

Rev 1:9-20

The Son of Man Revealed

Good morning church.

It is wonderful to be here with you all.

This morning we are going to finish that first chapter of John's Vision of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

So far, we have studied the introduction of this letter, and the Greeting.

This morning we will see **The Son of Man Revealed.**

John will describe the vision he has of the Glorified Jesus.

Now understand, the Apostle John walked with Jesus in all His humanity.

In his Epistle he declares in **1 John 1:1-3** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life — 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal

life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

John touched, saw and heard Jesus of Nazareth, and was very familiar with Him.

Yet we will see the Glorified Jesus, will be all that He was as He walked this earth, yet, He will be so much more.

And the 'so much more' will actually overwhelm John, Jesus' friend.

The vision here in the Revelation of Jesus, is the only description we have of Jesus in the New Testament.

We have some pictures prophesied in the Old Testament, in Isaiah, we see the Suffering Servant.

Isaiah was speaking of Christ the Lamb of God, the Sacrifice made for our sins.

John here will be describing Jesus the Judge, His current title and character.

So let us get into it, we will read the whole portion and come back through and glean all we can form this portion.

Vision of the Son of Man

1:9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 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. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow,

and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

Let us pray!

John says here in verse 9...

Vision of the Son of Man

1:9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

This mighty Apostle John, who has been such an instrumental influence in the early church.

The last of all the original Twelve disciples who walked with Jesus during His campaign here on earth.

This respected Elder within the church, who at this point in his ministry has been boiled alive in oil, and survived, and who is imprisoned because of his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ.

He is a hero to our faith, and yet, we see such humility here in his personal address.

He sends this letter to the many believers in Asia, which would be under his authority, and John, addresses them as their brother and companion.

You see in the church we are all One Body of believers.

Some of course carry the burden of leadership, but it never puts anyone in a greater place before God.

God shows no partiality, He does not give more honor to the pastor than he would the greeter at the door.

No man should ever expect more honor, or greater position in the church.

God looks for faithfulness.

John could have sent this letter from a place of authority, but instead he does so as a fellow worker, and a fellow sufferer.

He says he is a brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

This tribulation is not the Great Tribulation, but the troubles that the believers were immediately facing at the time of John's writing.

Domitian, the Roman emperor had put John in prison on the Island of Patmos.

John was the overseer in the church in Asia.

Domitian was threatened by the message that he preached.

So he banned him to this slave camp, and was forced to labor in the mines even in his old age.

He knew the worst of what the Christians were experiencing at that time, and he mentions he too is enduring patiently through them.

With the hope of the future Kingdom awaiting Him.

Remember Paul's admonition to the churches in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch...

Acts 14:22 "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Our lives as believers will endure through many troubles, but we patiently endure as the early Christians did, with the hope of our future Kingdom.

The last part of verse 9 John explains he was sent to Patmos for his own dedication to teaching and preaching the Word of God, and Jesus Christ.

You see he was already actively involved in the ministry prior to this point.

I find it fascinating, that God wanting to give John this Revelation, He does not do it when he was faithfully doing ministry.

Instead, God pulls John aside, God allows Satan to persecute the apostle, so God can get him away from the hustle and bustle of ministry.

And it is in his great isolation and separation that God speaks to John.

What Satan meant for evil here, God uses for good.

John will receive the greatest Revelation given to man in what he may have considered the worst time in his life.

Christian, this is consistent with the God of the Bible, He constantly met with the heroes of our faith in great times of distress.

Abram when separated from his family and all familiarity, in a great crisis of faith, going to a strange land, God spoke to him, and Abram became the father of all who would believe in God by faith.

Jacob, while running for his life, had the great vision of a ladder going from heaven to earth, and God spoke to him, and met him in his loneliness.

Moses, met God in the lonely deserts of Midian as a failure.

God made him into a mighty deliverer.

Gideon, God found him hiding, and in fear, and God gave him a name as a mighty judge in Israel.

It was Elijah who was running for his life from the wicked Queen Jezebel, in the midst of crisis and wishing death to overtake him, that is when God met him with a still small voice.

The mighty King David found his calling while running for his life from a jealous tyrant.

David's son Solomon, young and inexperienced, in fear of his calling met with God, who gave him wisdom.

Daniel while under persecution for his faith in Yahweh, saw God's deliverance from the mouth of the lion.

And all throughout scripture, we see it is when the person is completely done with themselves and at the end of their human capabilities, God, then shows Himself in a mighty way.

Listen to me right now, if your life is in shambles, and you are perhaps isolated and alone.

Perhaps you are fighting depression and extreme anxiety, understand it is when we are at the place we cannot take anymore, that God shows up.

And in light of what has happened this week, and another celebrity committing suicide, I want to speak to you here this morning who perhaps might be even feeling suicidal because of the pressures you are under.

Listen, to the testimony of John here, while he was suffering on the Island of Patmos, that is when God showed up.

If you are hearing this message this morning, and perhaps you have contemplated taking your own life, understand something, God loves you, He has not

forgotten about you, if you are in great crisis this morning, I want to encourage to listen.

God perhaps, through this trial wants to give you the greatest message of your life, patiently wait, through the tribulation that you are experiencing, and hope for the Kingdom that is coming.

God will show up, He will not forsake you, nor will He ever leave you, no matter how dark your life gets.

He has a plan for your life, hang in there. I want to come back to this thought at the end.

So while John was in great turmoil, John says next...

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

John explains that this supernatural occurrence that took place, happened on the Lord's Day.

You see his physical body was on Patmos, yet his spirit was focused on the Spirit of God.

You understand that the believer is a citizen of two worlds, for the meantime we live physically here on earth, with all the hardships and turmoil, yet our spirit longs to be home with our King.

Remember the Apostle Paul in Phil. 1:21-23 he explains he was hard-pressed between the two places, desiring to be with Jesus, but understanding there was work to do in this life as well.

How depressing and hopeless it would have been for John, if Patmos were his only reality to ponder.

Yet, he found his escape in his heart and mind, by seeking the things of the Spirit.

Understand if your depression has you overwhelmed this morning, you are in the right place here on the Lord's Day.

John too, possibly found his hope on Sunday, turning his heart heavenward.

Now the Lord's Day can also be understood, The Day of Lord, the commentators are almost split down the middle on the understanding of the Lord's Day.

The original Greek can be used both ways.

Either way does not change any context.

One just simply means John received this revelation on Sunday, the other is speaking to the fact, that John was brought to a future vision of the Great Day of the Lord, speaking of when Jesus comes back to this earth as Judge.

Either way, John's attention was brought heavenward...

With his heart and mind turned to the things of the Spirit the Lord spoke as loud as a voice of a trumpet!

The speaker is identified as the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last.

Giving Jesus a title of Divinity here.

The booming voice commands John to write a book of the vision he is about to witness.

Then he is instructed to send the writings to the seven churches in Asia, or what we would know as Turkey today.

We will meet each church in the weeks to come.

In these seven churches, we will get a fourfold meaning.

Jesus will address each church, and the problems that are in that immediate church, also we will have before us a picture of the complete church history from the Apostles to the modern apostate church.

Then we will also gather from the letters to the seven churches instruction for our individual church, and lastly understanding for each of our personal walks with the Lord.

So after John hears the voice and instruction we read...

12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 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.

John turns immediately to see who was speaking to him, and the vision begins...

He saw Seven golden candlesticks.

This imagery takes us back to the tabernacle in the days Israel was wondering in the wilderness.

In Exodus 25:31-39 Moses receives the instruction on an important piece of furniture for the worship of God in the Tabernacle.

A golden lampstand or Menorah.

It put forth the light within the sanctuary.

It was a reminder to the nation of Israel that they were God's light to the world.

Today, since the Jews rejected Christ at His first coming, the light bearers are the Church.

These candlesticks now represent a new light that is to shine forth as a testimony for God to the world.

We see here in the midst of the lampstands, One like the Son of Man.

Jesus Himself was in the midst of the candlesticks, with a priestly garment down to His feet.

Regarding the girdle, Josephus explains that the high priests were girded about their breasts as a show of dignity and majesty.

The normal priests were to gird up their loins, for maneuvering around to perform their duties, but the high priest was girded at his chest in a show of strength and power.

This is picturing not only Christ our High Priest but also the Judge.

In verse 14, we read about the Glorified Christ...

14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

Now, this description of Jesus also points very clearly to the Eternal Yahweh of the Old Testament.

Really tying them together as One God.

We see phrases used here for Jesus that in the Old Testament that were only used for God.

This God that Daniel saw in **Dan 7:9** where he says...

9 "I watched till thrones were put in place,

And the Ancient of Days was seated;

His garment was white as snow,

And the hair of His head was like pure wool.

His throne was a fiery flame,

Its wheels a burning fire;

These attributes that were given to the Ancient of Days, are now associated with Jesus.

They are One God.

Isaiah the prophet explains...

Isa 1:18

"Though your sins are like scarlet,

They shall be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson,

They shall be as wool.

Speaking of the meaning of the colors, we see white speaks of purity and cleansing.

His eyes are like a flame of fire!

Speaking of His Divine judgment that comes upon all things impure and unrighteous.

Now you will notice in this Revelation of Jesus, His fiery eyes will first turn to the church for judgment.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

If you come to this writing of the Apocalypse and you are anxious to see the Judgment of God unleashes upon wicked people, you will first have to understand that these All-Seeing Fiery Eyes of judgment are not partial to unrighteousness.

Jesus will first assess the church, and these eyes will penetrate first into our own souls.

The difference between the Judgement in the church age and the age to come is Jesus lovingly gives

instruction and correction to the church, although it does come with an ultimatum, there will be communication.

The fiery judgement unleashed on those who rejected His grace will have no such communication.

Be grateful we live in the church age, where we still relate to Jesus as Judge, yet also through Grace.

We see here in the vision His feet were like fine brass or bronze burning in a fire, speaking of divine judgement as shown to us in the Old Testament.

The Brazen alter which stood between man and God, which accepted the sacrifices, and burned them.

The Bronze being strong enough to withstand the flames, as the sacrifice burned upon the altar.

John Walvoord says here “We see Christ standing in the midst of the churches on the basis of divine and righteous judgement portrayed both in the fire and the metal mentioned.”

Then at the end of verse 15 we read His voice came forth as the sound of many waters.

Now, when Jess and I traveled to the Philippines on our first mission trip.

They took us to Casaroro Falls, it was a beautiful waterfall in the middle of the jungle, and I believe it was a 30-minute intense hike.

First you go down 355 steps, which means on the way back you have to climb that many after the hike through the jungle.

But as you hike back into the jungle to find the falls, before you see the waterfall, you can hear the crashing of the water.

By the time we reached the waterfall I was so impressed with the power and the sound, I was almost afraid to swim by it, I thought for sure the power of the water coming down would pin me under the water.

Only a couple of us were brave enough to jump in, but it overwhelmed all of your senses with the noise and the power coming down so violently.

John knew Jesus very intimately, but now, Jesus is in His glorified form.

And no longer is Jesus speaking as a gentle carpenter from Nazareth, but with crippling force and power.

Now since the Apostle Paul on the Damascus Road heard Jesus, as Jesus gave him his calling and purpose.

The heavens have been silent.

Have you ever shouted at God, “Why won’t you speak to me?”

Or, “I just want to hear Your voice, talk to me!”

Understand next time God speaks from heaven it will be terrible, and powerful.

You see this present Age of Grace, God is silent, and He has given us His Written Word as His means of communication.

How little do we realize, that the next time He speaks, it will mean the end of the age of grace, it will mean His mercy is withdrawn, and the dawning of the Day of Wrath has come.

One day the unmistakable omnipotent voice of many waters will break forth and drown out all the other noises.

Understand His silence now, means there is time to come through the doorway of Grace.

Come to understand and know Him through His Word, it will be a sad day, when your challenge to God is answered by terrors of the Great Tribulation!

Next, we read...

16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

We see here in the picture seven stars in His hand, which we will see in a moment are the messengers or leaders of the seven churches.

We see they are in His hand, in His grip.

What a comfort in this age of Grace, that Jesus is in complete control over all the forces in the natural and supernatural.

In those very hands that bear the scars from Calvary,
He holds the destinies of the church and its leaders.

Jesus is in control.

For me it brings such security, and gives me a peace of
mind.

****Lola picture****

My daughter Lola, some nights gets afraid, and every
so often she grabs my hand until she falls asleep.

She says, “Daddy, don’t leave my room.”

She knows that Daddy’s hands are in control, I will
protect here, sooth her, and comfort her.

Her weak feeble hands grab so tight on my much
stronger and sturdy hand.

If I try to slip away before she falls asleep, she grabs
tighter, and her fear grips her, and she cries, until she
realizes my hand is still there.

Well, ministry can be that way, uncertain, even fearful,
and I am so grateful for this picture here in John’s
vision.

The ministry is in His grip, He is in control, and no outside forces can come against us and prevail.

I find my security, as I squeeze His hand, and feel His strength.

This picture shows His Authority and Protection over the church.

Next, we see from His mouth a sharp two-edged sword coming forth.

The very mouth that spoke and the flaming sun and stars were thrown into the universe.

The very mouth whose words spoke and land formed on the waters of this world we call earth.

He spoke, and breath and life came into His creation.

This same mouth will one day speak and devastate His enemies with a Word.

Heb. 4:12-13 tells us... **For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts**

and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

His Word can create and replenish, and also cut and divide, this Mighty Word that comes from His mouth is Invincible and All-Powerful.

His countenance, John describes like the sun shining in its strength.

Understand the contrast here between Jesus the Suffering Servant, who was so approachable, the little children could come to Him.

Even the worst of sinners, the infirmed and sick could approach.

Even the politician and soldier were found coming to Jesus.

But Christ in His Glory is even more threatening than the sun burning brilliantly in the sky.

When I was kid, my mother told me not to look in the sun, well that provoked my curiosity as a young man,

and I forced myself to try, and for the rest of the day, I had a miserable blind spot, after only a moment of testing her theory.

The sun in all of its power cannot even be looked upon at 93 million miles away.

How much more the brilliance of the one who spoke into existence?

It is also interesting to me, that for those of us who have come to Jesus in this time of grace, we too will shine in the brilliance of His glory.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

In Glory only, will we be able to withstand the power and majesty and might of the Risen Jesus.

And we read next...

17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who

lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

You know I find it very concerning when I hear a man claim they have spoken to Jesus, or received a special vision of Him, some even claim Jesus came to them in a special way.

These claims are ludicrous in light of what John is admitting to us here.

John, Jesus' old companion, falls as a dead man before Him.

If anyone would be able to stand and converse with Jesus, it would be The Beloved John.

Yet, he is engulfed by the energy of this moment, and fear grips his heart, and he could do nothing but fall as a dead man.

It is absurd to me, that anyone would claim to stand face to face and talk with Jesus.

But many today claim this, and many more follow them and their claims.

What a wonderful thing here as John is touched by the right hand of Jesus, and comforted by the Words “Do not be afraid, I am the First and the Last.”

Perhaps that touch was familiar to John, and John is able to receive the rest of this vision after this gentle reassurance.

In Verse 18, Jesus tells John in a special way who He is, He is Jesus who lives, who John saw die, but behold He lives forevermore.

There is no one else who could be known by this precise statement.

Jesus also claims authority over death and hades.

Jesus rose triumphant over both.

Jesus because of this victory released those who were imprisoned in Hades.

In Luke’s Gospel in chapter 16 in the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man, Jesus describes the condition of the dead before the cross.

A place called hades, separated into two compartments, with a great gulf in between them.

One side was for the unbeliever, the other side were those who by faith believed in the future Savior.

After the death of Jesus, for three days, He went and preached, and set the captives free from hades, those who have patiently waited for their deliverance.

Today the other side of hades awaits the final judgement that we will see toward the end of this Book.

Christ now has the keys and control over death and even the eternal fate of man.

John, has just revealed the Glorified Christ, the best that he could with the language and images he had available to him.

Understand when we see symbols in the Book of Revelation, with the word “Like or As” after them, John is trying to use a symbol to describe something with images he can associate with.

For example “His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”

That word “Like” means this is something like this description.

Now, when there is no “like or as” we take the imagery literally or look to scripture to explain it for us.

As we will see here in a moment the seven stars and candlesticks will be explained.

So for the most part we will take these things written literally unless John states he is trying to describe something as or like something else.

Now many people have come up with all kinds of outlines for the writings in this book.

And over the years nothing has been consistent and man has really made this book confusing and hard to understand.

But it does not have to be difficult, when we study this book literally, and when we simply go through it without any sensational overtones, or exaggerated themes, we see the message is very clear.

Next Jesus gives us the very basic outline, a breakdown of this Vision as instructed from Jesus.

Jesus says...

19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

Now underline this verse in your Bible, and make a note, that this is the key to the whole Book of Revelation.

This is the inspired outline, and we understand the different breaks in this book from this verse.

First, John was instructed to write the things that he saw, that would be what he saw here in this first chapter, the vision of Jesus Christ.

Then John is instructed to write about the things which are, this will be chapters 2-3, the messages to the church, dealing with the church period.

We are in the times 'which are' right now.

The last section of John's writing will take place from chapter 4 to chapter 22.

Jesus describes this section as the things that will take place after this.

Now, those words "after this" are Meta Tauta in the original language, which is the key to understanding some very important doctrines regarding the church and where we will be during the events of the tribulation.

You see, when we do not take these writings literally we can come up with all kinds of crazy doctrines, however, it is simple.

In Chapter 4 of Revelation John will start with the very same word Meta Tauta, or after this.

After what John? Well after the church Era.

You see from chapter four on, the church will no longer be called the church, we will not see the church again in that capacity.

We will see the Elders before the throne of God, representing the redeemed church.

So we will see very clearly, as John is raptured and immediately brought before God's throne, this will be representing the churches rapture.

Mark those words 'after this' in your Bible, and write Meta Tauta, after these things, after the church Era, and we are brought up to heaven, then and only then will the events of the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord take place.

Next week we will start the second section of the outline here in verse 9, the things which are, the church era.

So do not let anyone ever deceive you into thinking the Book of Revelation is a great puzzle, and should be sealed up because it is undecipherable.

You now can take them to the key of this Book, and help them understand the simple breakdown of what John is writing here.

John concludes this chapter by recording Jesus' meaning to the symbols that he mentioned earlier.

He is obeying Jesus, by writing down everything Jesus spoke.

In verse 20, we read...

20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

We see here the seven stars are the seven angels, which should more accurately be translated to mean messengers.

As we will come to understand it, it can be more correctly understood, that it should be the overseer or pastors or elders of the church.

Donald Barnhouse says in his commentary regarding this, "Scripture clearly teaches that God holds the overseers of the church responsible for the spiritual condition of the people, and this responsibility is not upon the pastors *'only'* but upon all who hold positions of leadership. No angel in Heaven could be held

responsible for the state of the Church on earth. This is clearly a Word to human messengers...”

So the leadership of the church is found in the grip of His Hand, and we see Jesus is in the midst of the candlesticks that represent the church.

You know it is my prayer, that you all would understand this, that you would know that Jesus is in our midst.

It seems often times the church culture in America likes to look at a picture of Jesus, to hear stories of Jesus, to talk about Jesus, but the relationship seems to be as One that is far off.

My prayer is that the veil can be lifted off your eyes, that you can be with Jesus, not just learn about Jesus.

He is here in our midst, He is in control, He is leading this church, He is touching lives, and He is here.

This is such a comfort in the day we live, in the hardships we live among, Jesus is with us.

You know the key to knowing this, is not through the warm fuzzies of an emotional rush.

We learn His Word each week, and in this age He is known through His Word, and to obey the things we learn here on the Lord's Day each week is to experience Him.

To trust in the promises of the Word each week, is to trust in Him, to come to the Word for your answers to this life, is to come to Jesus Himself.

When we are in the darkest times in our life, to keep coming and keep trusting Him, this is how He is revealed to us.

What an amazing Revelation of Jesus John here received on the Island of Patmos.

What an overwhelming experience and privilege he was given in one of the darkest times of his life.

What if he did not stick it out there on Patmos, if he just gave up in discouragement?

We would have never had this glimpse at what the glorified Christ looks like.

I want to encourage you here this morning, when you think you just cannot take anymore, when you think life is just too much.

Listen for His voice through His Word; He is still revealing Himself today, even if you can't hear Him right now. Hold out, be persistent, He is not done with you.

You know depression and loneliness are very real today even in the church.

One Christian woman wrote as she was going through postpartum depression:

“I felt so guilty for feeling unhappy because I was a Christian.”

She said, “Satan’s voice seemed so real through my emotions. I felt like the pressure was so much, that I started to believe Satan that if I was not here anymore I would be relieved of the guilt I was feeling.”

The woman explains “Although I prayed and prayed and tried to read my Word everyday, it didn’t take

those feelings away. I tried to stay busy to keep my mind straight.”

She explains, “I had to everyday stand in truth when everything in my being was lying to me and telling me to quit. The voice told me God did not care for me, nor did He see I was hurting and angry for no reason.”

“I tried to reach out to brothers and sisters in the Lord for help, but no one knew how serious this was, nor did it seem like they cared, at times I felt as though I was screaming for help, and I would only get blank stares and Christian clichés.”

“I felt hopeless, alone, and simply done.”

I personally watched that woman pull slowly out of that dark time in her life, as she continually came to Jesus daily for her strength.

You know she came out of that time with a deeper understanding that God loved her, that Jesus was actually there with her through it all, never once did He leave her side.

In fact the growth my wife found in that dark time period in her life, gave her the strength to face great tragedies that came her way immediately after Jesus healed her.

Explain my judgments on depression and suicide...

Until I walked through this with my wife, I had no idea the depths of darkness a Christian can go through, not because they have sinned, or they are not trying hard enough, but simply because life is hard sometimes.

Now I picture John, on Patmos, so discouraged, beat down, not understanding why if he was doing the Lords work, why was he going through this misery, performing slave labor in his old age, possibly on this Day, as he was in the Spirit, crying out to God for answers, and God showed up.

It is not at all a stretch to think John perhaps was depressed in his isolation.

But in his darkness he saw Jesus clearer than anyone has this side of eternity.

Now, my Facebook feed has been overwhelmed by articles of Chester Bennington, who killed himself this week.

My wife told me he was crying out for a while, but nobody was listening, or knew what to do.

I personally know depression is real, as I watched my wife overcome it.

But this morning, I know perhaps some of you are suffering right now from depression, or anxiety, and perhaps you have the accuser of the brethren in ear lying to you, and trying his hardest to get you to end it all.

Listen, it is not a coincidence you are here this morning.

God brought you here to tell you He loves you, He has a purpose for you, He is with you, you have no idea what tomorrow holds for you.

Please, hear Him, come to Him.

Now the Elders and pastors will be up here during and after this last song.

If that is you, please come up and get prayer, let these guys minister to you.

You know every week, your spirit is possibly telling you to come forward and get prayer for this, but Satan feeds your pride, and you leave here without the healing Christ can offer.

No one here will judge you, we love you, we want to help you, we are saddened by your struggle, and the church, the Body of Christ is here to walk through this with you.

Come up and receive healing, as the Elders Pray for you.

Perhaps you have a loved one who is struggling with suicidal thoughts, come up and pray for their life this morning.

Whatever your prayer needs are this morning, these guys are here to minister to you.

Come today and be healed, let Jesus heal you. Amen.