

## **Session 1 The Majesty of Jesus as the Son of Man**

*Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Father, we come to You in the name of Jesus and we thank You for your glorious Son. Holy Spirit, we ask You to do what You do best and what You enjoy most. Holy Spirit, take the things that belong to Jesus and give them to us; and we thank You in Jesus' name, amen.

Well, I'm beginning a new course for the next semester at IHOPU on "Jesus our Magnificent Obsession, Part 2." And I want to take a moment and give a little review of the things covered in that last course and then take it from there.

First, the foundational spiritual principle that's important for us to really lay hold of is the idea that the knowledge of God transforms the human heart more than any other dimension of the grace of God. I'll say that again. This is a very important foundational principle that not all believers are locked into or focused on. When the knowledge of God touches our heart, it transforms us; meaning it's information that has power on it and will move us over time. However, the rule of the kingdom is that the Holy Spirit just gives us little increments, or little installments, if you will, of this information; but over time it accumulates and it changes us on the inside.

### **THE PRIVILEGE AND PLEASURE OF KNOWING THE MAGNIFICENCE OF JESUS**

Now our life goal, or my life goal and I'm sure many of you here would have the same one, is that I want to enter into the power and the privilege and the pleasure of being obsessed with the magnificence of Jesus. I want to enter into the power of that, and the pleasure of it. I want to be obsessed with the revelation of the magnificence of Jesus. I want it to grab me and lead me along as the primary influence of my life. Now that's the privilege of every believer in the new covenant who wants it.

### **THE GREATEST PLEASURE IS GOD REVEALING GOD TO THE HUMAN SPIRIT**

Paragraph A: There's no aspect in the grace of God that more powerfully transforms the human emotions than when God reveals God to the human spirit. When God reveals God to our spirit, when the knowledge of God touches us, it shifts our emotions. Again, little by little over months and years, but it makes a significant difference.

I encourage people who are struggling with bondage, as they're trying to get free, gritting their teeth to resist and break free from that bondage, rather than trying harder to resist the bondage, to put their focus and their attention on going deeper; gaining new understanding about God. I encourage them to go deeper and focus on that instead of trying harder. Because you can't grit your teeth and just by resolve free your emotions. However, you can go after information about God, and when the Holy Spirit touches our heart with it, it liberates our emotions, little by little.

### **THERE'S MORE TO JESUS THAN THE BENEFITS HE LOVES TO GIVE US**

Now many people think about Jesus mostly in terms of a savior. He forgives us of our sin and rescues us from hell. I like that! It's part of His ministry to us. They think about Him as One who heals, who directs, who provides, and who blesses circumstances. And that's true! That's what He does for us, but there's so much more about Jesus than the benefits that He loves to give us and that we love to receive. There's so much more about Him than the fact of what He does for us to enrich our life.

Now the witness to this truth is found around the throne of God in Revelation 4. The seraphim, the high-ranking angels, who are known as living creatures, cry day and night, offering unending, unceasing adoration and worship—not because they were forgotten; not because they were given financial provision or prophetic direction; not because the Lord healed them; for none of those reasons, but because they saw the glory and magnificence of God. And the glory of God, His magnificence, always provokes a response in those that see it. And this is the Jesus who forgives and saves, heals, directs, provides, and protects, but He's so much more. And as we see Him, it provokes a response in us; it moves us on the inside like it moves the seraphim around the throne.

Paragraph B. Philippians 3. Paul is the premier example of this truth of how the knowledge of God changes people's emotions and their emotional makeup and the way they think and feel. Paul gave testimony of this: he said, "I count all things as loss" (Phil. 3:8, paraphrased). He said, "I gladly give up everything."

Now why? What would motivate Paul to give up everything? He said, "I've had a glimpse of the excellence," or you could use the phrase, "the magnificence of the Man Christ Jesus." And as I grasp who He is even a little, it moves my heart in the deepest way.

### **THE POWER OF PAUL'S DEDICATION WAS ROOTED IN WHAT HE SAW ABOUT JESUS**

Now there are two applications to this passage of what Paul is saying; two applications to his life. Number one: "When I saw the worth of this Man Jesus in His majesty, it was clear to me that He was worthy of my full allegiance. He was worthy of my full abandonment to do His will and to give myself to Him." That's application number one. He said, "I saw the excellence and I said, 'Yes, no matter what it costs, You're worth my allegiance and obedience.'"

### **WE POSSESS DEDICATION TO THE EXTENT THAT WE SEE**

Now there's a second application, one that he knew because of the pleasure and the power of what he saw and how it moved him. He said, "I want to have more of it. I want to feel the glory of it. And I'll remove everything that gets in the way because I want more of the excellence. I want to position my heart to receive everything that God will give the human heart in this age." And so he said, "When I saw the grandness of this Man, He was worth my allegiance. But I saw the power and the pleasure of seeing Him and I wanted to remove everything to get more that I could feel more of the weight of the glory of this."

And so we understand that the power of Paul's dedication was rooted in what he saw about Jesus. I want to say that again: the power of his dedication wasn't just that he was a zealous man. I've heard people say, "Well Paul was so zealous; that's why he was so dedicated." He was so dedicated because of what he saw. His dedication was the fruit of how he perceived Jesus.

I've prayed over the years, "Lord, let me see what Paul saw and I could live in the dedication he lived in. Let me see what he saw and I could respond like he did." Because we possess dedication to the extent that we see. And so if you want more dedication, if you want more transformation, focus on seeing more. Don't just resolve to do better and try harder: focus on getting more insight. And I tell you that that insight will move you on the inside over time.

In John 16:13, Jesus talks about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is a very, very important promise from Jesus, and we need to really anchor our life into this promise. He describes the Holy Spirit's ministry in John 16:13. He says, "The Spirit will guide you. The Spirit will be your personal escort into the realm of the magnificence of who Jesus is, the beauty of God" (Jn. 16:13, paraphrased). Jesus said, "The Spirit will guide you. He will take you by the hand. He will personally escort you if you want to go into the deeper things of My heart."

He elaborates in verse 14. He says, "The Spirit will take what is Mine. He will take the glory and the splendor that I possess and He will personally declare it to your heart. He will be your teacher. He will teach you in a way that you can understand. He will declare it to your mind and to your heart in such a way that you can feel the power of it" (Jn. 16:14).

I look at this promise that the Spirit will declare Jesus to me. Beloved, He knows more about Jesus than we can imagine. And He is a very, very good teacher, but He will only teach us to the degree that we have hunger to go forward.

#### **"THE SPIRIT SEARCHES ALL THINGS, YES, THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD"**

It says here in 1 Corinthians 2:10, "The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10). The Spirit discerns the deep things of the Father and the Son in order to reveal them to us. And so I want to take a stand in faith, and not just use the faith principles, to experience more of the benefits of God's leadership in provision, economics, and healings, because faith is related to experiencing more of the benefits. However, I want to take the Word of God and exercise my faith to believe God that the Spirit would declare more of Jesus to me, even the deep things of Jesus' heart. The Spirit is so willing and He knows so much. He has gone to the deep places of Jesus' heart, and Jesus said, "He will teach you but only on the basis of your hunger."

He won't force feed us. He won't make us go deep. We can love Jesus in the general sense and stay superficial in our knowledge of God for decades. I've been pastoring for over thirty years and I've watched many people go ten, twenty, thirty years, and they never go beyond a superficial knowledge of God. Twenty and thirty years later, they still love the Lord, but in terms of the knowledge of God in a specific way they haven't moved forward. That's not OK for me. I want to go as deep as God will take the human spirit in this age. And Jesus said, "He will declare who I am to you more if you want to know." But again, He won't force feed us.

Now here's the good news: that "the Spirit will teach you about Jesus," and again, He's talking to the apostles. The apostles could have said, "We already know You; we've been with You for three years!"

And Jesus could have said, "Oh, there's so much more that you don't know about Me, and you'll need this escort into the deep things of who I am."

I can imagine the twelve apostles thinking, "Well, no, we think we know You pretty well..."

And Jesus says "No, I'm about to depart, and the truth is you know Me hardly at all, but He will teach you."

#### **IT WON'T HAPPEN AUTOMATICALLY, AND IT WON'T HAPPEN ON THE RUN**

Now the good news is that He will declare Jesus to us not based on our intellectual abilities. I've talked with people over the years and they say, "Well you know I'm not really a good student. I'm a little 'ADD.' I don't

stay focused and I don't remember what I read." And so they think, "Well maybe this isn't for me." No, this promise isn't based on people you know who are the top-rated students and everyone else is just left out. No, it's not based on your intellectual abilities, nor is it based on your ministry assignment. Your ministry assignment may be in the marketplace, or in education, or in your home. Your primary ministry may be in your home, or in the neighborhood, or in the university, or in the pulpit. You may be called to lead a congregation. It doesn't matter what your ministry assignment is; this promise is for everyone who wants it and loves Jesus. Therefore don't write yourself off because, "Well, I don't learn that well and I'm not a preacher anyway, so I might as well go along with the flow and just wait until I see Jesus at the end; then I'll just catch up on lost time."

No! You can do deep now, but we have a fierce determination. It won't happen automatically, and it won't happen on the run. It's when we lock in and determine, "This is really where I want my life to go." And it takes time; you won't go deep on the run.

Now again, one person has an assignment from the Lord that they need to be faithful to, and so they don't have as much time as another person. And you don't need to compare how much time you have compared to this guy or that guy; just go with all your might. Most of us do have things in our lives we can choose to turn off and turn away. There are some things that are maybe good and legitimate in themselves, but they're not helpful in this pursuit. Most of us have that 'x' factor in our schedule where we really could still be faithful to our assignment before the Lord and yet pull away and turn some things off and turn some things away and still find more time to go after this.

### **"HOLY SPIRIT, LET ME SEE WHAT YOU SEE WHEN YOU LOOK AT JESUS"**

Paragraph C: One of my favorite prayers: I pray, "Holy Spirit, let me see what You see when You look at Jesus. Let me feel what You feel." I talk to the Holy Spirit. By the way, He lives in your spirit in your inner man. I turn my attention to Him and say, "Holy Spirit." He's like the glory of God, like the burning bush, like the Holy of Holies dwelling in your belly. I mean, the Spirit of God is in the inside of you as a consuming fire. He's the Great Teacher. He is God himself.

I say, "Holy Spirit, let me see what You see and let me feel what You feel about Jesus!"

And the Holy Spirit might say, "I see much more than you can imagine. And I feel far deeper than you could ever understand. Your capacity is far too narrow, but I'll give you much more than you have now. You'll never have all that I have, but I have so much to teach you."

### **PROCLAIMING THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**

In Ephesians 3:8, Paul describes his ministry focus. And the reason I'm pointing this out is because there was a time in my life some years ago where I used this verse together with Philippians 3:8. And I determined that the premier focus of my life and my ministry would be Ephesians 3:8 and Philippians 3:8. And I would put those verses together and talk to the Lord. Paul said, "To me . . . grace was given"—and you could add the phrase, "The anointing of the Holy Spirit was given to me"—"that I might proclaim the unsearchable riches of the Man Christ Jesus" (Eph. 3:8, paraphrased). Now that's not all that we proclaim, but that was the primary focus in Paul's thinking about his life and ministry.

### **THE MOST NEGLECTED SUBJECT IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

Today the most neglected subject in the kingdom of God is God. I'm serious: we make reference to God and we make passing reference to Jesus. We talk about healing "in the name of Jesus." We talk about provision and direction "in the name of Jesus." We reference Him and we claim His name, but I'm talking about focusing on Him and talking about *Him*, not just the benefits and how we get them. However, I do believe in that, because it's a biblical truth. Most of the teaching in the kingdom of God is on relationship skills, leadership principles, economic principles, ministry skills, how to make life easier, and how to make life better. Those are biblical principles, but I'm talking about God himself as the most neglected subject.

Paul had this determination: "I know why I'm anointed. I will experience the excellence of this Man and then I will make it known everywhere I go. Jesus will be my primary subject." Not just activity, not just ministry, not just relationship building, not just impact, though again, those are all very important biblical subjects. "I will make the Man Christ Jesus the primary focus for my life and for my ministry."

### **THE GREATEST CRISIS IN AMERICA TODAY**

There's a great crisis in America, but the greatest crisis of America isn't Islam growing and increasing; though that's troublesome in itself. It's not abortion, though I can't think of anything worse. It's not same-sex marriage. It's not the financial crisis that's looming and increasing. I believe the greatest crisis in America is the lack of clarity in the pulpits about God Himself to the church: Clear and anointed proclamation with specific insight about Jesus Himself will set on fire the church, and a thousand lesser evils can be cured when that first domino is pushed over. These other problems are real problems; they're troubling. However, beloved, until several million believers are ignited by the glory of the Man Christ Jesus, those problems aren't going away. I believe the greatest crisis is in the pulpits in the church in our nation, and therefore the response or the lack of response of the Body of Christ to the Word of God.

### **WE TALK SO LITTLE ABOUT JESUS BECAUSE WE THINK SO LITTLE ABOUT HIM**

The reason we talk so little about Jesus in our ministries is because we think so little about Him in specific ways in our private lives. I'm not trying to be negative or critical; I'm trying to stir you up so that you say, "By the grace of God I'm not going in that direction."

I'll say it again: the reason we talk so little about Him in our ministries is because we think so little about Him in specific ways. Again, I'm not talking about His benefits; I'm talking about the person of Jesus Himself. When I reference talking about Him in our ministry I don't mean preaching on a microphone. I'm talking about the twos and threes that you're influencing; I'm talking about the discipleship commitments you have, whether they're formal or informal. We talk so little about Jesus in the Church because we think so little about Him. Our thoughts are too low, too few, and too vague. I mean, we have a general idea: "I love You, Jesus!" We picture a man on a throne and we love Him, but our thinking is lacking in specificity and detail. And I've said to the Lord, "I don't want my life stuck in the muddle of thinking thoughts about Him that are too low, too few, and too vague." I want to think deep and long and clearly about Him because there's so much in the Word about Him.

### **JESUS CHOSE TO IDENTIFY WITH THE HUMAN RACE FOREVER**

Roman numeral II. In this second semester on "Jesus Our Magnificent Obsession," we will focus on Jesus as the Son of Man. Now "the Son of Man" is His most comprehensive title as Messiah. It's the title He used the most.

It says the most about Him and His role as the Messiah. Eighty-five times in the Gospels He calls Himself “the Son of Man.”

What does it mean? It means so much. First, when He calls Himself “the Son of Man,” He’s identifying with the human race. He’s saying, “I’m one of you forever! I didn’t just become human, die on the cross, rise from the dead, and then lay My humanity aside. I’m human forever. Yes, fully God, but I’m fully Man forever.”

### **HE EMBRACED THE FRAILTY OF HUMANITY DURING HIS TIME ON EARTH**

Not only is He identified with the human race by being human; He embraced the frailty of humanity during His time on the earth. I mean, that the uncreated God, Jesus Christ, could be hungry and tired and thirsty is just unthinkable; the Creator hungry and thirsty! He embraced human frailty. And not only that: He’s committed to human partnership. He says, “I’m the Son of Man; My eternal companion is human and I’m bringing her, My bride, into everything that I inherit as a man. Under the Father I will bring her to My side and she walk in it all with Me. Yes, I will rule the nations and she will rule them with Me under my authority.”

There’s so much in the statement, “He’s the Son of Man.” However, the point I want to focus on is that “the Son of Man” is a phrase that’s only used once in relation to Jesus the Messiah in the Old Testament, and the other times it’s related to weak human beings. That’s why it’s such a shocking reality that the phrase “the Son of Man” is used in the Old Testament but only to refer to weak human beings, frail humans.

And when Jesus appeared as the Messiah, Daniel saw him and said, “The Son of Man? Are you sure that’s the title? Are you sure that’s who you are? Jesus, forgive Me, but do you realize what the Son of Man is? To us it refers to the frailty of men.”

He says, “I understand that.” And He puts together this combination of the glory beyond anything we could imagine in the midst of His humanity.

### **“ONE LIKE THE SON OF MAN CAME BEFORE THE ANCIENT OF DAYS. . .”**

And the great passage is Daniel 7. Now you may not be familiar with Daniel 7, but I want to highlight this, as it’s a “must read, must know” passage. Daniel 7 is one of the premier descriptions, one of the premier prophecies of the Messiah, of Jesus, in the Old Testament. If you only study a few of them, place Daniel 7 near the top of your list.

This is where Daniel had an open vision of the Messiah, of Jesus, ahead of time. He saw Him before His incarnation; he saw His destiny as a man and where it was going. And so each time Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man, He was always pointing back to Daniel 7, because that’s the only reference in the Old Testament. And so when He would say, “I’m the Son of Man,” people would raise their eyes and say, “Do you realize that You’re referencing Yourself as the Man from Daniel 7?”

And of course Jesus retorted, “That’s the point; I’m that Man.” Remarkable.

Let’s look really briefly at Daniel 7, and give it a quick snapshot. And we’ll look at it more in the weeks to come on Friday night. Daniel 7:9. First, Daniel sees the Ancient of Days, which is a name for the Father depicting His eternal nature. He’s the uncreated God from eternity past. Never was there a time when God the

Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit did not exist. And He goes by the title, “The Ancient of Days,” depicting His eternal nature.

And then Daniel is looking on in the vision and notices that the Father’s garments and hair are white like snow. Now the garments always speak of the deeds that are done. The garments in the heavenly realm depict the deeds that are done as well. They’re symbolic, but there’s actually a dynamic relationship between the garments worn and the deeds done. What Daniel understands is that God’s garments are white as snow; totally pure and perfectly wise is the idea. Now the point that I’m emphasizing here is that in a moment we will look at Revelation 1, the other passage where Jesus appears as the Son of Man. He has the same white garments and the same white hair, just like the Father. And He’s saying to John, “I’m an expression of the same purity and wisdom that My Father possesses from eternity. I’m the perfect expression of His glory and person.”

His throne was like a flame of fire (Dan. 7:9). Daniel is speaking in around 500 BC, five hundred years before the incarnation. He said, “He’s like a human, but I’m not sure He’s more than a man. Surely He’s at least a man, but there’s a supernatural dimension about Him...” I mean, Daniel was perplexed. He was awestruck and perplexed. He said, “I don’t really get how this works.”

Because God said to Moses, “Moses, no man can see Me and live. Anyone who looks on Me will die” (Ex. 33:20).

But Daniel says, “But this Man is a man, but He’s... living... and He’s so near to God! He’s in the heavenly realm, so He must be a supernatural being of some sort, but He’s so human! I don’t get what I’m looking at!”

I mean, it was undoubtedly very perplexing. This “One like the Son of Man” came on the clouds. It’s interesting that when Jesus eighty-five times references Himself as the Son of Man, when He talks about returning to the earth, He throws in the dimension of clouds. He says, “Hey, Daniel 7: that’s one of My favorite parts of My return! I’m coming back on clouds.”

He came up to the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:14). And to Him, to a man, is given the dominion of all the nations of the earth. Now this is surprising, because Daniel surely understands that he’s seeing the Messiah, but the Messiah would be the King of Israel, and this Man is the King of every nation. He might have thought, “Wow, this is bigger than what I was expecting.”

### **THE SON OF MAN WILL PARTNER IN RULING THE EARTH WITH HIS PEOPLE**

And then a surprising dimension in verse 27 in this vast vision of the Son of Man. The Son of Man wants to share His government with His people, with His eternal companion which in the New Testament we understand is His bride forever. He says, “When I rule, she will rule at my side with Me.” He cried out in John 17:24, “Father, I desire that My people will be with Me where I am, together forever. Together forever she will be with Me” (Jn. 17:24, paraphrased). And so Daniel is surely perplexed by this.

Well, we take the Daniel 7 foundational truth about the Son of Man, and again, it’s the only description of the Son of Man in the Old Testament. And so every time Jesus calls Himself by that title, He’s only referencing one passage. He’s saying, “Look, go and read Daniel 7 and fill in the gaps.”

Again, it raised a lot of eyebrows in Jesus' day. Because when He made this claim to the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees and Sadducees, the leadership of Israel, they said, "How dare you claim to be the Daniel 7 Man?"

He said, "The very thing I claim, yes, I am He!" And they called it blasphemy. It was impossible that a man from Nazareth could be the Daniel 7 Man, impossible. They called it *blasphemy*.

### **AN OLD TESTAMENT AND A NEW TESTAMENT REVELATION OF THE SON OF MAN**

Well, there are two primary chapters in the Bible that describe Jesus as the Son of Man: Daniel 7 we just looked at, and Revelation 1 which we will focus our course on. Not only Revelation 1, but that's kind of the outline of where we're going.

Now the reason I identify these two chapters is because only when they're read together do we understand them in their fullness. When we read Daniel 7 together with Revelation 1, we get an Old Testament and a New Testament revelation of the Son of Man. Daniel saw one, and Jesus Himself gave the other to John on the Isle of Patmos when John was about ninety years old.

He says, "John, I'm the Son of Man. I'm the Daniel 7 Man, and I will show you the implications of that."

Let's see what John recorded. Now John undoubtedly saw much more than what he wrote down. He gives us the briefest statements, the briefest statements. And each one of these statements that he makes about Jesus has many, many implications.

Verse 10. John, again, is about ninety years old; it's about sixty years after Jesus' death and resurrection. John is on the Isle of Patmos as a prisoner for preaching Jesus. The Roman Empire has cast him onto that prison island. He said in verse 10, "I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10). And so John turns around and there's a man, a man who is fully God and fully Man, and He says to John, "I'm the Alpha and the Omega! I'm the First and the Last!"

### **JESUS POSSESSES ALL THE PURITY AND WISDOM OF HIS FATHER FOREVER**

Verse 12. "And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands. In the midst of them there He is! He's the Man I know, but there's more about Him that I've never seen before" (Rev. 1:12, paraphrased). "He's the Daniel 7 Man looking at me eye to eye. He's clothed with a garment reaching to the feet. He's coming as the sympathetic High Priest. He comes girded about the chest with a golden, wide band." Every one of these phrases is filled with meaning when we know what the Bible says about these different truths.

"His head and His hair were white like pure wool" (Rev. 1:14, paraphrased)! That's like the Father back in Daniel 7. He has the same purity and wisdom that His Father possesses from eternity. His eyes are like fire. Everything He does, He does for love. His feet are like brass, which speaks of judgment. He will remove everything that hinders love.

In His hands are seven stars. In just a moment Jesus explains what they are: "Those seven stars are the leaders that I carry that are so near and dear to Me. I don't just give them an assignment and send them on their way. I carry them near to Me, in My own hand; I'm among them" (Rev. 1:20, paraphrased).

"Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength" (Rev. 1:16). And John said in verse 17, "When I saw this Man, with whom I had been friends for three and a

half years, I saw Him with a new dimension of glory and I fell like a dead man before Him” (v. 17, paraphrased).

### **DRAMATIC REVELATION PRODUCES A DRAMATIC RESPONSE**

The passage goes on to describe how Jesus puts His hand out, kneels down, and touches him saying, “John, John, it’s just Me! Your friend! You put your head on My chest at the Last Supper. You’re the one I love; remember, you wrote it. You’re the disciple the Lord loves! I love you!” John is trembling, shaking under the weight of the glory: “I hardly know who you are!”

Back in Matthew 16 when Jesus said, “Who do men say that I am?” and the different apostles gave their answers, He could have said to John, “John, you didn’t really know who I am. You didn’t know then and you really don’t know now. There’s so much more that you don’t know about Me.”

Well, we see the principle here again that it’s the knowledge of God that moves John. Now this is an extreme example, but the principle is still true: he sees the knowledge of God in a dramatic way and has a dramatic response. However, the knowledge of God still moves us even in the lesser measures. Even in the simple ways, when we read the Word and the Spirit just gently stirs or warms our heart, it happens little by little, but it builds and accumulates over time and it shifts us on the inside, meaning it changes the way we think and feel.

### **THE REVELATION OF HIS PERSONALITY WILL MAKE OUR SOULS BRIGHT**

Paragraph C. Revelation 1 to 3. I tell you, this is a gold mine. We need to mine this gold. We need to be locked in for the rest of our lives to Revelation 1-3. I don’t mean for a summer or a semester; I mean, we will never exhaust these three chapters.

John shares the vision because he was told to share the vision in verse 11. Jesus said, “Write it; make these things known. It’s important that My people know what you’ve seen and what I’ve said” (Rev. 1:11, paraphrased). John notes thirty different descriptions of Jesus and eighteen eternal rewards in these three chapters. I want to highlight that. John gives thirty distinct descriptions of Jesus, eighteen specific eternal rewards. Now each one of these thirty descriptions and each one of these eternal rewards communicates a very specific truth about the nature, ministry, and majesty of who Jesus is. We want to lock into them, because what Jesus was telling John when He revealed this to him is this: “Make sure you write this and share it with the churches.” Really, what He was saying is, “If they can understand these things about Me, it will equip them to resist temptation, and to not draw back in the face of persecution. And I’ll equip them to participate with Me when I transition this earth to the age to come and the generation I return, when the events of the book of Revelation unfold.”

I want to say that again. What Jesus was saying is, “John, these thirty descriptions of Me are valid all throughout church history. However in the generation when I return, when sin escalates beyond any other time in history, if they know these things about Me they’ll withstand the temptations. Because I’ll touch them and their spirit will be fascinated and exhilarated and moved by Me. It will be stronger than the temptations of sin that assault them. Not only that they’ll be equipped to stand without yielding to fear under persecution” — because there’s going to be great persecution in that hour. There’s persecution now all over the world, but it will increase the closer we come to His return.

However, even more than resisting temptation, even more than enduring persecution, Jesus was all but saying, “If they know these thirty things in here and the eighteen rewards, they’ll be equipped to participate with Me in My plan to transition the earth to the age to come.”

Beloved, that’s a serious, serious mandate for the Church in that generation. We won’t be equipped just on the run. We will be equipped by going deep in these thirty truths about Him. Not that we will master them all or get them all, but we will be pursuing the Holy Spirit teaching us about these things.

### **EACH PHRASE IS LIKE THE TITLE OF A BOOK IN THE LIBRARY OF HEAVEN**

Paragraph D. To remind you again, these are only abbreviated statements: His eyes are like fire; that’s an abbreviated statement. His feet are like brass, His hair white like snow, His face like the sun. He’s called the faithful witness, the Ruler of the kings of the earth, the firstborn from the dead. These are little phrases but the point is that John saw more than he wrote. Each phrase is like the title of a book in the library of heaven. Each phrase is like a hint, and the Spirit is saying, “There’s much in the Word from Genesis to Revelation on the truth represented by this phrase. Come after Me and I’ll teach you about it if you want to know.”

The Holy Spirit won’t force feed us, and the Holy Spirit will only teach these subjects if we want to know them. And when Jesus appeared before John, He says, “Make sure the Church knows these things, their meanings and implications. They’ll need this to overcome temptation, endure persecution, and be prepared to partner with Me in that hour of history, as well as through 2,000 years of church history.”

Beloved, I believe these thirty descriptions in Revelation 1 to 3 are the diet, the menu on which the Holy Spirit is going to feed the end-time church. And not only do I want to be fed by them; I want to do Ephesians 3:8. I want to be anointed to make known the riches of Jesus. I don’t just want to experience the excellencies; I want to share them with others. I don’t mean by just saying, “He’s awesome, He’s awesome, He’s awesome!” I want to give details with specific thoughts, with practical ideas and phrases that people can lock into and picture it and feel the weight of it. And beloved, I believe all of us can take hold of this. Philippians 3:8: I want to see the excellencies; and Ephesians 3:8: I want to make known the riches of this excellent Man.

Again, your ministry may be one on one. Your ministry may be in the social network where you’re making truths known. You don’t need a pulpit and a microphone to commit to Ephesians 3:8. This is my life focus, to make these riches known about this Man.

### **THE PROGRESSION OF THE REVELATION OF THE SON OF MAN**

Paragraph G: There’s a progression, and I’ll let you read this on your own just for time’s sake. There’s a progression of revelation, meaning more revelation unfolds as time goes by. It starts in Daniel 7: the foundational revelation of the Son of Man. Then, 500 years later, Jesus for three and a half years in the Gospels takes that revelation of Daniel 7, the Son of Man, and expands it and elaborates it significantly. But it’s not over then. Then He anoints the apostles and they write the epistles, the various letters, and they give insights into what the Old Testament and the Gospels were making known. And then finally at the very end, Jesus appears; He doesn’t entrust this to any other. He comes Himself and says, “John, let Me place the capstone; let Me give you the finale. This is what I want you to see”; and He reveals the Son of Man and brings it another step beyond the Gospels and the epistles. However, only by reading them all together do we get the whole picture.

Beloved, it doesn't get any better than Jesus preaching Jesus. And in Revelation 1 it is Jesus preaching Jesus. He says, "Let Me tell you what you saw in the Gospels; let Me show more of what I was hiding that you didn't see, John. When I told you that I loved you, look at Me: My eyes are burning with fire. You never saw that before, did you? When I went and cleansed the temple, I have feet like brass: I will cleanse the whole earth. When I was with you on the boat and I calmed the storm, when the storm hits the whole earth in the end times I will be with My people. I will be in the boat calming the storm. I walk amongst the candlesticks. I will be with you holding you near to Me."

And so John is saying, "Oh, He's putting it all together."

Here's the point: some people take the Gospels and place them in contrast to the book of Revelation and the Old Testament prophets. Beloved, it's one complete story with all the components necessary to give the complete picture. There's no contradiction. The revelation just builds; it gets clearer and it expands as the Lord visits more throughout history. It begins with Daniel and the Old Testament prophets, and then the Gospels and epistles, and finally the book of Revelation, the grand finale. The whole book is called "the unveiling of the revelation of Jesus" (Rev. 1:1, paraphrased).

### **ONLY THE HUNGRY DINE, ONLY THE THIRSTY DRINK DEEP**

Roman numeral III. We have to search for this with all our heart. Beloved, salvation is a free gift. God pursued you for salvation. We didn't pursue God; He pursued us, He boxed us into a corner, He ambushed us, He trapped us and took away the options. Then years later we said, "I sought the Lord and I found Him."

And the Lord says, "That's not exactly how it goes. I sought you and trapped you and I gave you the free gift. You did have to say yes, but I really pressed you. However, it's different with the deep things of God. I won't make you go there. If you're hungry you can have it."

Proverbs 2:4-5. The Lord used this passage in my life years ago, and it has been an anchor verse the Lord promises about the knowledge of God: if you seek for it like hidden treasures, if you search for it, you'll find it. But only if you search for it. He won't trap you, hem you in, ambush you, and force you. "If you're hungry, I have these treasures to give you."

### **THE TREASURES OF THE LORD HAVE BEEN HIDDEN IN JESUS**

Beloved, they're treasures, but they're hidden. They're not automatically ours to enjoy unless we pursue them. The Lord says, "I've pursued to give you free salvation. Now I've awakened you. Now I beckon you, come pursue Me; search after Me. I have much treasure to give you, but it's hidden and you'll have to go after it. But if you want it, you can have it."

In Colossians 2, Paul says the same thing. He says, "The treasures, the riches of this Man have been hidden by the Lord, that only the hungry can enjoy them and receive them" (Col. 2:3, paraphrased). Beloved, you can love Jesus and kind of live business-as-usual Christianity and go to heaven being spiritually superficial, which is the lot that so many choose. Or you can go after those treasures. They're hidden; they'll take effort to go after. They'll take a determination and a focus, not for a summer or a semester, but for decades of locking in and not backing away.

It's the glory of God to hide a matter, but the glory of a king to search it out (Prov. 25:2). God says, "It is My glory to hide things that are dear to Me. I hide them. But a kingly spirit will search them out and refuse to be denied." The Lord says, "I have treasures I've hidden! Do you want them? Have a kingly spirit and refuse to be denied."

There's a deep correlation, a very strong connection, between the amount of time we spend studying, praying, and searching out what these descriptions mean, and our ability to understand them. If you'll give more time to it over the next months and years, you'll get more. There's a direct correlation.

You say, "Well I don't have the same time as another guy."

You don't have to compare yourself to the other guy. Do your assignment in the Lord faithfully. Turn some things off, turn some things away, even legitimate things, and the Lord says, "I'll meet you according to the time and the hunger you have while you're faithful to the responsibility I gave you."

And you don't have to be a good student; you can stare at the same passage for a whole month and say, "Holy Spirit, teach me!"

### **AGREE WITH HIS HEART; ASK FOR REVELATION; KEEP THE PROPHECY**

How do you apply these? It's very, very simple, but I just want to give them to you one, two, three. They're self-explanatory, so I'll be very brief here. I use the acronym A-R-K.

Paragraph C. A stands for agreement. We simply agree with these thirty descriptions. We tell Jesus, "You're the faithful witness!" We agree with them. R means asking for revelation. K means keeping the prophecy. That's a phrase that Jesus used twice in the book of Revelation: He said, "If you want to keep the prophecy, respond in obedience in your personal life to the revelation that I give of Myself" (Rev. 1:3; 22:7, paraphrased).

Paragraph D. For example, number one is simple declaration. "You're the faithful witness. You're the Ruler of the kings of the earth. You have eyes like fire. You have a face like the sun." The simplicity of saying that to Him with affection and gratitude is surprising, because that's what it takes. As simple as it is, it's so simple anyone can do it, but it's so simple that very few do. I feel many Christians have never said to Jesus, "You're the faithful witness; thank You!"

He declared that about Himself. We simply say it back to Him. Now when you do that, I encourage you to journal the things that you say—not everything, but the key phrases. Because the Holy Spirit will give you little phrases and you'll hear them out of your own mouth. I've learned to journal, because to journal is to capture the little phrases. Because the power of this is in the little phrases, the little pieces of information you capture, and that's what ends up transforming you. It's simple, but so many people miss it because of its simplicity.

For example, I'll say, "Lord, it says that Your eyes are like a flame of fire," and I'll just focus my mind on Him and say, "Your eyes are like a flame of fire. I love that about You. Thank You." And then a little while later I'll add the phrase, "In Your eyes of fire You're so filled with love, passion, and desire for Your people." And I say, "Oh, OK," and I write that down: "Filled with passion and desire for Your people."

And I say, “O Lord, Your eyes are like fire; You have so much desire and passion for Your people, and what we do moves You.” Then I say, “Oh!” and I write that down: “What we do moves You.”

As you say those little phrases, the Holy Spirit will actually give them to you, and that will be the first time you ever thought those phrases. Write them down and say them to Him often. And it will expand and expand.

I have a different folder on my laptop for each one of these thirty descriptions. And I have a different folder for each one of the eighteen eternal rewards. And I thank the Lord for them and I ask Him for more information about them and I talk to Him about them. And little phrases come, and whenever they do I write them down and add them to my folder. One reason we talk so little about Jesus is because we talk so little to Jesus. If we talk more to Him, we will talk more about Him.

Paragraph D: And so we start just agreeing, just saying what it says: “You are, You have, Your face is like...” and then maybe you don’t say anything. Lots of times I just say it and then nothing else comes. And so I’ll say, “I love You because of that. I love this about You.” And every now and then another phrase comes and my understanding just keeps growing, because it’s the Spirit actually inspiring you in the simplest way.

### **IT’S OUR PASSION TO BE OBSESSED WITH THE MAGNIFICENCE OF JESUS**

Then the next thing you do is R: you ask for revelation. “Holy Spirit, teach me about Jesus as the faithful witness.”

The Holy Spirit might say something like, “I was only waiting for you to ask. I have much to say! You’ve never asked, and I won’t start the conversation; I’ll wait until you start it.”

Many believers have never asked the Holy Spirit to teach them about these thirty descriptions. They’ve never done it once in their life. They’ve never declared them to Jesus and they’ve never asked the Spirit to declare them back to their heart. We declare them to Jesus, and the Spirit declares them to us and it just unfolds little by little, inch by inch, month by month, a little here and a little there; it keeps growing. And your emotions change in the process.

Paragraph G. K: keep the prophecy. We make a personal response “You’re the King of kings!” That’s the A, the agreement. R: ask for revelation: “Show me the revelation of Your kingship.” It’s so simple. K: keep the prophecy. “I will bring my life under Your leadership as the King: My money, my schedule, my time, my resources, my enemies, I’ll bring them all under Your kingship.”

It’s so simple that anyone can do this; you don’t have to be a scholar. However, when you do it often, little phrases come and you start saying them; you write them all down and what’s happening is that the Spirit is declaring to you these truths about this Man. And beloved, it’s our passion to be obsessed with the magnificence of Christ Jesus.

Amen and amen! Let’s stand.