

Session 7 How to Encounter Jesus as the Son of Man

Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.

INTRODUCTION

Revelation 1 is one of the great treasure chests in the Word of God. It's one of the best-kept secrets in the Body of Christ, and that's not good. There is so much wealth in Revelation 1. It's the passage that gives more insight into Jesus, and Jesus is the One giving it. It's a very neglected passage. I want to stir up your attention and desire to go after this chapter. I believe that the concepts in this chapter will increase in importance, because the positive and the negative dimensions related to the generation of the Lord's return, the end-time things, are increasing. With every decade that goes by, the truths of Revelation 1 become more important, because they have tremendous implications.

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR REVELATION 1

Paragraph A. Setting the context for Revelation 1. Without a context, you could read over it really fast and say, "I think I've got that." This is the sort of chapter we could spend months and years on and never, ever get to the bottom of it. There's so much information in seed form in Revelation 1; there's so much information about Jesus.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION: THE END-TIME BOOK OF ACTS

Paragraph A. I refer to the book of Revelation as "the end-time book of Acts." Because it describes the acts of the Holy Spirit released through the end-time church. It's the end-time book of Acts written in advance. Because in the same way that Moses released the plagues of Egypt through prayer, and the same way that the early apostles released the power of God through prayer, the end-time church is going to release the power of God for the great harvest and the judgments of the Antichrist through prayer. But it's all written in advance.

THE PRIMARY THEME OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

Paragraph B. The primary theme of the Great Tribulation, the theme that people are so worried about, is God's judgment against the Antichrist. The primary theme of the Great Tribulation isn't judgment against the saints; it's judgment against the Antichrist. A secondary theme is the tribulation the Antichrist brings on the Church. There are only twelve verses—only 3 percent of the book of Revelation is about the trouble the Antichrist brings on the Church. The rest of the book of Revelation is the glory of Jesus and the trouble on the kingdom of darkness.

THE UNIQUE DYNAMICS OF THE COMING GENERATION

There will be unique dynamics in that generation. I believe we're in the early days of that generation. That's not a prophecy; that's just an observation by looking at the signs of the times. I think there are people alive today, very possibly, who will see the return of the Lord in their lifetime. I don't know that for sure, but that's my strong opinion. In the generation of the Lord's return, there are unique dynamics. There are really intense negatives and really intense positives that go beyond any other time in history. The most intense positives and the most intense negatives will happen simultaneously in one generation. The most significant player in the drama is the praying church. They have to have understanding of Jesus in order to fully be involved in the way the Word of God describes.

Roman numeral II. If we as the Church want to be fully involved, we need to understand the majesty of Jesus in the way that Jesus set it forth.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST: THE UNVEILING OF THE GLORY OF A MAN

Paragraph A. The book of Revelation is called “The Revelation of Jesus.” That’s the title of the entire book. The book is the unveiling of the glory of Jesus. The very first verse calls it, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” which God the Father gave Jesus, and Jesus gave to John (Rev. 1:1). God is showing the things which must shortly take place.

Here’s the point: we study the things that will take place because they lead us to the Man behind the events. The book of Revelation is about the unveiling of the glory of a Man. He’s fully God and fully Man. The way that we see His glory is by studying the things that He has designed in His great wisdom. We study them and it leads us to understanding what kind of person He is.

DON’T BE OBSESSED WITH THE PLAN, BUT WITH THE MAN BEHIND THE PLAN

Paragraph B. First, the book of Revelation is about a man. Secondly, it’s about the events. God’s purpose is to reveal the Man behind the plan. Many people who study Revelation want to know the plan and they miss the Man. We study the plan, we study the events, and we discover more about the Man behind the plan. We’re awestruck with Him. It’s not enough just to study the plan itself. It’s important to do that, but that’s secondary. We’re fascinated with the Man Himself.

Paragraph C. Revelation 1-3: that’s one section. You want to keep those three chapters together in your thinking. John reports a visionary experience where he highlights thirty specific descriptions about Jesus. There are thirty descriptions. We won’t go through them all tonight, but I want to alert you to that. There are thirty “gold mines,” so to speak, to go deep in. This is the most complete picture of Jesus, the most comprehensive picture of His majesty in the whole Bible.

These three chapters give thirty descriptions of who He is and what He does.

If we study these thirty descriptions with the events that are associated with them, it inspires us to adore Jesus and to trust His leadership.

Some people say, “I’m not into the book of Revelation.”

I say, “Don’t say that. You don’t have to be obsessed with the plan, but be obsessed with the Man behind the plan.” If you study the book rightly, it inspires you to adore Him. If you study the book rightly, it builds your trust in His leadership.

THE ASPECTS OF THE CHARACTER OF JESUS THAT HE EMPHASIZED MOST

Paragraph D. This point is very important. In Revelation 1-3, these three chapters, these thirty descriptions, we see what Jesus emphasized most about Himself as He was preparing His church.

We could say, “Lord, what do You want to emphasize about Yourself to prepare the Church for the greatest hour of glory in human history?”

He says, “I’ll tell you what I want to emphasize about Myself: study Revelation 1-3, because that’s what I revealed about Myself in the context of preparing My church for the greatest hour of glory in human history.”

The problem is that currently much of the Church is neglecting these thirty truths about Jesus. They seem a little strange; there are titles that don't make a lot of sense at a casual reading. "He's the Alpha, the Omega, the First, the Last, the Beginning, the End. OK, that's cool; let's move on." But beloved, each one of those phrases is a gold mine! These are the truths that Jesus wants emphasized the most. As messengers of His kingdom, whether you're a messenger one-on-one or whether you're using all the technology of the Internet and social networking to get the message out—whether you're a preacher, or writer, or singer, or whatever—you want to emphasize what He emphasized about Himself.

Paragraph E. These thirty descriptions give us insights about Him. They form the way we serve. They form the way we pray. They form the way we prophesy. When we touch these thirty truths about His glory and majesty, it changes the way we do ministry. That's part of His plan. They exhilarate us to love Him. They empower us with courage in the most troublesome and glorious hour of human history. They energize us for righteousness. Beloved, this is the Jesus we need to encounter.

Top of page two. The Jesus of Revelation 1. All the truths of the Gospels, all the truths of the Old Testament prophets, all the truths of the epistles, the letters of the apostles, all come to a fullness, to a crescendo, in Revelation 1. They all come together in this explosive portrait that Jesus gives of Himself. There's nothing in Revelation 1 that denies the Old Testament prophets, the Gospels, or the letters of the apostles. Rather it brings them together in a very strategic way.

DANIEL 7 AND REVELATION 1: BOOKENDS BEARING WITNESS TO THE SON OF MAN

Top of page two. I want to say this first. There is a dynamic relationship between the two passages in the Bible that present Jesus as the Son of Man. I want you to get that clear in your head first. There are two primary passages that present Jesus as the Son of Man. There are a lot of little excerpts, so to speak, where one or two verses talk about Him as the Son of Man in the Gospels. The first passage, the original defining passage of Jesus as the Son of Man is Daniel 7. That was the first time the Messiah was presented as the Son of Man. It's the original defining passage.

There are many significant definitions of the Messiah as the Son of Man, and what that would look like. First we have Daniel 7, and then at the end we have Revelation 1. It's like bookends. It's the first revelation of the Son of Man and it's the final revelation in the Bible. Revelation 1 brings to fullness what Daniel 7 introduces and initiates. Revelation 1 expands and brings the implications far beyond what's said in Daniel 7. Again, they're like bookends. They're the first and the last primary descriptions of the Son of Man. We always want to study them together.

Paragraph B. Let's look at the Daniel passage first and then come back to Revelation 1. We will look at the original Son of Man passage. The reason I'm focusing on the Son of Man because the Church needs to be equipped with these thirty facets of Jesus as the Son of Man for the great glory and the great trouble that's going to happen simultaneously. It's encountering the Son of Man in His glory.

We're going to the original passage where the first definition of the Son of Man was given, here in Daniel 7. There are many characteristics here; we won't look at all of them. I just want to point out the significance of this passage. Daniel 7 isn't just a passage on the Son of Man: it's the original, defining one, the first one, the foundational passage from which all the others draw their meaning.

Daniel 7:9. The Ancient of Days is the Father presented in His eternal nature, the God who lives in eternity. From eternity past to eternity future, He is the Ancient of Days.

“His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool” (Dan. 7:9). In other words, the plan the Father has is perfectly wise: it’s rooted in an eternal perspective as the Ancient of Days. It’s pure; there’s no defilement. His plan is perfect; His plan is wise. His plan is pure: that’s what Daniel sees in Daniel 7:9. His garments and His hair portray the purity and depth of His plan that was rooted in eternity.

“His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire” (Dan. 7:9b). Daniel sees the Father’s throne like a big, fiery flame, and a river of fire is flowing out of it. You’ll find that if you read the whole passage.

Look at verse 11. Daniel watches until he sees the Antichrist slain and thrown into the burning flame. Daniel sees the great adversary in the final generation of human history. The Antichrist, the Beast, is thrown into the flame. Later we’ll find out it’s the lake of fire.

Daniel keeps watching. He sees a personage—the Son of Man. He doesn’t quite make sense of who He is. He looks like a man, but He can’t be a man because He’s so close to God, and no one can see God and live (Ex. 33:20). Not only is He close to God; He’s being enthroned by God over all the nations of the earth. He’s riding on heavenly clouds, which are very different from earthly clouds. They’re supernatural glory clouds. He has these characteristics of being divine. He’s next to God on supernatural clouds, encountering God in such proximity.

He’s clearly a man, so what’s the deal? He’s a man who will rule the nations of the earth, but He’s fully God. Daniel is in a quandary. Why? Because this is a new idea—that the Messiah is the God-Man, fully God and fully Man. This wasn’t clear in the Old Testament.

Daniel says, “Behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven” (Dan. 7:13)! Again, there is a supernatural dimension to this Man who is God, but who is also Man. There’s a supernatural dimension. His transportation is on heavenly clouds, which is like the glory of God transporting Him. They’re not like natural clouds.

“He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him” (Dan. 7:13b). No man can go near to God like this, but He’s more than a man. He was given dominion over all the nations of the earth (v. 14). Again, this is a strange idea that He isn’t just given dominion over Israel, but all the nations of the earth—not just the throne of Jerusalem, but the throne that would conquer and rule all nations one day in the future. This is literal; this is real.

But then, in verse 27, it gets even better. The kingdom that’s given to Him, He shares with His people. The saints of the Most High God inherit and rule the kingdom with Him. This is quite an amazing reality.

THE PRIMARY PREPARATION FOR THE END-TIME CHURCH

Revelation 1, paragraph A. This is the other bookend. This is the final primary passage on the Son of Man. Daniel 7 is the first one; Revelation 1 is the final one. It’s the fullness of which Daniel is an introduction. “I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet” (Rev. 1:10). There are thirty descriptions in Revelation 1-3 that are linked to this passage right here from verses 10-20. Verses 10-20 is the core place where they’re all

clustered together. Again, you put Revelation 1 with Daniel 7 to get the full picture. Because you can't understand Revelation 1 without the foundation of Daniel 7. You can't understand Daniel 7 in fullness without Revelation 1. We can't be prepared as a church without seeing the Son of Man, Jesus, the way He's revealing Himself right here. This is what will prepare the end-time church, not just to move in power, but to move in purity and love beyond any time in history. You want to move in more love? You want to experience more purity? You want more power on the inside as well as on the outside? Jesus said, "Encounter Me in the way I set Myself forth and you'll experience more power on the inside and on the outside."

John hears a voice behind him saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last" (Rev. 1:11). John writes, "Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow" (v. 12-14). His head and His hair are like the Father's. He has the same purity, the same wisdom. He's involved in the same plan as the Father from back in Daniel 7.

His eyes are like a flame of fire. Verse 15: "His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:15). First His voice is like a trumpet. But there's another dimension as well: like the sound of many waters. He has in His right hand seven stars (v. 16), which we learn in verse 20 are the leaders of the Church that He holds near and dear to Himself. Out of His mouth goes a sharp, two-edged sword (ibid).

JOHN IS OVERWHELMED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE GLORY OF JESUS

After all this information further implicating Him as the Daniel 7 Son of Man, Jesus now adds more than what Daniel saw. Jesus turns His gaze on John and His countenance is like the sun shining in its strength and John falls as a dead man. He's overwhelmed by the brightness of His glory. I imagine it increasing. John is observing the eyes of fire, the white hair, the feet like bronze, or brass, which are the same. He's awestruck, but he still has his composure. Then the brightness of His face gets brighter and brighter and John falls like a dead man trembling under the glory of God.

Did Jesus turn it up to full power? No. We saw in the last session how Jesus' face will light up the New Jerusalem. Jesus was just at the beginning of His power right there. Beloved, that's who this Man is right now. That's not who Jesus is going to be; that's who He is right now. When He appears to people throughout history, He can veil His glory or He can reveal part of it or more of it, but if He showed all of it, the earth would be filled with a brightness far beyond the sun. Any encounter is just a small amount His glory.

Paragraph D. Jesus connected His Son of Man title to returning to the earth as King. In Matthew 24, He said, "The Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven" (Mt. 24:30, paraphrased). That's what was seen in Daniel 7: the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven. He says, "That Messiah is coming to the earth." In Matthew 25, He elaborates: "When the Son of Man comes, He will have a throne of glory" (Mt. 25:31). Remember Daniel 7:14: all the nations are given to Him. Here He highlights His throne of glory, which will be in the city of Jerusalem.

Observe what Jesus says. In Daniel 7, remember, the saints inherit the government of the kingdoms of the earth with Jesus. Jesus shares them with the saints because, as we find out later, the saints are the Bride of Christ. They're His eternal companion forever. Jesus motivates His people to overcome by describing the partnership, the extent of the partnership that He desires with them. He's saying to them in Revelation 3:21, "You know

what Daniel saw in Daniel 7? I would inherit all the nations of the earth. I want you to know the extent of the partnership I want with you. I want you to govern with Me. I really do, but I'll only give you that position if you'll agree with Me in this age with all your heart. If you overcome, you'll enter in with Me to the world-governmental dimension of the Daniel 7 prophecy of the Son of Man."

There's more involved than governing the earth, but that's one of the main features. He says, "Come and sit with Me" (Rev. 3:21, paraphrased). He's speaking to weak and broken people like us. He wants wholeheartedness on this side that's connected to governing in that dimension of the Son of Man's glory on the other side, in the age to come.

THE DEFINITION OF HUMILITY IS AGREEING WITH JESUS

I've heard for years: people say, "I don't want to do that. I'm happy just to get into heaven, to worship God." I think if Jesus offered this, He knows it's more important than we might think it is. I've heard that through the years: "I don't want to do that."

I say, "Since you have so little knowledge of what it is, and Jesus has perfect knowledge and He says you want it, I'll go with Jesus, not with your religious sentiment about your humility."

I mean that. Because humility is agreeing with God. There isn't some other version of humility: it's agreeing with Jesus. That's humility. Whatever He says, we agree with: that's what humility is.

JESUS, THE RULER OVER THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Paragraph E. In Revelation 1, John sees Jesus as the ruler of the earth, and he sees His people ruling with Him. That's the Daniel 7 Son of Man revelation. Revelation 1:5. He calls Jesus "the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead" (Rev. 1:5)—the first human with a resurrected body. That's what "the firstborn" means. He's "the ruler over the kings of the earth" (ibid). He "has made us kings and priests to His God and Father" (v. 6). Beloved, do you really grasp who you are? We get lost in the mundane, the routine, the difficulty of the grind of life, and we lose connection with who we are to Him. We're kings who govern forever the inheritance that the Father gave Him and He earned by the shedding of His blood.

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Rev. 1:7). There He is again, just like in Daniel 7. All the nations will receive Him; all the nations will be stopped in their tracks in His glory. Here it's talking about the negative response: the people who have rejected Him all turn around and change their opinion. It's too late for many of them; they've already taken the mark of the Beast. They'll wail and scream that they made such a horrible decision. When the Daniel 7 Son of Man is coming, they'll say, "What were we thinking that for a temporary benefit we said yes to the Antichrist?"

Paragraph F. We can only understand these thirty truths by seeing them in the context of eternity. That's one reason I wanted to anchor our thinking back into Daniel 7, the Son of Man who reigns on the earth forever in a supernatural dimension of being fully God and fully Man. He wants His people with Him. When we anchor these thirty descriptions in Daniel 7, where they belong, they make a lot more sense. If we read Revelation 1 just as it is, by itself, as a stand-alone chapter, we won't have nearly the connectedness that God wants us to have when we see it in the context of the larger testimony of Scripture.

Beloved, we can endure persecution. We can understand His judgments. We can choose righteousness far better if we see our connectedness with this Man who dwells in eternity, the Son of Man—if we know who He is and what He means to us. We will have a very different response to persecution, and temptation, and the understanding of what His judgments are about.

THIS IS REALITY: JESUS WILL REIGN ON THE EARTH

Top of page three. Here in the first part, I wanted to anchor these thirty descriptions in the Daniel 7 revelation of the Son of Man. You can't understand the thirty descriptions if you don't link it into that.

Again, I read some different commentators, and they said, "Well, this is symbolic! It's poetry!" It's far more than poetry. This is what the Man is really like. It's far more than symbolism: it's reality. It's truth.

Top of page three. Just get a little snapshot of what we looked at in the last session. Even the last session was only a hint of a hint. We need to go in depth on all thirty descriptions. I'm not saying we'll do that in this series, but sooner or later we need to. These are the things that Jesus wants emphasized the most to prepare the Church the best for the greatest release of glory and trouble the world has ever seen. Many of these things are being neglected by the Church. I want to go deep; I want to drink at this well. I want to search out this divine treasure chest, so to speak.

JESUS, THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA

I'll go briefly. I have more extensive notes from last week, and more coming in the future. First, He's the Alpha and the Omega. Jesus is saying He's God. The Father is the Alpha and the Omega. Jesus is saying, "I have the completeness that My Father has. I'm equal to Him in deity."

He's saying much more than that. Paragraph B. He's the First and the Last. In other words: "I'm not just fully God, Alpha and Omega. I'm fully Man, but I'm a resurrected Man in the full glory of God as God intended man to be in his fullness, and more. I'm unique among glorified men." Other men and women will be glorified at the time of His second coming, but He's the ideal Man in the highest position of authority, the First and the Last.

JESUS HAS EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE

Paragraph C. His eyes are like fire. That speaks of His burning desire of love. It speaks of His intensity. He isn't a passive Man. Jesus isn't a "tiptoe-through-the-tulips" type of guy.

Some people say, "I just want to chill with Jesus."

Jesus isn't chilling, just so you know. He has eyes of fire. "Just going to see what happens!..." He's already preoccupied with a vision. He's going after something and I want to go after it with Him. He has eyes of fire.

It's more than that. His knowledge penetrates everything in the way fire penetrates metal. Nothing can hide. His eyes are like fire. There are many more things related to the eyes of fire.

JESUS HAS A VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET

Paragraph D. His voice is like a trumpet. Here's a little introduction to what that means. The trumpet was used in the Old Testament to gather people to the presence of God. Even by describing the Revelation 1 Jesus, it gathers us to Him. Yet the trumpet does more: it warns of judgment. And more: the trumpet announces the end-

time truths, the eschatological truths. *Eschatological* is just a fancy word for the end times. I only know about three fancy words, so I use them whenever I get a chance. The trumpet is also the announcing of the King in the transition to the age to come. It's not only the announcing of the King, it's the announcing of the King who will transition the planet to the age to come. That's the trumpet. Jesus is trumpeting a message. His voice isn't just of the tone of a trumpet, in the vein of what a trumpet represents in the Old Testament. Jesus is saying, "I'm going to give you twenty-two chapters, called the book of Revelation. I'm giving you the warning and announcement: the King is coming to transition the planet into the age to come."

JESUS POSSESSES THE SAME GLORY THE FATHER POSSESSES

Paragraph E. His hair is white like wool, like snow, in the same way the Father's was in Daniel 7:9. In other words, Jesus possesses the same glory the Father possesses—meaning specifically here that the plan of the Father and the plan of Jesus is perfectly wise. It's pure in love, humility, and righteousness, and it's rooted in eternity, in an eternal perspective. It's not short-sighted at all. He's seen the end from the beginning; He's seen every dimension of it. His plan is pure. There's no defilement, there's no spot in it. There is no fault in His plan. It's pure in love, it's pure in humility, it's pure in righteousness, and it's perfectly wise. There are no gaps. He didn't overlook or forget anything in the plan. That's what He's saying by the hair and head white like wool. He says, "I'm like My Father in wisdom and in purity, and all that I do is rooted in eternity. It's proven in the big picture, in the long term. It's not a momentary, last-minute plan to shake up the earth and try to bail the earth out of its troubles. There is a master plan We're working from."

Daniel 7 describes it as pure wool: clean wool, cleansed wool, pure wool. Back then, they didn't have paint and colors in the same way we do today. The rich had some special dyes here and there. It was hard to find white out in everyday life. The most common form of white that the Israelites had was wool.

JESUS THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Paragraph F. His garments are like the garments of a priest. He's pictured as a high priest. The glorious Son of Man who is the King of the nations, who will destroy the Antichrist, who has the power of His Father, is also the great High Priest. He's tender and sympathetic towards us. He's human. He gets our struggle and understands our plight. It's remarkable. Because the Son of Man is so glorious, so completely "other than" that it's possible to think, "How could we ever relate to Him?" He has the garments of the High Priest. In other words, He made a way for us to connect with God. Not only that: He's sympathetic and understands who we are. He's a high priest.

Paragraph G. In His right hand, He holds the stars—His leaders. He promises to anoint, to direct, to protect, to be near. He says, "I will hold you. I will be near you. If you call on Me, if you want Me to be near you, I've committed Myself to doing it. That's what I'm like; that's the kind of King I am. I'm more than a king; I'm more than a high priest. You're so near and dear to Me. You're My eternal companion. I will hold you."

"YOU WHO HOLD THE SEVEN STARS IN YOUR HAND, HOLD MY HEART"

As humans, we feel so weak, so inadequate, no matter the assignment we have. I've never met a person who feels adequate for the assignment they have from the Lord—not one. If they do, they only feel that way for a few moments in their pride and they wake up and find out they were totally inadequate. No one really thinks that over the long term. If you feel inadequate to your commission, don't feel picked on. That's how it works. He holds us. He'll be near us. We're near and dear to His heart.

I love this idea that He holds the seven stars. You could say to Him, “Hold my heart. Be near to me.”

“That’s exactly what I had in My heart. It was My idea before it was your idea.”

You can’t imagine that the Son of Man with such power would have such sensitivity and attentiveness to His people. His feet were like fine brass. Out of His mouth goes a sharp, two-edged sword. He strikes all that opposes His kingdom. There’s so much more to both of these.

Then, paragraph I. His countenance: that glorious radiance that has no end, that has no measure to it. I mean, when John falls like a dead man, His face is like the sun. We find out later that He lights up the whole world. Look at the New Jerusalem: the countenance of Jesus just gets bigger the more Scripture we look at.

DON’T STARVE TO DEATH WHILE STARING AT THE MENU

Page four. This is quite simple, but most importantly in this session here: how can we actually encounter it? At this point I’ve just “whet your appetite”: we’ve looked at the menu, but we haven’t gone into it in depth.

As people who love Jesus, you’re saying, “I’m hungry! I want to devour this! I want to drink deep of this. I want to order this. I want to assimilate this into my being.”

How many of you know it’s not enough to read the menu? You can starve to death reading the menu. A lot of people starve to death talking about the menu. They don’t even read it; they just talk about it. “I love the Bible!”

“Me too, I love the Word!”

But they never read it. Other people read the menu, but they don’t assimilate it: they don’t actually eat it. They’re connoisseurs of the menu. It’s easy to do. You can build a career being a connoisseur of the menu and never actually ingesting and encountering the Man in an ongoing way.

I have a little acronym: A-R-K. I use this little, three-letter acronym as I read the book of Revelation: particularly chapters 1 through 3, with their thirty descriptions. Technically there are a hundred descriptions of Jesus in the book of Revelation. The thirty core, primary descriptions are right here. The others are offshoots and elaborations of those thirty. They’re all linked back to Daniel 7—that great introductory passage of the Son of Man.

THERE IS SAFETY IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

In Proverbs 18:10, we read that the name of the Lord, His titles, are like a strong tower: the righteous run into them and are safe (Rev. 18:10). Beloved, there is safety in the name of the Lord. Not just claiming it: it’s more than claiming it, though claiming it is important. I’m talking about interacting with the name of the Lord and who He is in His names at the heart level. I’m talking about talking to Him and the Holy Spirit marking our heart related to who He is in His names. He’s a strong tower.

In John 17:11, Jesus prayed, “Holy Father, keep them through Your name” (Jn. 17:11, paraphrased). In other words, “Reveal Your name and exhilarate their heart in God by revealing Your name. Let them encounter what You’re like. You’ll keep them if their spirit encounters You again.”

It's not about being a connoisseur of the menu, but about interacting with the name—actually drinking deeply of the name. Jesus prayed, “Keep them; protect them.” To keep them means to protect them from compromise and going astray. “Keep them safe spiritually. Keep them connected by the encountering of Your heart, through the knowledge of Your name.”

WE WILL BE SET ON HIGH FOREVER BECAUSE WE HAVE SET OUR LOVE ON HIM

In Psalm 91:14, the Lord is describing a godly man or woman. “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him” (Ps. 91:14). Beloved, there's a kind of man, there's a kind of woman, who sets his or her love on God like David did—like many of you do. Therefore, He will deliver them. But more, far more than that: He will set them on high (ibid). How high? When you read Daniel 7 and Revelation, we will rule with Him as His eternal companion. That's being set on high, right? It's not just having things go better in this age. That happens for sure on occasions, and sometimes it doesn't happen. We will be set on high forever because we have set our love on Him.

He says, “Because this man has known My name” (Ps. 91:14b, paraphrased). This doesn't mean they can technically repeat it; it means they're familiar with the name of the Lord at the heart level.

THE NAME OF THE LORD IS LIKE AN ARK OF HIS PRESENCE

Paragraph A. I use this acronym, A-R-K. It's like an ark of safety. His name is like an ark of His presence. It's like the ark of the presence of the Lord touching and preparing His people as the decades unfold. As the decades go by, the importance of the Church laying hold of this increases. He makes our spirit strong. The name of the Lord is a strong tower. Our spirit becomes strong; our spirit becomes peaceful. When our spirit is dull and fearful, we're far more vulnerable to compromise. By encountering the name, our spirit can be strong.

Paragraph B. I use the acronym A-R-K as a little tool to apply these thirty descriptions in three ways.

Letter A. We agree with them. As simple as it sounds, we agree with them. We speak them back to Him. “You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth.” I'm not talking about underlining it in your Bible, but actually saying it to Him in love and gratitude. I read this and say, “You are...” and I stop. I begin to talk to Him. “Jesus, You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth. I love Your leadership. I love that everyone has to bow to You. I love this. This is good.” When I do that, my heart connects with Him a little.

I don't just underline it and move on. It's like the Holy Spirit says, “Stop here, camp here, and agree with it.” I agree with it, but I don't know much about it. He's the Ruler of the kings of the earth. I could add a little more to it. There's a lot more that I don't know, so I ask the One who knows everything: “Holy Spirit, teach me about Jesus as the Ruler of the kings of the earth. Teach me. Give me revelation.” That's R.

MAKING COMMITMENTS TO RESPOND IN FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Then K. I want to keep the prophecy. That's a term used three times in the book of Revelation. It's very significant. By the mouth of Jesus in Revelation 22:7, He promises a blessing to anyone who keeps the prophecy. What do you keep when you keep the prophecy? That means you respond to it in a personal way with your actions and attitudes. You don't just agree with it; you actually keep it. Do something with your life related to the revelation of Jesus in this prophecy. To keep the prophecy, we resolve, we set our heart, we make commitments. That's what it means to keep the prophecy: to make commitments to respond in faith and obedience, according to each of the truths. In each one of these truths of Jesus, we can agree with Him and

glorify Him and thank Him for it. We can ask the Spirit for more insight. Then we respond to Him in light of that particular description.

Let's look at a few examples to get you started. Paragraph C. We agree. We just make simple declarations. They're just simple declarations. You're in your prayer time, whether at home or in the prayer room. We agree with who He is and what He does. We identify the core truths in each of the thirty descriptions. When He says He has eyes of fire, there are a number of core truths in that. There are about ten core truths. Each of the thirty contains a number of core truths. We declare it back to Him and we say it with gratitude, with affection, with an "I love You" in our hearts. Again: "Jesus, You're the King of the rulers of the earth. Thank You. I love You as King of the earth. I'm so grateful You're King and no one else is."

As I've gone through these thirty descriptions, I've identified three types of declarations. I call them the "You are" declarations and the "You have" declarations. I'll just give you the three "You are" declarations. "Jesus, You're the faithful witness. Jesus, You're the firstborn from the dead. You're the first resurrected Man in full glory. Wow. You're the firstborn. You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth."

Those are the three "You are" declarations. Then there are the "You have" declarations. "You have a sword. You have the keys of the kingdom. You have the stars in Your hand." You could go on and on.

Some of the thirty are "Your" declarations. "Your face is like the sun. Your eyes are like fire. Your feet are like burnished bronze." We make these declarations with a "Thank You" and an "I love You" behind them.

Paragraph D. I give you a few more examples to get you started. I want to encourage you to get a notebook out. Bring it into the prayer room. As you say them out of your own mouth, you'll say more than you've said before. You'll say something like, "You're the King of the earth, and I'm really glad You are."

So I write down, "I'm really glad You are." I say, "I've never said that before. I like how that felt."

Then I say, "I'm glad no one else is." I say, "Oooh, I like that, too!"

I write my little statements down and they just keep growing. Out of your own mouth you'll say things you never said before. The Spirit will inspire them. Not everything you say will be inspired, but you'll find inspiration. The Spirit will teach you while you're declaring your agreement with these truths about Him.

Paragraph D. "You're the Son of Man." He's the Son of Man. There's only one Son of Man. "You're the Son of Man. You're the only Man who is fully God and fully Man."

I wrote down, "I love this about You." "I love this part of You. You became a man to win me. You were already God, but You became man. You wanted me. Thank You. You're the Son of Man. I trust Your leadership."

Another phrase I might say is, "You're the Ruler over all the kings of the earth. I rejoice in Your preeminence. Soon everyone will bow to You, Jesus." Little phrases like that will stir your heart and get your mind in a wholly different space. For some of you, it will begin to fuel your holy imagination in an entirely different way. "You have eyes of fire. You desire to fill me with Your love. You're a faithful witness. You never lie. You

always tell the truth. You're so reliable." Those are phrases you could add in the "Thank You" and affectionate overflow of declaring these truths. "I can count on You. You're the faithful witness. You never lie. Never do You lie." The enemy hates this. The enemy is bombarding the minds of so many believers with lies, and this is breaking the power of lies and expanding our agreement with truth. The Spirit will bear witness to it as we do it.

Paragraph E. We don't just declare our agreement: we ask for more revelation. It's a very simple idea. "Reveal Yourself to me as the faithful witness. Tell me more about who You are as the firstborn among the dead. Show me Your glory as the Ruler of the earth," etc. "Teach me."

Paragraph F. Keep the prophecy. After we make the declarations of agreement, now we make declarations of resolve to obey, to respond. For example, when we say, "Jesus, You're the faithful witness; reveal who You are as the faithful witness," now we go on to commit our lives to it: "I commit to be a faithful witness like You—regardless of what it costs me. I'll say what You say is important to say. I'll say it regardless of what it costs me. Help me, but I resolve. I commit."

When we say, "You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth," we mean, "I submit to Your leadership. I'll obey Your leadership. Help me to obey You. I'll obey You." It's a statement of resolve, a declaration of commitment.

Paragraph G. This is an important one. I've said, "Jesus, You're the firstborn from the dead—the first resurrected Man. You're the only resurrected Man right now." At the second coming, everyone else catches up. He is the only resurrected Man who exists with a resurrected body. He's had it for 2,000 years. The way I respond to that is by saying, "I will take time to cultivate my understanding of the resurrection and the age to come. I will feed my mind on what the Bible says about our life in the resurrection together, because You're the firstborn. I commit to grow in my understanding. I'll put time and energy into this, because You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth. I will give You preeminence in my life. Because You have eyes of fire, I ask You to fill me with Your love. I commit to grow in love, to receive your love and return Your love. I commit to a lifestyle to receive Your love and return it, to grow in those ways."

When He says His feet are like brass in Revelation 2, He's talking in relationship to immorality. We say, "Your feet are like brass. I say yes. I commit to You, to obey the things that You're wanting to build up and stay away from the things Your feet of brass are destroying. As You remove immorality from the Church, I commit myself to it." That's how we respond to Jesus as the feet of brass. That's one of many ways to respond.

These are just a little snapshot to get you going. I tell you, beloved, and I say this again in a sad way: Revelation 1 is the best-kept secret in the Body of Christ. Let's get the word out. I don't mean get the word out by handing someone the handout. I mean you make your own, you start talking about it, and you start teaching on it. You take the next ten years and go deep in these thirty declarations.

Let's get the word out—personally. Let's experience it and proclaim it in the simple ways of talking about it one on one. That's one way we proclaim it, and there are many other ways as well. Amen.

MINISTRY TIME

Hopefully some of you are so stirred up by the menu, you want to go out and eat tonight: "Hurry up and be quiet, Mike—I have to go eat! I can't have someone preaching. I can't talk to Him well with someone preaching. Hurry up!" I will.

I want to start you on this journey if this is new. Even tonight, in the next hour or two, begin to write these things down. Start saying these things to Him. “You’re the Alpha and the Omega. I don’t get that, but You are.”

Nothing happened.

“You’re the Alpha and the Omega.”

Still nothing happened. Stay with it. It will happen over time. Just stay with it. Don’t lose interest in it.