

To Philadelphia

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[0 : 00] Oh, thanks once again for inviting me to come and be with you this morning. I've heard many great things about Brunstford Evangelical from John, from Graham, and for those who come here. And it's a real joy, and I mean that sincerely, to actually be with you, worshipping God with you this morning.

Now, if you've got a Bible, why don't you grab one of these Bibles there? Why don't you turn to Revelation 3? Revelation 3, chapter 7. We're going to read this in a minute or so. But before we do that, I'm sure it has not escaped your attention that right now, Edinburgh is part of the largest arts festival in the world. We have the Edinburgh Fringe on our doorstep right now. You cannot walk down the Royal Mile without getting flyers thrust in your face, and people inviting you to come see improvised sketch comedy, and all sorts of stuff like that. But as you walk down the Royal Mile, it's also very hard to escape your attention the kind of society that we today live in. It's not very hard, when looking at the shows that are on the offer, to see just what this society praises, what this society seeks, what this society desires, what this society affirms.

[1 : 13] I don't know if this year I'm more aware of it or not, but the posters I've seen up in the Royal Mile and elsewhere in Edinburgh, and the obscenities on these posters seem to have increased over the years. You see, when you look at what the popular shows are at the Fringe today, we become all too aware of the godless society in now which we live.

I've seen a few shows on the Fringe, and I can count, I think I've seen two shows that have not included either swearing, nudity, or blasphemy. It's very hard to find a good show that doesn't contain these three things.

But as we've seen these shows, as we've seen the different plays on the Fringe, another thing struck me. It's that everyone is desperate to try and find some answers. People are desperate to find out what it is to be human.

What is this life really all about? And people are trying to find the answers in the wrong places. I went to see a play this week at the Traverse Theatre, and it was dealing with issues of loneliness, and humans seeking to find some form of connection with other people.

But yet they're chasing after that connection completely in the wrong places. And this play offered absolutely no answers. Because, you see, our godless society doesn't have the answers to the big questions that we are seeking to find out.

[2 : 31] Now, we might think, oh, that's great. As a church, that's fantastic, because we now have the opportunity to step in there and offer the answers we believe we find in Jesus Christ.

Great opportunity, and you're absolutely right. We do have lots of opportunities to make Christ known in Edinburgh. The more secular our society becomes, the more opportunity the church has to point people to Christ.

But here's my question. As a church, do we not feel like we're just not making that much of an impact upon our city? We have 500,000 people on our doorstep.

I know that Charlotte Chapel, last year, we saw about six people come to faith for the whole year. Praise the Lord for every one of these souls that went from death to life, but we want to see more, do we not?

We've got half a million people there who are completely lost at this moment. Do we not get tired? People looking at you a bit weird because you believe all this God stuff.

[3 : 35] Do you not feel tired that people judge you and look at you with disgust because you believe in biblical marriage? Do we not get tired feeling like our voices are not being heard, or when they are heard, they're mocked and ridiculed?

Do we not get tired that because we're a church that holds to the Bible's teaching, we're seen to be, at best, irrelevant to society, or at worst, a dangerous threat? Does it not feel like sometimes it's just easier to pack this all in?

To stop telling people about Christ just to have that easy, quiet life? I'm tempted by that. And I'm sure many of us today are also tempted by that. Does it not feel like we are just too weak?

Too weak to make Christ known in Edinburgh and beyond. So what should we do about this? How should a Bible-centred church in the 21st century Edinburgh respond to our increasingly godless society?

What does God have to say about all this? Well, to find out, we're going to look at an ancient letter to an ancient church written in an ancient book. Because we believe that this ancient book, the Bible, is God's living word.

[4 : 44] That it's just as relevant to us today in 21st century Edinburgh as it was to those in the 1st century. And because what we're experiencing today is not all that different to what the church has experienced over the past 2,000 years.

Now, as has already been healthily said throughout this series, the key to the letters in the churches in Revelation is not to pick out which church we are most like, but it's to see what Jesus commends about these churches and what he condemns about these churches, put that together, and we get a bigger picture of what Jesus thinks is a healthy, faithful church.

Because after all, the opinion that matters most about church is the head of the church, Jesus Christ. So that mind, go to Revelations 3, verse 7. Before we get to it, I am going to come to this, by the way.

But I want to give you a little bit more context first before we come to this, okay? Now this, we've now reached in our series, The Letter to Philadelphia. Now a few things to say about Philadelphia before we read this letter.

First of all, Philadelphia is not found in the U.S. of A. and it's not the hometown of the Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, nor is it a letter written to a cream cheese factory. Philadelphia is actually found in Asia Minor, what we now know today as Turkey.

[5 : 59] And you can still visit it today. It's got a different name now. It's called Alasihur, I think. Alasihur. Something like that. But you can still visit that on the west coast of Turkey. Now the surrounding area, very fertile, it was renowned for its grapes, for its winemaking, but it was also a city that was known for its pagan festivals.

The people of Philadelphia were very much into worshipping gods. They worshipped the gods of Olympus as well as their own local gods. In fact, the nickname for Philadelphia was Little Athens because of their many worships of gods.

Now it's to the church of Philadelphia that's written a letter. This letter is written that the Philadelphian church is the youngest of our seven churches and it's perhaps the weakest of our seven churches. If you had a line-up of all seven churches of Philadelphia, all the church of Revelation, sorry, Philadelphia would be the last to get picked.

You know, you'd have the more established Ephesian church, probably the team captain with its great work ethic, it doesn't get weary. Then you've got Pergamum with the vice-captain because she has a faithful witness.

And then you get down the line, at the end of the line, there's no one left to be picked and you have little old Philadelphia, the youngest and the weakest, who are not really all that much to look at.

[7 : 17] Other churches are more like the Royal Marines, Philadelphia is more like Dad's army. Here is a small church that's struggling to make an impact in a city. A church that faced great opposition from the local people as well as the local Jews.

This was a church that was denied entry into the local synagogue by the Jews. This was a church lacking in strength, a church that was all to wear of its own weakness and insecurity, and a church that needs to be strengthened.

So with that in mind, let's finally read Revelations chapter 3, verse 7. To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens, no one can shut, and what he shuts, no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.

I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word, and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews, though they are not, but are liars, I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.

[8 : 33] Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. I am coming soon.

Hold on to what you have so that no one will take your crown. Him who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it.

I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God. And I will also write on him my new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. This is God's Word. What a letter we have here. What a wonderful letter filled with encouragement and wonderful promises for this weak yet faithful little church.

See, unlike the other letters we've seen, this letter does not contain one single rebuke. There's only two letters that don't have a rebuke. The other being Sismarina and this one here.

[9 : 42] Not a single rebuke. See, to this church Jesus says, yes, you are weak but you are a faithful church and I love you and I will keep you.

So what was it about Philadelphia that made them so faithful? What is it about them that we can learn from them today? Well, the first thing and perhaps the biggest thing that we can learn is that they have a small view of themselves and a big view of who Christ is.

a small view of themselves and a big view of who the risen Lord Savior Jesus Christ is. They, like Jesus, knew they were weak. They knew they were struggling in the face of persecution, suffering, and discrimination.

But they also knew who Jesus was. They knew that he was worth it to stay faithful to him. That is why there's nothing but praise and affirmation towards this weak yet faithful little church.

You see, I think the reason, or one of the reasons why we get so easily tired when it comes to reaching Edinburgh for the gospel is because we're trying to do things on our own.

[10 : 49] It's because we're trying to do things by our own efforts and we've forgotten just who it is that we serve. We've lost sight of just how big he is. We serve the almighty God.

We serve the almighty God who's the creator of all things. We serve the risen Lord Jesus Christ who died on a cross to take the punishment for our sins and yet rose, three days later, rose back to life.

We serve the living God who defeated death itself. Yet too often we try and do things by our own esteem. Too often we depend and rely upon ourselves than lean upon the almighty God who can do all things.

But when we think like that, we fall into the trap of thinking too much of ourselves and too little of God. we forget what Paul says in Corinthians. Think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards. Not many influential. Not many of you were of noble birth but God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

[11 : 56] God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things and the things that are not to nullify the things that are so that no one may boast before him. God has not chosen the strongest.

God has not chosen the coolest or the most influential. No, God has chosen the weak, the foolish, those who lack any kind of influence. God has called the low so that no one may boast except in the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, we are weak. We are foolish. We do not hold much influence. No wonder we get tired when we try to do things by ourselves. No wonder we struggle to make an impact on our city for we have such a warped view of ourselves and such a low view of who the God is that we serve.

And I think it's very deliberate that each of these seven letters all begin with describing the awesome attributes of Jesus Christ. If you need a bigger picture of who Christ is, then come with me to verse seven.

Look with me at the title Jesus has given. These are the words of him who is holy and true. A more literal translation would be the holy one, the true one.

[13 : 06] See the term holy used frequently throughout the Bible and it's a title for God. It's the title of divinity. In other words, the risen Jesus is being described as divine.

The true one, less common, but it means that Jesus is genuine. His word is reliable, which is quite crucial for this church to hear considering the opposition they face from local Jews who will deny who Jesus Christ is.

Hear Jesus saying, I am the risen Messiah and my word is reliable. I am the holy one and I am the true one. Let's keep going to verse seven. What else do we see about Jesus?

Who holds the key of David. What he opens, no one can shut. What he shuts, no one can open.

Jesus is holding the key of David. Now if you want a background on the key of David, I'd encourage you to go and check out Isaiah 22.

We don't have time this morning to go there, but do do that as homework later on. But the key of David opens the way or the door to the heavenly kingdom. And whoever holds this key has the authority to either let people in or to deny them entry.

[14:16] You heard of the phrase the key to the city. Edinburgh's got two giant keys to the city that are given to the queen every time she comes up to stay. Whoever holds this key has the authority to back in the day used to be to literally open the door to the wall to let people come in and out of the city.

Whoever holds the key has authority to let people in or out of the city. Now obviously our keys to Edinburgh are absolutely huge. They're more symbolic. There's not a giant lock somewhere that these keys open.

But it symbolises when they're given to the queen that as monarch she has absolute royal authority over the city of Edinburgh. She does then actually hand them back to Edinburgh again trusting in their care. But it's the same idea here in Revelation.

Jesus is holding the key of David as symbolic of the fact that the risen Jesus the king of kings has absolute authority over who enters the heavenly kingdom. And his authority cannot be overruled. What he opens no one can shut. What he shut no one can open. Jesus possesses undisputed royal authority. This is who we serve. The risen Lord Jesus the holy one the true one the keeper of the key of David.

[15:27] The Philadelphians knew this and we need to know this too. So what does a church as a low view of itself and a high view of Christ look like? Well I believe we've got an example here in this letter.

Jesus says to this church I know your deeds I know that verse 8 you have kept my words. Here we see the first characteristics of a faithful church that thinks low of itself but yet high of God.

Unlike other churches mentioned Revelation this little church had not been led astray by heretical teaching. They had not fallen into the trap of compromising the word by adding extras or removing parts from it.

They had not turned God's word into a picking mix but instead they remained faithful and they remained true to the words. Sadly in Edinburgh you do not have to look long to see a church that's turned the Bible into a picking mix.

You do not have to look long to see a church in Edinburgh that's watered in the gospel so that they can appear relevant to society. So they speak a lot about God being a God of love but don't speak much of the judgment and the sin and hell.

[16:42] They completely ignore these realities because they want to be more palatable to society. But rather ironically by ignoring such things they're also denying that God is a God of love.

And tragically you do not have to look long at these churches to see their numbers dwindle. You see if we want to be relevant to society if we want to draw people to Christ we don't do that by watering down God's word.

We don't do that by turning it into a picking mix. No we do that by being counter-cultural. We do that by holding fast of what the Bible teaches. We do that by staying faithful and true to God's word the Bible.

We do that by keeping God's word. And we do that by having a big picture of who Christ is and not being afraid to be seen as bigots. Not being afraid to be persecuted, to be discriminated against because we hold to the Bible's teaching.

The church of Philadelphia knew this. We need to know this too. Second characteristic of a faithful church, Jesus says to his church, I know your deeds, I know that. Verse 8, you have not denied my name.

[17:51] In the face of persecution, in the face of suffering and discrimination, this weak church never denied the name of Christ. They must have been under such pressure, such temptation,

especially from the Jews, to deny that Jesus is the Christ, that he is the risen Lord, that he is the Son of God.

But yet not once did they deny his name. So you think there are perhaps three ways in which we today can deny the name of Christ. First of all, we can deny who Jesus is, that he is the Son of God, that he is the promised Messiah, that he was without sin, that he did die on a cross for our sins, that he did raise to life three days later, that he is the saviour of the world, that he is the only way to salvation.

I am the way, the truth, the life. In a society where absolute truth must be rejected, uncertainty seen as arrogance, these are counter-cultural claims.

But a faithful follower of Christ, a faithful church, will hold to all these claims. To deny any of them is deny who Jesus is and therefore deny his name. I think the second way that we can perhaps deny Jesus' name is to not acknowledge Jesus before others.

Ashamed of who he is, ashamed to tell others about Christ. So maybe we do confess in our hearts that Jesus is Lord, but we still deny him by not telling other people about him.

[19 : 24] Now, I'm speaking as much to myself here, we're all slow to admit our faith to others, we are. We live in a culture that is increasingly hostile to Christianity. We're painted as ignorant people who believe in harmful, bigoted fairy tales.

And that can lead us to shrink back. But by doing so, we make Jesus look small. We make him look like he is not worth living our lives for him.

And by doing so, we deny who Jesus is and what he has done for us. Jesus. Jesus has absolute authority over who passes through the door of salvation.

And if when we get to heaven, Jesus says, you're not with me, you're not getting in. There are many people outside our doors who do not know Jesus, who are not going to get in right now.

And yet, we shrink back and tell them of who Christ is, of the salvation that can be found in him alone. By doing so, we deny his name. We have a lower opinion of who Christ is and a bigger opinion of who we, who man is.

[20 : 31] Again, it must be so tempting for the Philadelphians to just keep quiet about who Jesus was, keep their mouths shut. But they didn't. Why? Because they had a big view of who Christ was and a small view of who they were.

But perhaps the most easily and subtle way that we can deny who Jesus is is through hypocrisy. We may shout from the rooftops Jesus Lord, but our messy lives can drown out our words.

See, my question for you is, what does your life say? What does your life say of who you follow?

See, many people profess to know God but deny him with their works, Titus 1, 16.

See, faith in Jesus will always change the way we live. So if our lives look like nothing has changed, then maybe something is not quite right. See, your words may acknowledge Jesus but do your works deny him?

Are you loving others? Are you obeying him? Are you bearing fruit? Are you sacrificially giving yourself and your resources to others? Are you seeking to keep God's words? Are you seeking to not deny his name?

[21 : 43] Philadelphia kept Jesus' name, did not deny it. Why? Because they had a big view of who Christ was and a small view of who they were. And Jesus promises to this church in verse 9 vindication before their foes.

This is very interesting because in Isaiah 60, 14 it says this, the children of your oppressors will come bowing before you. All who despise you will bow down at your feet. And the very people who thought that they would be standing there with people bowing before them was the Jews in Philadelphia.

They thought these Christians, these Gentiles, will one day come before them and bow before them in fulfillment of this prophecy in Isaiah 60. But Jesus says, no, no, no, no, no. No. The Philadelphian church are the ones who are going to be standing there and the Jews, the synagogue of Satan, the liars, will come down and bow before you and they will see that I love you.

Now when I was studying this passage this week, I was annotating my script, I printed out the passage, annotated it, and I simply wrote the one word, whoa, next to verse 9.

Whoa. These people who are oppressed in the Philadelphian church, who are barring them for the synagogue, will one day come and bow at their feet and see that no, Jesus loves them. Whoa.

[22 : 59] I thought it's amazing. How long for that vindication, how I long to see those who oppress us, call us bigots, those who discriminate against us come bow at my feet. Then I suddenly realized, I'm making much of myself here and little of Christ.

If I'm longing for myself to be seen as right, then I have forgotten who I serve. And the more I studied this passage, the more I thought, whoa, look at who Christ is, the holy one, the true one, the keeper of the key of David, the one who is going to take these enemies to bow to their feet, the one who loves me.

Whoa. The Savior loves me. Whoa, I get to serve him. That will be a glorious day when Christ comes again and when that does happen.

Brothers and sisters, we are not going to be looking at enemies bent before feet, we are going to be looking at Jesus and says, I love you. We're going to have this big, real picture of who Christ is. We are going to see him face to face. Whoa. Third characteristic of a faithful church, I think, it's low of itself but much of Christ.

[24 : 13] Verse 10. Jesus says, I know your deeds, I know that you have endured patiently. You have endured patiently. The Philadelphian church knew about suffering.

They knew what it was like to be ostracized by your community, to be opposed by your neighbors. They knew this and yet they still endured patiently through this. Again, it must have been so tempting for them to pack it all in.

It must have been so tempting for them to deny Christ's name, to not keep his word, and to just forget all about it. But they endured. And they endured patiently.

Why? Because they had a big view of who it was they served. They had a big view of who Christ is. Brothers and sisters, we have many opportunities to witness to our non-Christian society out there. But when we do, we will face persecution, we will face discrimination, there's no two ways about it. But we are called to endure patiently. And we can do that knowing who it is that we serve.

[25 : 17] Jesus Christ, the Holy One, the True One, the Keeper of the Key of David, the One who will keep us through these sufferings, through these times of trials, through these times of persecution. That is what's going to make us endure patiently.

Not relying upon ourselves, but relying leaning upon the Almighty God whom we serve.

Philadelphian church knew this. They kept God's word. They did not deny Christ's name.

They endured patiently. Why? Because they had a big view of who God was and a low view of who they were. And because the Philadelphian church was so faithful to Christ, Christ would show his faithfulness to them.

Read with me in verse 10. Let's read this together. Verse 10. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

Jesus will show his faithfulness to his people by protecting them, by keeping them through the hour of trial that will one day come. We read about this hour of trial in Mark 13 to 2 Thessalonians 2, but we also read it in Daniel 12, verse 1 to 9.

[26 : 21] I believe you've just been through a season, Daniel, so I thought we'd go here. Daniel 12, verses 1 to 2, which says this, there will be a time of distress. Such does not happen from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people, everyone whose name is found written in the book, will be delivered.

Multitudes asleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. There is going to be a terrible time. There is going to be a terrible time of great testing.

But Christ will keep and protect those who are faithful to him through the hour of trial. Now maybe this morning you're with us and you perhaps aren't a Christian.

Maybe you're not a believer or follower of Christ and we are so glad you're here. We really are.

We're delighted you have come with us to worship with us, to be in church with us this morning. But can I just say this to you? Have you thought about what happens after death?

Where are you trying to find your answers right now to the big questions in life? And are you trying to find the answers in the right place? Are they satisfying you, these answers? Or is there something missing?

[27 : 33] Is there something just not quite right with you? Well can I encourage you to come and study who Jesus Christ is? To come see who the Bible says he is, see who we say he is, and

explore further what Jesus is offering to us.

Salvation. Eternal satisfaction. Eternal peace. Because this time is coming, this hour of trial is coming. And if you're not found in Christ, when it comes to the final judgment day, Jesus is not going to say to you, I know you.

And Jesus is not going to let you into the heavenly kingdom. Rather, face eternal shame and everlasting contempt. Speak to the person who brought you, speak to me, I'm kicking about. I'd be happy to talk to you more about that. But let's go finally to the fourth characteristic of what a faithful church looks like. That has a low view of itself and a high view of Christ. Jesus says to this church, I'm coming soon, so hold on to what you have.

Verse 11. Hold on to what you have and you will be victorious. Hold on to your faith. Hold on to my word. Keep obeying my commands. Keep going. Continue to remain faithful and one day you will take the victor's crown.

[28 : 52] But that's not all. That's not all. That's amazing in itself, isn't it? But it keeps getting better. Because what is in store for the one who takes the victor's crown? Well, we keep reading into verse 12.

We see guaranteed entry into the messianic kingdom. Guaranteed entry into the kingdom of God, the new creation. Even if the synagogue door was slammed shut in the face of the Philadelphian church, they could be assured that the door to the kingdom of heaven remains wide open for them to just walk through because they have remained faithful.

Because remember who holds the key to the door? Jesus Christ. Who has the power and authority to open what he wants to open, shut what he wants to shut. There is the Lord Jesus Christ who loves them and will keep them.

But it goes even further than that. Come with me to verse 12. Let's read verse 12 together. Him who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it.

Here we see, read of Christ's promise to this church that this once weak band of faithful people who are barred from entering the synagogue, barred from the temporary temple on earth, will one day become a strong pillar in the eternal heavenly kingdom of the living God.

[30 : 09] That's amazing. We sang Cornerstone this morning. That's the anthem for this church I think. Christ alone, Cornerstone, weak made strong in the Saviour's love.

Through all he is Lord, Lord of all. That is the anthem of the Philadelphian church, weak made strong. Now of course, they're not actually going to become a physical pillar. That's not much of an incentive for us, isn't it? Stay faithful when you become like that pillar over there.

It's not much least, is it? But no, it's symbolic here, okay? It's symbolic. It's symbolic of something permanent, something strong. Okay? Now we do read later in Revelation, there isn't actually going to be a physical temple in the new creation.

The whole city is going to be the temple because that's where God is going to dwell with his people. But these images emphasize the point that those who are victorious, those who hold on to what they have, will dwell with God permanently in the new city of God.

This pillar is a symbol of something that's strong, solid, heavy, permanent. Not like a peg of a tent that's temporary that can easily be picked up again. This is strong, permanent structure.

[31 : 15] This is an assurance of their security in Christ. That those who are victorious will come into the presence of God and dwell with him there. And they will never leave his presence.

This once weak yet faithful, this once persecuted, suffering, discriminated against church, that the last to get picked, the dad's army of the followers of Christ, will one day dwell with their God forever. What a glorious picture we have here. And just in case we haven't quite got this theme of assurance and security, keep reading in verse 12 where he says, I will write on them the name of my God, the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God, and I'll also write on him my new name.

Three names, three seals of assurance, that those who are victorious belong to God and are citizens of this new city, this new Jerusalem. Here we have the faithful, victorious Christian who's able to say, I belong to the God Almighty.

I am a citizen of the city of God and I am a follower of Jesus Christ and I have his name on my back. Three names, thrice sealed. That is what awaits this faithful yet weak church.

[32 : 29] So maybe we feel like we're not making a dent on our city. Maybe we are struggling. Maybe we're weak. But remember that God has not chosen the strongest, the wisest, the coolest,

or the influential.

God has chosen the weak, the foolish, those who lack influence. God has called the low so that no one may boast except in the Lord. And God has called us to remain faithful, weak, yet faithful. What does that look like? We keep God's word. We do not deny Christ's name. We endure patiently and we hold on to what we have because we know that he is worth it.

And like I said at the beginning, we live in an increasingly God-less society. This means we have increasing opportunities to make Christ known to the people of Edinburgh. Brothers and sisters, the door of opportunity is wide open for us.

The less Christian society's morals and morals become, the more we will stand out. as we seek to live holy and pure lives. The more people search for answers in the wrong places, the more chances we have to point people to Christ and whom we find true satisfaction, true peace, true salvation.

[33 : 39] But as we do so, remember who we serve, the holy one, the true one, the keeper of the key of David, he yields absolute power and authority, the king of kings, the lord of lords.

Jesus Christ loves his people, who will make those who persecute us, fall down before his people. Jesus Christ will keep his people from the hour of trial, who will make his people a pillar in the temple of God.

Jesus Christ who will seal his people's identity and citizenship in the new Jerusalem. That is a Jesus Christ who we serve. That is who we're disciples of. That is who we should have the big picture of who Jesus Christ is.

Jesus says to his disciples in Matthew 28, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to be everything I have commanded you, and surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Let's pray together. Let's pray. Our mighty heavenly Father, Father, what an awesome picture of Christ we read in Revelation.

[35 : 02] What an awesome picture we see of him as the holy one, the true one, the one whose absolute authority, the one whose authority cannot be overruled. Father, we pray that as we study the revelation, that as we look at just who Jesus is, we will be more, we have more desire to lean upon him, to not lean upon our own efforts as we seek to go and make disciples of all nations, but to rather to trust in him who has absolute authority, to trust in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Father, forgive us for the times when we do make this about us. Forgive us for the times when we do make a big view of ourselves, but a low view of you, who you are. And Father, we do pray that through the preaching of your word, Lord, that you would help us to have a bigger view of who you are and a lower view of who we are, so that we can be a faithful church who goes out there, makes Christ known, and glorifies you with our ministry and with our lives.

Lord, we need your help for this, and we pray that you give it to us. In Christ's precious name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.