

Fresh Revelation of Jesus Christ - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the necessity of a fresh revelation of Jesus Christ to understand His glory and majesty in today's world.

Duration: 30:02

Scripture: Proverbs 8:1, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 1:4-17

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that people have reduced their spirituality to a minimum and are trying to get to heaven with minimal effort. He criticizes the materialistic and blind way of life prevalent in society. The speaker highlights the importance of walking in the light and spending time with God, using the example of John on the Isle of Patmos. He contrasts the lack of divine encounters in modern churches with the profound revelations experienced by John and Daniel in the Bible.

Transcript

Revelation chapter 1. Read from verse 4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace unto you and peace from him which is, which was, and which is to come. And from the seven spirits which are before the throne of God. Verse 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending saith the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come.

Verse 17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead, and he laid his right hand upon me and said unto me, fear not, I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.

If we're to have a new vision anointing on our individual lives for this year, it surely will have to be, because we have a new revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. You may not know much Greek, but you know that Alpha and Omega are the first letters and the last letters in the Greek language. And he is the Alpha, he is the beginning and he is the ending.

Now if you and I had been writing that fourth verse, John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace and peace be unto you from him which is, we would have put first him that was and is and is to come. But you notice, and I read the repetition there, from him which is, which means that he is, he is from everlasting to everlasting, he was God. He was, he was here on earth for a season, and he is again going to come again.

Now I wrote the different versions, but this old King James version of mine says the revelation. And then in small letters underneath it says of Saint John the Divine, which is totally wrong. The Bible's inspired, but the titles are not.

And they should actually read the revelation to Saint John the Divine. Because if it's of John the Divine, then the first verse of the, of the chapter, of this chapter would be wrong. The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to his servants, things which must shortly come to pass.

I want to emphasize that again, that this, this marvelous chapter, this marvelous book was written two thousand years ago, and it says that the things in it will shortly come to pass. Well then we must be very near the things coming to pass. Two thousand years have gone since we were warned that they would shortly come to pass.

Now this, this word, uh, the revelation in, in Greek is apokalopsis, which actually means the unveiling. And I'm not concerned about an unveiling of John the Divine. I am concerned about an unveiling, or new revelation, or taking away the veil, and seeing Jesus Christ in his glory, in his majesty.

Uh, in, in the uh, first book here, uh, we, we have in the first chapter, a revelation of Jesus Christ himself, in his glory, and in his majesty. And then you, you have the second chapter, and the third chapter, which is a revelation of Jesus, um, in relation to his church. And the rest of the book, from uh, chapter four to twenty-two, is a revelation of Jesus, and it's coming.

And all that's going to happen. See this is the most up-to-date book in the world. It's more up-to-date than tomorrow's newspaper.

And I say again that we need, at least I need, I believe, a new revelation of the glory and the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Years ago, J. D. Phillips, who gave us a translation of the New Testament afterwards, and he uh, he gave us a, a title to a book. I have the book on my shelf.

I've had it ten years and not read it, but I like the title. The title is, Your God is Too Small. Many of us have a miniature God.

Many of us most, spend most of our time looking backward. Now, there's nothing in this uh, I'm going to say epistle. There's no concentration in this, in this uh, chapter of revelation, book of revelation, on the Lord Jesus Christ as an infant.

It's showing us his majesty, it's showing us his glory. Again, Paul does not stress the virgin birth, I'm sure he believed in it. But he says to Timothy, remember the one who is coming.

What does he say? He's the immortal, invisible, only wise God. And, and we need to keep our eyes, we, we don't despise, we don't in any way minimize the old rugged cross. But we're living in that period of time when these awesome things in this chapter.

I find the book of revelation a book of mystery. I don't understand a lot of it. It's a book of majesty.

I see Jesus in all his glory, in all his majesty. And, and it's a book of misery. Because it shows me the collapse of world systems.

It shows me the final judgment that's going to come on the world. It shows me the anger of God, which is going to be poured out before too long. Now, John says here, he saw this person, and it's very

remarkable, isn't it? That, that here he is on a barren island.

I don't think anything grows on that island today. It was a dumping ground for every perverted, rotten, corrupt individual. It was a place that they banished people to because they've no chance of getting away.

And in the midst of all that corruption, reminds me of what Paul says, there were saints in Caesar's household. And that was hell. Every pagan thing, every cruel thing, every, every perverted thing went on in Caesar's household.

And yet God put saints there. See, some of us would like a little private rapture, wouldn't you? I mean, you've suddenly discovered after 40 years, you married the wrong man. Or you did something else, and you caught your way, would have been a much easier way.

But that's not how God makes saints. What if they gathered all the streetlights out of Tyler, and put them all in a field up here, all together. You know, let them all shine brilliantly, and left everybody walking in darkness entirely.

Wouldn't make much sense. There are saints in Caesar's household. There are times when God has to put us in places that are the very last place on earth we'd like to go to.

Isn't it amazing that this book of the revelation was given to one man, just one man. Isn't it amazing that this man had been with Jesus, and he'd laid his head on the bosom of Jesus, and heard that divine heartbeat. He'd had an unveiling of Jesus in the first chapter of his gospel.

Says the word, he was with the Father before the world was. There's a wonderful chapter. Let's look at it in the book of Proverbs.

A good idea for you this year will be to learn a new proverb every day. Why don't you try it? After all, you'll know 365 of them at the end of the year. Look at the 12th chapter.

Pardon me, I'm sorry, the 8th chapter of Proverbs. Let me read it pretty quickly to you. This is again the King James Version, which is the Living Bible.

Proverbs chapter 8, verse 1. Does not wisdom cry and understanding put forth a voice? She standeth in the top of the high places by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, and at the coming in at the doors. And this is what she says, unto you all men I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.

O ye simple understand wisdom, and ye fools be part of an understanding heart. Hear for I will speak of excellent things, and the opening of my lips shall bring, shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth, and wickedness is an abomination unto me.

All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, there is nothing forward or perverse. Jump down to verse 14. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom.

I am understanding, I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me, yea durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than

choice silver.

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment. That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

Do you get that? The Lord possessed me, I believe this is speaking of Jesus Christ, possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from beginning or ever, or to change it to modern English, or before the earth was. When there was no depths, I was brought forth.

When there was no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. Well as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there.

When he set a compass upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep, when he gave to the sea his degree, that water should not pass his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was with him. As one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delight so with the sons of men.

Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children, for blessed are they that keep my commandments. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children, for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse not.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, watching and waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. Now I believe that that is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christ who is, the Christ who was, and the Christ who is to come. Now again, here is the most amazing revelation ever given to a man. You find something comparable to this in Daniel, I think it's in the ninth chapter there, where Daniel has a vision of the glory of God, and he says because of that he became faint, he collapsed.

It was more than his being was able to comprehend, he was shot by the majesty of his God. Now we don't get this kind of thing. We go into church a bit tired, we sing a few songs, we come out.

But again as for a confrontation with deity, it very very seldom happens. Now again, it's amazing that here is one man, that Jesus was seen of 500 brethren at once. But why didn't he reveal himself as revealed himself to John? Why should Jesus in his majesty's glory come and reveal himself to a man on a barren rock, away there out in the sea? Why didn't he go to the sand he dreamt? I've often wished that the morning Jesus was resurrected, he'd gone into the temple of Herod and pulled his beard and patted his cheek and said, well now what are you going to do? It's very interesting wouldn't it? Or if he'd gone into Pontius Pilate and said, well now what about the Roman Empire? You see he says, I am he that liveth and was dead and behold I am alive forevermore.

I think by the deadness in some churches, and I get scalped for saying this but I'll still say it, you'll think Christ was still dead. He's alive. Now come on, did you have communion with him today? It's amazing how many of the great revelations came to individuals.

Moses on the backside of the desert with a burning bush, nothing but stinking sheep around him and dust and everything else. And yet God appears to him in a burning bush. Elijah on Mount Carmel without any support as far as I know of his own kind, opposition of every kind.

And yet God comes to him in majesty in that situation. Take the New Testament, Jesus comes to one woman at the well. Now that wouldn't suit most of our evangelists today, they've got to have a big crowd.

They've got to be seen, they've got to strut, they've got to show their stuff. Jesus reveals himself to one woman, or again on the Damascus road, although there were a number of people, Jesus really appeared only to one man there. Because Paul again says, they're shunned round about them that journeyed with me, pardon me, they're shunned round about me and them that journeyed with me, alive from heaven.

I heard a voice. And it's hearing that voice that makes all the difference. Now again, John is shut up, he's in a bad spot.

I suppose most of us, we'd like some vision like this, but I'm not supposed, we'd like to go to Patmos to get the vision. We like to go to a meeting where there's a crowd and all come and clap our hands, that's not wrong. But you see, once we have this personal encounter, the ultimate, according to some people, that John was boiled in oil eventually.

Now most of them, most of the apostles have very, very horrible deaths. Remember it speaks in Hebrews about the people that, when the Hebrews or the Jews were getting shaky and weak and thought they were having the roughest time on earth, the man points back and he says, wait a minute, there were some people who were years and years and years ago that didn't have the revelation they had. They were stoned and they were sawn asunder.

I don't know there's any historical proof, but tradition says that Isaiah was hung up when his feet were in clamps and he was sawn down the middle with a, not with a nice electric saw that got it over quickly, but with a wooden saw, with wooden teeth. One of the most agonizing of all deaths. My goodness, sometimes if somebody frowns at us, we almost collapse, we almost toss a coin whether we should backslide or not, if somebody's hurting us.

There's an awful lot of suffering in the church of Jesus Christ today. But you see, when you've seen what somebody is calling a hymn, when you've seen the vision glorious, when you've seen the Christ of God, as John had seen him. You know again, I've said this before and I'll say it again, a lot of new folk here, that when I read this book, I get terribly embarrassed when I think of what we call now the electronic church.

Yeah. Well, I'm sure the church in the Acts of the Apostles wasn't electronic, but it was electrifying. Boy, you went there, you didn't, the fellow at the door didn't give you a mimeograph copy of what was going to happen from the first hymn to the final amen.

We say we let the spirit have his way in our church. We don't. We've mimeographed what he asked to do last Wednesday in the church office.

But we read of those men and women in Hebrews 11, they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. And then this thing comes crashing into our mind. Not one of them ever had a Bible.

God in heaven, what do we get, what are you going to say to God when you get to the judgment seat of God? You know so much, you're so clever, you've stored a lot of scriptures in your mind, you're sure you're on the right track, you've got the right theology, come on, come on then, what are you doing? We talk about a new year, it's, there's no new year about it, that's all. What was difference? The grass was the same color when I got up New Year's Day. Would you believe it, our grass was the same color? Why don't they change the color overnight, make it all red for a change? That would send the cows dizzy, wouldn't it, eating red grass all day long.

There's nothing new, it's an artificial division. It will be a new day tomorrow, there are no new years, there are new days. And every day should be a period of exploring with God, of getting again into this word.

John could never have been trusted with what he had, unless he'd gone through the trials that he had. Now it's seen the glory of Jesus, it's seen Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration when the glory of God shone. I don't believe a light came from heaven on him, I believe that the hidden glory burst out of him.

That which had been shielded from men, and they saw the glory of Jesus Christ there. The glory which he had with the Father before the world was. I won't listen to anybody who say they sacrificed for Jesus, that's bunkum.

No man ever lived to sacrifice for Jesus. No man that ever lived did a favor for Jesus. God does all the favors.

Why we ought to dance for joy that we were in his kingdom? I'd rather be the least in the kingdom of God than the greatest person in the devil's kingdom. Because you see, this kingdom is never ever going to pass away. He's a faithful witness and he's the first begotten from the dead.

And I don't wonder that anybody could go through the martyrdoms and sufferings that they went through, because they really swallowed this word and made it their own. That they cometh and he cometh and every eye shall see him and they which pierced him and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Now I love singing, I like to hear you folks sing, you do a good job.

But when I sing I think about that number 10,000 times 10,000. How many is that? A hundred million plus thousands of thousands. There's no finality about it.

There's going to be a chorus of rapturous joy that we won't be able to contain if we had mortal bodies. But we won't have mortal bodies. But then there's going to be a weeping and a wailing and an ashing of teeth.

There's going to be something that I believe we'll observe when the world system collapses. And men are going to call on rocks and hills to fall on them and God's going to laugh at them. They won't say I have a thousand acres and I have a yacht bigger than an ass has had and this that and the other.

Everything they have like balloons, like having 10,000 balloons and the air goes out of them all. Which one would you choose? And world systems are going to go down like that. And it says in Revelation that men are going to call on rocks and hills to fall on them and they'll seek death and they won't find it.

The man can jump off the top of the empire state building, he'll land on his feet, he won't die. He'll shoot himself, he won't die. When they see the anger, the wrath of God going to break on them and they remember all the times they've rebuffed the spirit that has made a claim on them, every time they've deafened their ears and it will be hell on the way to hell.

What does it say in the second Psalm? He that dwelleth in the heaven shall laugh. It's after he says I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. And I remember, don't remember him, but I remember reading where Spurgeon said, when it says he that dwelleth in the heaven shall laugh.

And he's not trying to be facetious, he said if that's what God does, if that is what God does when he laughs, what in the world does he do when he's angry? You see, this guy, a fellow sent me a tape this week. He said if you can't listen to it all, please listen to the second side. I got stacks of tapes.

I think I'm a prophet. I thought it was a loss, but anyhow. He said I'm a prophet, I've got this word, and you know it was such a tame thing.

There's going to be a judgment seat. There was no anger there, there was no sense of the lostness of men, that millions of people right at this moment, two thousand years after Jesus came, we're building fancy churches. And you know, things struck me very forcibly.

We ask for tithes and offerings in the church. What for? Does God Almighty get them? No he doesn't. What do we do with them? We spend them on better carpets in the church, and better seats to sit on, and better air conditioning, and better heating system.

God Almighty doesn't get them, why call them tithes? They're not God's tithes at all. And I don't wonder if the man in the street doesn't want our particular version of Christianity. I trust that this year will get us deeper into the Word of God.

I pray not only we'll get into the Word of God, I trust we'll get into the heart of God. Do you make yourself a candidate for the burden that is easy and light, that sometimes seems as though it's killing you? If I said, I mean if you want to be like Jesus, you'd raise your hand, but now if I explain it all, I wonder if you'd stay with it to the end. Would you like to be rejected all your life? He was, from the moment he was born, he was rejected.

Because Herod said, bring me word that I may worship him, when he wanted to kill him. So before he could walk or talk, he was rejected on the cross. He was rejected, at least by one of the men.

He was rejected by his family, they thought he was insane. He was rejected in the synagogue, they didn't want him. I think from the very moment he opened his eyes, and those men came and were trying to find where the babe was.

I believe that the whole system was against him. I believe the religious system, because he was called the king of the Jews, so the Jews had suspicious eyes on him, envious eyes on him. Herod was anxious about him.

And all through his life you have that shadow, and yet look what he did. I said it before, I'll say again, you see we're born with personalities. We had our little granddaughter home last week, she's got quite a personality.

She's 18 months old, but boy there are certain things about it. But I don't think she's got character yet. Now look, you've got, you've got as big a book as any preacher that ever lived.

You can tell me about Spurgeon, Finney, Wesley, not one of them had a bigger Bible than you have. The only thing is they had more illumination, they brooded over it, they ate it, they digested it. That's why I say read Proverbs, get some of those principles into your life.

Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city. A good name is better to be chosen than riches. My, there's so much fabulous truth here in this Word of God.

And then when you get beyond that, you get again to see the, as I say, the latter part of the book reveals the kingdom, the power and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we celebrate Christmas, at least we make a mess of it. It's gone by just now with all its tinsel and its toys and its foolishness.

And we celebrate Easter with the death of Jesus. In this country, so different from other countries in Europe, they make as much of the, the Pentecost Sunday as they do of Easter. But very little is said about this aspect of Jesus.

Now John again is the one that leaned on the bosom of Jesus. He lived with Jesus. He ate with Jesus.

He slept with Jesus. He saw the miracles of Jesus. His eyes must have popped out nearly sometimes at the things Jesus did.

And yet with all his intimacy with Jesus, when he sees him in his resurrection glory and power, he says, I fell at his feet as dead. Well, we don't get struck like that with the majesty of God often, do we? In true revival that happens. In true revival there are periods of stillness when for hours and hours and hours people don't say a single word.

There are, there are other periods when they sing for seven or eight hours straight off and nobody knows they've been singing so long. Another period that when they pray for seven or eight hours and nobody's exhausted. You see, we've reduced God to the minimum.

Most of us, I was going to say forgive me for saying it. I won't. I'll try and provoke you with it.

Most of us are trying to get to heaven on minimum spirituality. If we looked after our businesses like we looked after our souls, we'd have been bankrupt years ago. The materialism has crept in.

It's blinded us. It's the way of life. It's the American way of life or the English or some other way of life.

But come on now, there are just two areas in the world. There's this area here, which is a kingdom of light and this area, which is a kingdom of darkness. And the Lord says that we're to walk in the light.

He is the light. Isn't it amazing that this being that was, as Isaiah has amazing visions of him. You know, there's in verse 11, it says, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

That's mentioned three times in the book of the Revelation. It's also mentioned three times in the book of Isaiah. Now, how often do we step back and Jesus is saying, when he says, as he says, from him which is and which was.

He's not thinking of the Christ who was before these disciples. He's thinking of the one who was away there in eternity, before the world was shaped. Before the trees of the field clapped their hands, as the word of God says, or the stars sang together.

How could we? We don't have the capacity to look into eternity, to look into infinity. See the king and his majesty before the world began. Isaiah says, I saw the Lord high and lifted up.

That wasn't God the father, it was God the son. No man has seen God at any time. And in case you question that, read the 12th chapter of John and it tells you there that John, this spake Isaiah, when he saw Christ.

Well before that he'd been seen and worshipped and adored in the eternity. And yet he laid it all on one side and becomes an infant. He goes through trial, tribulation, testing.

Are you trying to get away with something that the father wouldn't let his own son get away with? Doesn't it say that he was tempted on all points like as we are, yet without sin? Doesn't it say that he learned obedience by the things that he suffered? Suffering brings out character. There's not much said about that anymore. I was trying to go to somebody yesterday, an old saying, and I don't know where I found it.

I'd like to find it again and I don't know. It doesn't matter that much. But it's a very smart saying I think.

And the person said this, that the believer is in great danger when he makes his achievements the ground of his confidence. When you say, well I've been preaching 20 years and so that's my. No, no, no, no.

It doesn't matter whether you've been preaching 2,000 years. The ground of your confidence is not in your ability, it's not in your ministry, how many books you've written, how many records you've sold, how many hymns you've written. The ground of our confidence can be only in Christ Jesus.

And that's why again this whole thing is turning our eyes first to Jesus in the excellency and the glory of his person. And then to see him ministering in his church, walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. You know it would be a good idea maybe if every day this year as far as the Lord lets us live, if at the end of the day you ask the Lord, Lord have you been comfortable living in me? Do you think he is? Would you have to retrace your steps? You know there's an old hymn my granny used to sing it, take time to be holy, speak off with our Lord.

But the only time we have it seems now is for TV or video machines and all the rest of it. It takes time, we have to contemplate. Here is John on the isle of Patmos.

He's got nothing to interrupt except the period of time he works as a slave. And then as soon as that's over, God opens the heavens.

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