

In the Midst of the Church

Revelation 1: 12-20

In our last study regarding Jesus in the midst, we found Him within the Upper Room, ministering unto the disciples in the midst of their struggles. They battled doubt and fear, but Jesus provided courage and strength to endure.

John was among the disciples as Jesus appeared in the Upper Room. However, much had changed since that time. Decades passed, and yet John had remained faithful unto the Lord. He is now an old man, some sixty years after the resurrection and ascension. John had been banished to the Isle of Patmos for refusing to deny Christ. The authorities thought they had put an end to the foolishness of an old man, but it was on the island that John would receive the Revelation. During that time, as John began to receive the Revelation from Christ, he made a profound discovery – once again seeing Christ in the midst. This time Jesus was found among His church, providing all they needed to endure persecution and proclaim the Gospel.

We too can take comfort from this passage. Jesus is found among the church. While John would write to seven churches that existed in his day, the principles revealed in this particular revelation remain relevant for the church today. Jesus remains in the midst of His church! As we examine the [attributes](#) of our Lord, I want to consider: [In the Midst of the Church](#).

I. The Presence of Christ (12-13a) – [And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; ^{\[13a\]} And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.](#) We know that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. He had heard the voice as of a trumpet. As John turns to [see](#), (must've been some voice) he sees seven golden candlesticks.

- This wasn't a sight unfamiliar to John. Candlesticks were found in the Tabernacle of God, [Ex.25:31 – And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same.](#) God required they be made of pure gold, indicating their purity.
- Jesus reveals the candlesticks represent the churches, God's complete church. [Verse 20 – the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.](#)
- The church is to be the light of the world. A specific type of oil was used to light the candlesticks. Oil usually pictures the Holy Spirit. If we are to be the light of the world, we must be filled with the Spirit.
- As John looked, he saw in the midst of the candlesticks, [one like unto the Son of man](#). Are you beginning to get the picture? Jesus is in the midst of His church! Jesus ascended back to the Father some 60 years prior to John's vision, over 1900 years ago, but He is still in our midst today.

The church is precious to the Lord. We are His purchased possession, the ransomed of Christ, the cause for Calvary, the redeemed!

- When we gather together for worship, Jesus is in the midst. Even when we are unaware, Jesus is here! We are not alone, serving some dead, forgotten god, but the risen Savior who abides with us. Praise God for His presence!

II. The Person of Christ (13b-16) – No doubt the candlesticks were beautiful, but John focuses his attention on the Man in the midst.

A. His Garment (13b) – *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot.* Jesus is seen wearing a long, royal robe. This wasn't the attire worn by servants or common men, but kings and priests. John sees Jesus as King of kings and our great High Priest.

- He is the sovereign Lord, holding complete authority and judgment. He was rejected as Messiah, and many still do, but He is the King.
- Jesus is also our Priest, our Intercessor and Mediator to the Father. He placed His royal blood upon the Mercy Seat forever atoning sin. There will never be a need for another sacrifice. Jesus is the eternal King and Priest over the church and the world. *Heb.9:11-12 – But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; ^[12] Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*

B. His Head and Hair (14a) – *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.* This speaks of His purity and eternal nature. Jesus came in flesh as a man, lived a holy, sinless life, and died for our sin. He is holy and righteous; He is God!

- Jesus wasn't created at His birth; He is eternal, without beginning and ending. The precious head of our Lord was smitten, spat upon, and crowned with thorns. They placed a napkin about His face as He was laid in the tomb. His head will never again be crowned with thorns or have grave clothes wrapped about it. He will wear a crown of glory that no other is worthy to wear!

C. His Eyes (14b) – *His eyes were as a flame of fire.* This pictures the omniscient, all seeing eyes of Christ and the infinite wisdom He possesses. He is able to see and discern all things, even the inward desires of the heart. *Heb.4:13 – Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

- These eyes saw Adam in the garden, Moses at the Red Sea, Job in his ashes, Peter by the fire, Stephen being stoned, Paul on the Damascus road, as well as you and me. They wept for Lazarus and Jerusalem. Nothing escapes the eternal gaze of Christ. He knows our hearts!

D. His Feet (15a) – *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.* Brass and bronze in the Bible are typical of judgment. Jesus stands in the midst of His church as the righteous Judge. The precious feet of the humble Babe became nail scarred on the cross.

- When He returns in power His feet won't be nailed to a cross, but walking in judgment as He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, *Rev.19:15 – And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Jesus will come as Judge and execute His authority and judgment upon Satan and sinful men.*

E. His Voice (15b, 16b) – *and his voice as the sound of many waters.* His voice was described as a trumpet in *V.10*, but now it is as the sound of many waters. The mighty sound of Niagara would likely not compare. This is the same voice that astonished the doctors in Jerusalem when He was only twelve years of age; that caused the soldiers to say – *Never man spake like this man*, that calmed the raging sea, and that cried - *It is finished.*

- It is the voice that will call for the church at the rapture. It is the voice that will defeat the enemies of God. *Verse 16b – and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword.* *Rev.19:21 – And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.* I'm glad I'll hear His voice as an invitation to glory rather than in judgment.

F. His Hand (16a) – *And he had in his right hand seven stars. Verse 20 – The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.* Jesus holds the seven stars, the angels of the churches, in His hand.

- Some believe this to be guardian angels, watching over the churches. Others believe the angels represent the pastors of the churches. The underlying Greek word literally means *messenger*. I prefer to believe they represent those who carry the message of God. Jesus is seen holding those who carry His message in His hand.
- The world has no use for those who preach the gospel. We are hated and despised. There is comfort for all Christians in this verse. We are safely held in the mighty hand of Jesus. Hell may rage, as it did in John's day, but we are secure in the Lord. He is in our midst; we are in His hand.

G. His Countenance (16c) – *and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.* John saw Jesus in all His glory. He had seen it before on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus no longer has

the countenance of a man. His glory was hidden by flesh when He came the 1st time. Now He possesses a glory that outshines the sun. [Rev.21:23 – And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.](#)

- That glory will one day be revealed for all to see. The wicked will desire the mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the face of Jesus. His countenance won't be marred or beaten, but shining with the glory of God.

III. The Peace of Christ (17-18)

A. His Authority (17) – [And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.](#) John had spent much time with the Lord. He was part of the “inner circle”, the disciple whom Jesus loved, but he fell at his feet as dead.

- Jesus isn't just “one of the boys” or “the man upstairs” – He is Lord. There will be no proud hearts in the presence of Jesus. Isaiah said, [Woe is me, for I am undone.](#) Peter said, [Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.](#)
- Jesus came with a tender touch to John. He had already ascended back to heaven, but He still cared for John. Jesus loves us today. He cares for us and wants us to trust in Him. The child of God has no reason to fear. We are serving the risen Lord.

B. His Assurance (18) – [I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.](#) Here is one of the most powerful verses in the Bible. Jesus existed before Bethlehem; He died upon the cross, yet He lives again. He is the eternal Lord. He overcame hell and death. The thing that man fears most, Jesus has conquered.

- We can rejoice in the victory that we have in Jesus. He has removed the sting of death and we shall forever live with our King. [1 Cor.15:54-55 – So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.](#) ^[55] [O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?](#)
- There is nothing left to conquer; there is no adversary that can defeat Him; we are secure in Jesus. I know of no greater assurance than that which is found in Jesus!

Conclusion: I'm glad to know Jesus as my Savior. We have seen a very detailed picture of Christ. He came the first time as the sacrificial Lamb, but He will come again as the conquering King. His return will bring great joy to those who are saved and ready, but it will be a time of sorrowful judgment upon those who have rejected Him. He stands in the midst of us today!

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I pray you have accepted Christ as the Savior of your soul. He is the King; that will never change. The question is: does He reign in your heart today?