

Living Water Fellowship

2nd Sunday in Easter – 17th April 2022

COME TO JESUS

PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION REVIVAL ANTHEM (REND COLLECTIVE)

WELCOME & PRAYER:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

SONG: *Our God*

BIBLE READING: Revelation 1:4-8 & 12-18

⁴This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia.

Grace & peace to you from the one who is, who always was, & who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; ⁵and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, & the ruler of all the kings of the world.

All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. ⁶He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory & power to him forever & ever! Amen.

⁷Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him — even those who pierced him.

And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!

⁸“I am the Alpha & the Omega—the beginning & the end,” says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, & who is still to come—the Almighty One.”

¹²When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. ¹³Standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. ¹⁴His head & his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like flames of fire. ¹⁵His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, & his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. ¹⁶He held seven stars in his right hand, & a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. His face was like the sun in all its brilliance. ¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me & said, “Don’t be afraid! I am the First & the Last. ¹⁸I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever & ever! I hold the keys of death & the grave.

FIRST CENTURY NEWS:

FAITH CHAT:

1. What are some things you perhaps take for granted now, but never thought you’d see in your lifetime?
2. If you open your Bible to the book of Revelation, what does chapter 1 verse 1 tell you is the “real” title of this book? How is this book usually read, instead of that?

THE MESSAGE: *IN CHRIST'S HANDS: LIVING REALITY*

OFFERING SONG: *How Great is our God*

PRAYERS:

THE COMMUNION:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship Video during Communion: SPEAK O LORD (KEITH & KRISTYN GETTY)

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

**(Name), † child of God, Jesus is real & alive in you!
Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: *Cornerstone*

SHOW HIS LOVE

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Revelation 1:4-8 & 12-18. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you find most challenging? Why? Read also Rev 2:1-7. How does Rev 1 naturally flow into what Jesus says to this first church in Rev 2?
2. In studying the Revelation, why do many Christians look for a timeline of the end-times rather than a revelation whose subject is Jesus Christ? If you look for the wrong thing, how likely are you to correctly understand what the book says?
3. If you were suffering persecution for faith in Jesus, what word from God would encourage or comfort you & strengthen your perseverance? How do you hear that in these first verses from Revelation?
4. How do these first verses point to the key themes you expect to find over the course of John's writing? Make a list of what you think John wants his readers to know? How do you feel when you read them? John shares what is most important about Jesus. What is that? Note the similarities in 1 Cor 15:3ff. Why is that important?
5. How does knowing the truth about Jesus Kingship & imminent return shape your life here & now? (Read Rom 5:1-5 to deepen your answer...also Heb 6:16-19) When John notes in v 3 that the "time is near" for these things to take place, what does that suggest to you?
6. What is the significance of the exalted Jesus walking among the lampstands (the churches to whom this letter is addressed)? What does this teach us about the church? What does it teach us about Jesus? (See Eph 1:22 & Col 1:18)
7. The *Survivor* TV series uses an extinguished torch/lamp to designate when someone is forced off out of the competition. How is their use of that image helpful/not helpful in understanding what John is sharing from his revelation of Jesus?
8. What is implied in the designations Alpha/Omega (how God describes himself vs 8) & First/Last (how Jesus describes himself vs 17)? How can both be both?
9. What does Jesus' further self-description (vs 18) suggest to you? (See also Mt 18:8) Keys can not only unlock but also can be used to lock. Discuss the two-edged nature of Jesus' authority? What does he set free or release? What does he lock up or imprison?
10. John writes between 50-75 years after Jesus was raised from the dead. Already the churches struggled to remain faithful. What challenges do you believe they faced? How are their difficulties similar to/different from yours as a 21st century follower of Jesus? What hope does John provide for them & for you? How can you share that with someone who is struggling to remain faithful to Christ now, or struggling to accept the truth of Christ in their own life?
11. What does this text call you to do?