of the Holy Spirit. “Dunamis” in the Greek. “Dynamite” in the English.

You know... Yeah. Why not? Just real quick. This is another thing I hope you don't tire of me saying. I don't know how it is possible for a Christian in these last days, this last hour, to survive, let alone thrive, absent the power of the Holy Spirit, the baptism with the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Spirit coming upon you. “Epi” in the Greek.

I got the Holy Spirit with me, para; in me, en; and upon me, epi, poured out upon me to overflowing, so that my life becomes like a torrent, powerful torrent of living water, the illustration, again, of how powerful are flood waters that they can take a whole house downstream like a toothpick. That's power.

Jesus said, **“Come unto Me, all you who thirst.”** That was during the feast, and that was a fulfillment of the feast. He's the water of life. He's the light of the world. He's the bread of life. He's the source.

So maybe you lack power. You find yourself just powerless. And what comes with the powerlessness is hopeless. You feel so powerless and hopeless. May I just humbly suggest — and this applies to me as well — maybe you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit anew and baptized afresh.

Oh, Pastor, are you going to get into the whole gifts of the Holy Spirit?

No, unless you want me to. I'd be happy to. No, no, I want to get you out of here before lunch. No, it will never be before lunch.

Let's move on to the second one in *verse 13*. It's Jesus is my High Priest. So Jesus is my only source, and Jesus is my High Priest. That's who Jesus is to me. Now, what does that mean to me? Well, this is an interesting reference to Daniel.

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Remember we talked about how Revelation, over 90% of the *Book of Revelation*, conservatively, is a reference to the Old Testament? And they would have known that because they knew the word of God, they knew the Scriptures.

So when this was written, seemingly cryptically to the Romans. It was not cryptic at all. They had the — what do they call them — the ciphers that decode? Because they knew the word of God. So they knew immediately that John the revelator was referring to Daniel 7:13 concerning Jesus being like a Son of Man.

We're going to see that again in *Daniel Chapter 3*. But that's Thursday, so you have to come on Thursday for that. But now this is going to be germane to our understanding. And let me explain why.

The Son of Man with a robe reaching down to His feet speaks to the high priest whose entire body was covered. Now watch this. Jesus is not only High Priest to me, but so too is He a covering for me because we're the body of Christ. So as the High Priest, He's covering His body, as part of His body being the Son of God and God the Son.

That's who Jesus is to me. He's my covering. He's my High Priest. The priests, the service, the priestly service, they would represent God to the people and the people to God, and then Jesus fulfilling the order of Melchizedek, the first mention of the high priest.

We — oh, that was intense when we were going through Hebrews, one of the most — I'm just going to confess — one of the most difficult books in all of the Bible to teach. I just want you to know that your pastor perspired his own blood trying to prepare to teach that book. Melchizedek the high priest, the order of Melchizedek?

No, He is the greater than Melchizedek. Everything, everyone pointed to Jesus, fulfilled by Jesus. So what does that mean to me? What is that to me? Oh, He's your covering. He's your High Priest. This is something that is hard for — and it's understandable — it's hard to wrap your mind around when you are reminded that Jesus said and promised that He would be at the right hand of the Father, praying for us. I'm covered, man.

Wait. Listen. When you pray for me, thank you, I love it. You say, hey, we're praying for you. Thank you. It means a lot to me, seriously. In all seriousness, it means a lot to me. But

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when somebody says to me who Jesus is to me and that Jesus is praying for me, I'm like, I got Jesus praying for me! What was your problem again?

I got the Holy Spirit interceding for me. I got the Lord, my High Priest, covering me, representing me, praying for me. Man, I got it made in the shade. I'm looking for another very pastoral way to say it, but I'll spare you, maybe. I think you've had enough.

But that should settle us because He covers us. One last thing, and we'll move on to this last one I want to spend the remainder of our time on because it's huge. But the high priest had to cover all of the flesh.

So when they would perform the sacrifices and the offerings, they would step up to the altar, they had to have their robes all the way down to the ground because if they stepped up, you would see their flesh. And no flesh is going to be in God's presence. No flesh is going to glory in My presence. I don't want the distraction.

Now, this is for pastors. Talk about getting convicted. Why did I even go there? As a pastor my flesh has to be covered. Because the flesh can become a distraction, and it takes away from the Spirit. Because the flesh is opposed to the Spirit. There's a war between the flesh and the Spirit. **“The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”**

There's a lot of typology in this. You walk in the Spirit, you're busy in the Spirit, you're filled with the Spirit, baptized by the Holy Spirit, and you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh.

How's that work?

Well, the analogy is, if I'm full, and you invite me over for dinner, I don't have any appetite for whatever you prepared, as nice as it is. And thank you very much for the invitation. By the way, that's not a reality in my world right now.

But here you prepared this fantastic meal, homemade recipe handed down by the generations, secret recipe, we can't tell you, we'd have to kill you kind of recipe. And here you make it for me, and I have no appetite for it.

Why?

Because I'm full. Why? Because I went through Taco Bell drive thru, and I whacked a 12 pack of Taco Supremes, a couple of burritos, gordita. I'm not telling you what else I had. So

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now I'm so full of Taco Bell, I don't have any appetite for this beautiful Holy Spirit meal you picked — prepared.

And it works both ways. If I'm so — let's flip it around — if I'm so full of the Holy Spirit, so satiated — oh, you know how it is? It's wow. Now I drive by Taco Bell, and Taco Bell starts speaking to me. Psst, JD, (speaking with a sinister voice) 12 pack.

I'm like, yeah, no. I have no desire whatsoever to fulfill the lust of driving through the drive thru and ordering \$100 — have you seen the prices of this stuff lately? That's another topic for another time.

Pastor, do you have a point?

Yes, I absolutely have a point. Our flesh is covered by our High Priest. That's what Jesus is to me. Love covers a multitude of sins. There's no flesh because Jesus covers the flesh because He's my High Priest.

Let's talk about, lastly, this third one, which again, I want to spend the remainder of our time on because Jesus is not only my only source, Jesus is also my purifying fire. Purifying fire. He's not just the light source, the life source. He's not just my High Priest who covers me. But He purifies me too. That's who Jesus is to me.

We need to talk about this because... And they would have got it again because this is a reference to *Isaiah 1:18*. They wouldn't have had to like, you know, at their home Bible study fellowship, you know, they wouldn't have had to say, Hey, what was John — which verse in the Old Testament was John referring to when he's talking about wool and white as snow? No, they would know. Ah! That's *Isaiah 1:18*.

And you know this verse. You just don't know that you know this verse. Because Isaiah says, "That though your sins be as scarlet, He will make them white as snow." He will forgive us, and cleanse us, and purify us, and remove our sins as far as the east is from the west and remember them no more.

Yeah, but my sins were pretty scarlet.

Yeah, but He makes them white as snow. His hair, white as wool and white as snow, that's who Jesus is to me. He purifies me.

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*1 John 1:9* has been referred to as the Christian bar of soap. I've gone through a lot of soap.

**“If we confess our sins, [That's all we do, confess our sins] He is faithful to forgive us and...”**

It's a two-for-one deal. All we do is confess, one thing. If I just do one thing, confess, He does two things. What? He forgives me, and purifies me, cleanses me of all of my unrighteousness. **“Though my sins be as scarlet, He makes them pure as...”**

This doesn't work in Hawaii. But we used to have a saying on the mainland: Undriven snow. I mean pure. When it snows and before the snowplows — which take forever. The snow's already melted by the time they get there. But nobody's driven over it. It's so pure, it's so fresh, it's so white.

And how about not just white like wool. And by the way, don't think white hair or gray hair. This is bright white. Bright white. So you've had this scarlet crimson stain. We talked about the scarlet worm, the crimson worm in *Psalms 22* when Jesus refers to Him as the worm who dies on the tree and secretes this scarlet color that they use for dye.

And as the worm dies on that tree, like Jesus died on the cross, His body, the body of that crimson worm turns white. And that's the larva for the new life that comes from the death of the scarlet worm.

I mean, (Mind exploding) Right? That's what Jesus is saying. Who am I to you? I am your purifying, cleansing fire. And that's what fire does, right? Fire purifies. Think about the illustration that the Apostle Peter uses about our faith being tested by fire. It makes the gold pure.

How?

By subjecting it to the fire. And the heat is so hot that all of the impurities come to the surface. And then the goldsmith scrapes all the impurities off the surface of that gold. And he knows he's got pure gold, listen, when he sees his image reflected in that gold. Wow.

By the way, this is *Romans 8:29*. We don't talk about *Romans 8:29* because we're too fascinated by *Romans 8:28*. Nothing wrong with that. We can quote it upside down, inside out, in several different translations and even languages if need be. You know, **“For we know that God works all things together for the good, for them that are the called — that love God and are the called according to His purpose.”** And we stop right there.

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Wait a minute. Okay, I love God. But what's this “**the called according to His purpose**”?

Oh, that's the next verse.

What's the purpose?

To conform us into the image of Jesus Christ. Oh, that explains everything. This is all about making me more like Jesus.

So how's He going to do that?

He's got to, like Isaiah says, again, refine us in the furnace of affliction. Okay, stop right there. I want to be refined, but not in the furnace of affliction. I think the beaches of Hawaii are just fine to be refined.

No, I got — you gotta be put — see, you're the clay. I'm the potter. You know what the potter does to that clay? It's brutal. It's brutal. And this is Jeremiah. This is Isaiah. I mean, they use the analogy of the potter and the clay.

Well, what's clay?

Dirt. In fact, the 17 elements in the human flesh are the same 17 elements found from the dust of the earth. When God created Adam out of the dust of the earth, literally, God created Adam out of the dust of the earth. So next time you think more highly of yourself than you ought, remind yourself, you're dirt.

[ Laughter ]

We are but dust, right? I mean, that's really who we are. But now let's talk about who Jesus is to us as who we are. Well, He takes that dirt, and He makes clay. And He's got to get that clay on to the potter's wheel. Have you seen these things? They spin very fast. You know, you're on the potter's wheel when your life is like (Spinning sound)

Lord, what are You doing?

Settle down; you're on the potter's wheel, okay?

Can you turn it down? I'm getting dizzy. I'm going to throw up.

No, you don't got anything to throw up because I already took My hand as the potter, and I stuck it into that clay, and I took out all the gook before I stuck you on the wheel.

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And then it's all downhill from there. We're on the potter's wheel. And here's the potter. Now He's going to shape and make and form that clay into the image. We're His workmanship, “poema” in the Greek, where we get our English word for “poem.” We're His work of art, and He's going to put His name on us like an artist puts their name on their work of art. I'm a work of art. You are too.

But we got to get there first. And I'm still on the potter's wheel. I've just had the hand of God, just, I mean, and boom, sticks it in there. Have you seen the potters do this? They pull out the gook in the middle.

And then you're on the potter's wheel, and you're going a thousand miles an hour spinning. You're dizzy. You have no idea. You're so disoriented. God, what are You doing? And then He takes His hand, He goes, bam!

What are You doing?

I'm shaping you. That's while you're on the wheel. Now, you ain't seen nothing yet. It's going to get even worse than that. So in other words, enjoy the wheel because you're heading into the kiln, appropriately named. You remember this in school, the pottery class? Did you guys take pottery? Yeah, I'm scarred from that. We had the kiln, perfectly named.

God, You're “kiln” me!

I know. I have to.

You stick the clay in there. Now it's already been shaped and formed and fashioned. And then you're stuck into the furnace, and the heat is — forget Shadrach and Meshach, seven-times hotter — we're talking 700 times hotter.

And you're in there just going, God, what are You doing?

To which God responds, you'll see. I'm purifying you. I'm refining you. I'm making you more like My Son, Jesus the Christ. That's what I'm doing. And what was Jesus like? Humble. Gentle. I have to get some of those rough edges off of you to make you more like Jesus. Because that's the purpose is to be more like Jesus Christ's likeness.

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I think about in the Book of Acts, when there's these two guys, and they're just looking at these guys like, no way. These guys are not the educated type. And yet I'm listening to them talk about this Jesus of Nazareth, and wow!

And then somebody comes along and says, "Well, to answer your question, these men have been with Jesus." Oh, would to God that that would be said of me. That people would look at me and marvel. I mean, they do anyway. Wow. Yeah, right? You too.

But they marvel, and they're just kind of, you know, you're an enigma to them. And then someone comes along and says, "Oh, he's been with Jesus." Oh. Because isn't it true that we become like the person we're with the most?

This is why the Proverb says, "**Do not associate with an angry man, lest you become like him.**" It's contagious.

And it works both ways. I had a boss back in the day, many years ago, decades ago, actually. And this guy was an intense guy. And of course, I'm with him, you know, day in, day out. I started finding myself, catching myself, reacting the way he would react, I mean, the mannerisms, everything. I would even say the same things he would say. And I'm like, no! I don't want to be like that.

Well, the more you're around somebody, the more you become like them. How about let's be around Jesus? Let's be with Jesus so we can be more like Jesus.

Okay, let's talk about this because this is the purifying fire. And notice that John, in addition to the purifying fire, it's also a rewarding fire. Now, if you'll just hang on for a second, we're going to go into *1 Corinthians* to expound on that. But it's the fire that purifies and makes more valuable the precious gold, but so too does that same fire consume. But it also, that fire, will expose the reward based on what the fire does.

So if my faith, like gold, is proven through the fire, then that is the reward that comes as a result of the purifying fire. Again, hang on to that. We're going to continue John's revelation of Jesus next week, but we're going to turn a corner and go from what Jesus is to me, to what Jesus does for me. I can't wait.

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That's next week, Lord willing, but I want to close with *1 Corinthians Chapter 3*. Perhaps you're familiar with this passage. I'll begin reading in *verse 12*. I want you to use your God-given imagination if you will.

I just would ask because we're all prone to read a passage like this and just go, oh, okay. And we'll even quote it and refer to it and tell someone about it. But do we actually know what is really being said here? So let's get into this.

*Verse 12*. Now this is the Apostle Paul writing to this church in Corinth. And he says, **“Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, [Or as some of your translations render it stubble] Each one's work [Verse 13] will become clear; [For what it really is] For the Day will declare it, [Expose it] because it will be revealed by fire; [Got the growl on that one] and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. [That's what John said] If anyone's work is burned, [Uh-oh] he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”**

Some of your translations — I like some of the other translations better — you're still saved, but you're going in with flames. I mean, through the fire. You still got fire burning off of your, you know. Anyway, that was maybe a little bit too much, but you get the point. You're still saved. So what's going on here?

Let's use our God-given imagination. We got two piles, okay? One pile is a pile of wood, hay, and straw, or stubble. The other pile is gold, silver, precious stones. Now we're going to subject both piles to the same refining, purifying fire.

You ready? What's going to happen? I like how one said it. My pile of wood, hay, and stubble is going to be a very big pile. It might take a little bit longer to burn. But the fire is going to expose it for what it really is. You're going to know that's wood, hay, and stubble because it's all burned up, nothing to show for it.

Conversely, over here, that same fire is making more valuable and purifying the gold, the silver, the precious stones. So what do the gold, silver, and precious stones represent? Those things which we did in the Spirit.

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What does the wood, hay, and stubble represent? Those things we did in the flesh, which is why your pile is going to be huge in comparison, in contrast to this pile. But the rewards — and I hope you know this, that in heaven we're all going to have different treasures, different amounts of treasures.

Don't think for a second that somebody is going to be in heaven going, Ho — because we're local — they got more treasures than I did, or their mansion is bigger than mine is. No, we're going to be going, I can't believe I got... Wow! Yeah, but you see his? I don't care, man. Just praise You, Lord. Thank You, Lord. Right?

Because in heaven, in eternity, there's no jealousy. There's no nothing like that. You're not going to — that's sin. In heaven there's no sin. Sin is gone for all eternity. There's no more rent. There's no more cockroaches or termites or anything like that.

There's not even any night there. That alone is worth the price of admission. No night and no sleep. No need. Yeah, no sleep. You won't need to sleep. You're going to be awake all the time and never be tired, never be sick. If you're in the medical field, you're out of a job. I'm just telling you now so you're clear. There's no — we have no need for you in eternity. Am I taking it too far? Have I offended you? I'm an equal opportunity offender.

Let's get back to our piles. We got a pile. Someone said, "I am the pile." You know, that saying, "I'm under the pile"? I'm the pile. I mean, things are piling up. And here I'm piling up this pile. How am I going to know unless it's that fire to expose what was wood, hay, and stubble, and what was gold, silver, and precious stones, and jewels? Only the fire will expose it.

And our rewards and treasures in heaven will be predicated upon *1 Corinthians Chapter 3*. And again, please don't think that there's going to be envy or covetousness in heaven. Just like there's going to be different degrees of torment in hell for all eternity, so too will there be different degrees of treasures and rewards for all of eternity.

This is the last thing. And I tell you, it just sends spiritual chills up my spine every time I meditate on it. So our lives down here, but a vapor, James says. Let's say 80 years old. As I get older, I keep pushing it. Let's go 90. 90 years compared to eternity.

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So I've got — what I did — well, we got to take five off because you don't know anything before five years of age. For me it was more like 15. I don't have any memories of anything before — I don't know what age I was. So we'll give us a pass on maybe the first few years of our lives.

So we'll come back down to 80. Are we okay with that? We've got 80 years. What we do for that span, like a vapor of 80 years, will determine our eternity. Does that not give you pause? Because all of those things that you did in that life that you had as long or short as it was, it will lock in what your rewards will be for all of eternity.

As one famously said, “Soon one life will be passed only that which was done for Christ will last.” And I want to leave us with that. And I'm not going to say I'm going to leave you with that because I'm stuck with it, too. You know, I gotta own it, too. And I do.

I hope you know that. By the way, I cannot impart that which I do not possess. I cannot just stand up here and talk down to you or preach at you. No. I own this. I have a Ph.D. in this. I can, like you, say that this just gives me such pause to rethink and revisit my life, how I spend my time. In light of eternity, I'm investing my time, my talents, my treasure in that thing, and it's going to all burn up.

We had a — when I was a young believer — this will be the last — my final closing right here. We're almost done. Thank you for your patience and your grace. As a young believer, we had a, you know, group, small group, brothers and sisters in Christ.

And after church, we would always discuss the study, the teaching, and the application of it. And this one particular night, the teaching was about how it's all going to burn. And so, one of the guys that was there had just bought a brand-new car. And of course, you got to know you can write the next chapter in this one, right?

So here's this other brother. So quick, I mean, it rolled off of his lips like, you know what he said, right, like a hot knife through butter. It's all gonna burn. True story. The guy that said it, his car, not a new car, it burned to the ground. Here's this guy, got a new car, drives up. It's all gonna burn. I mean, here you're investing all this money, all this time, all this treasure, all this talent, all this stuff on something that's not gonna last.

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**“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thief does not break in and steal.”** You can't take it with you, but you can send it ahead. It'll be there waiting for you.

And by the way, for those of you that are investors or you know, you're good at this stuff, the yield, are you kidding me? Talk about compounded interest. I mean, the yield is out of this world, literally. All right, I'm done yelling at you.

So Kaponu, come on up. You can stand up. We'll close in prayer. I hope this is somewhat helpful. I pray that — well, I'll just pray and ask the Lord for this. Lord, will You take this now and just give us that fresh fire on the altar of our lives, in how we see You and view You and who You are, how You are.

Lord, this is real. This is more real than the chairs people were sitting on or the ground we're all standing on. And this is also very soon and very soon. So Lord, I pray that all of us, again, myself included, would take heed, and take this to heart. Thank You Jesus, for who You are to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.