

Seven Stars and Seven Candlesticks

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead's sermon explores the significance of the seven stars and candlesticks in Revelation, emphasizing Christ's authority and the call for all believers to serve Him fully.

Duration: 53:06

Scripture: Revelation 1:12

Topics: "Candlesticks", "The Role of the Church", "The Authority of Christ"

Description

Paris Reidhead emphasizes the significance of the seven stars and seven candlesticks in Revelation, illustrating how Christ, now exalted, holds authority over the church and its leaders. He contrasts the humble Jesus of the Gospels with the glorified Christ who walks among the churches, urging believers to recognize their responsibility to reflect His light in a dark world. Reidhead calls for a total abandonment to Christ's will, asserting that every Christian is called to full-time service, regardless of their secular roles. He stresses the importance of the local church as the primary means through which Christ reveals Himself and encourages believers to live in a way that honors this calling. Ultimately, he challenges the church to be a vibrant witness of Christ's glory in a disillusioned world.

Transcript

Now would you turn, please, to Revelation, the first and second chapters. Seven stars, seven candlesticks. Seven stars, seven candlesticks.

And I read, in order that we can have the context, beginning with the twelfth verse. John, the revelator, is sharing with us what he's seen and heard and experienced. So, beginning then with the twelfth verse, let me conclude with the first verse of the second chapter.

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and gird about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. And his voice as the sound of many waters.

And he had in his right hand seven stars. And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not. I am the first and the last.

I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And have the keys of hell and of death.

Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in thy right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. Seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.

And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches. Under the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. This picture of our Lord Jesus Christ is in striking contrast to the picture that we have presented in the Gospels.

There we find him weeping at the tomb of Lazarus. We find him silent in the presence of Pilate. We find him bowing his back to the cross and to the scourge.

We see him in the garden after his resurrection, unknown, unrecognized, even by Mary who thought that he was the gardener, and questioned by his disciples as they walked with him on the road to Emmaus. Now the picture that we have given to us here of the Lord Jesus Christ is, I say, in striking contrast. Some might say, and they have, that this is not an accurate revelation, but it is.

For in the Gospels you have Christ as he was last seen by men, before he had taken his place at the right hand of the Father. And in Revelation you have the unveiling of Christ as he is now, at the right hand of the Father, with all authority in heaven and earth in his hands. And you wonder what kind of an appearance the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father has.

This is it. When you think of the Son of God, you do wrong if you think of him as the meek and lowly Jesus there. Everyone that prays visualizes.

You have to. When you pray for the sick, if you pray in faith, you visualize that person well. If you pray for a need, you visualize the need supplied.

If you pray for the change of character, you visualize the person as they will be when their character has been changed. And when you pray to the Lord, somehow, somewhere there is a mental picture of the one to whom you are speaking, or else there occasionally will be. How do you see in mind's eye the one to whom you are praying? John has given us the picture of this one, seated upon the throne, filled with glory, standing in celestial splendor, before whose feet he fell as dead.

But, oh, how tender, how loving. John, who leaned on his chest. John, who walked with him, the beloved apostle and disciple.

Here is this same Jesus speaking, fear not. And yet you ought to fear and not fear. Another of the paradoxes.

You ought to serve God with godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire. You ought to be so afraid of God that you are afraid to sin. But you hate sin, every kind, all kinds, sin wherever it occurs.

You don't rightly understand God. Unless seeing him and what he is, you are afraid to sin and afraid of God because of his holiness and because of what he will do. For, if you sin and are his child, he will chasten unless you judge it and forsake it.

And if you are not his child, it is just another nail driving you to the cross of death, eternal separation from God, binding you to the doom. For, if he sentenced his son there when his son had your sin and that his son might redeem you, you can understand what your lot will be if you spurn his son. We ought to be afraid of God and we ought to serve God with fear.

And you ought to realize that this lowly Jesus that walked so humbly with men, the Lamb, meek and lowly, has been exalted. He is at the right hand of the throne of God on high. And this is what John saw.

You ought to worship him. He is worthy of your worship. You ought to love him.

He loved you first with measureless, boundless, everlasting love. You ought to pour forth your heart's adoration before him. You ought to obey him gladly because he is worthy to be obeyed.

And there ought to rise out of our hearts tonight an echo of that song of the multitude that are washed, robed, swiped, gathered even now in his presence. If you hearken, perhaps even in your hearts you can hear them as they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, unto him who loved us and who washed us in his blood and made us kings and priests unto God. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches and honor and glory and dominion and majesty and power and praise now and forever.

This is the one of whom we speak. This is the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the one you serve, the one whom you expect to meet, and the one who will reward you for every deed you've done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be bad.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Now we find here in the sixteenth verse, and he had in his hands seven stars in his right hand. This was part of the revelation of Christ.

He had there held firmly in that hand of omnipotence seven stars. Notice now in the twentieth verse the mystery of the seven stars which thou saw'st in my right hand. The seven stars are.

We are concerned about these seven stars, what they mean, what their significance may be, and why he has three times mentioned it. Well, actually a fourth, because in the first verse of the second chapter, these things saith he that holdeth the seven stars. Four times now we have this statement, seven stars.

What does it have reference to? First, the right hand of a king, the right hand of majesty, is the hand that exercises authority, the hand that controls, the hand that directs. And so when he holds here in his hands seven stars, he thus is affirming that whatever these stars are, they are under his direct control. Now let's think for a moment.

Stars are light-bearers in darkness. They themselves, unless we think of the planets which are shined by reflected light or the stars by their own, serve the same purpose, really, that is to illuminate the darkness. And so, said he, he holds here something which is going to shine in darkness.

The sun is obscured, the sun is hidden, and it's night, and he's holding seven stars, light-bearers, points that are fixed, light that is settled, and he controls them. May I suggest to you that the Lord Jesus Christ said, first, I am the light of the world. That light which shined in darkness, that light which the Father gave

to illuminate the stygian darkness of the human spirit, had it not been for the coming of Jesus Christ there would have been no answer to the enigma of life and the then tragedy of death.

But our Lord Jesus was the light that came in and lighted a path out of hell into heaven, for we were certainly doomed to hell by virtue of all our rebellion and crimes against God. And he became the light, the light as well as the way, the light as well as the truth, yes, the light as well as the life itself. And our Lord Jesus then said, ye are the lights of the world, the little lights, the small lights that shine by light that he gives.

Now he speaks of the stars, these that are lights but are set by him in places to guide, to direct, to illuminate in darkness. May I suggest to you that the stars seem to me and to many others to stand for, and he speaks of them, for he says they are the angels of the seven churches. But that word angel is the word messenger.

Actually, it was an interesting thing. We had the word malachia in the Arabic. The malachias were the men that came around and took the heavy loads on their back and carried the mail and packages.

They were the messengers that we sent. The word malachia is the word from which we get our word angel. They were the messengers.

They were the servants. So he says these are the seven messengers, the seven servants, seven translated into King James English, the seven angels. As I said, I'm suggesting to you that these speak to us of those who ministered for Jesus Christ in the churches to which he's writing.

Those who were appointed by him to speak for him and to teach the truth to the congregations. That the stars speak of those to whom he has entrusted specific responsibility to teach and to proclaim and to establish doctrine. Now this is a solemn thing that the Spirit of God has fixed for us here.

For he has said, be not many teachers. I believe it's safe to say that you have never heard me, from the time I've been with you as your pastor, urge young men to go into the ministry. Now you say, why? Well, there's only one reason.

I have seen too many young men in the ministry because someone urged them. I believe that when Jesus Christ wants to put someone into the ministry, he is adequate to speak to that person and make it clear. I believe that every Christian ought to be wholly committed to the will of God.

It would be an utter contradiction to every biblical principle that I hold dear and precious if I were to give an invitation, say, surrender yourself to the will of God in terms of full-time service. For I believe that every Christian must be surrendered to the will of God, and if he isn't basically in that principle of true repentance, then he isn't Christian. That the difference between a sinner and a saint is the sinner lives to please himself and the saint lives to please God.

A sinner is governed by his own will and a saint is governed by God's will. A sinner has committed himself to please himself and a saint has committed himself to please Jesus Christ. And God has a plan for every Christian.

Every believer is in the body as a member to the head. I believe that every Christian is called to full-time service. Every Christian is called to full-time service.

Not in the sense, however, being supported by a congregation necessarily, but in the sense that whether a housewife with the tasks that seem to be sometimes verging on drudgery or a man working in the office or the factory earning the funds for daily bread, these are equally full-time service when one is there in the will of God. And if they aren't, they ought to get into the will of God. If you're not in the will of God in what you're doing, you've no right to do it.

I believe Jesus Christ is just as concerned about the school that a teacher has and the job that a clerk has and the garage that a mechanic works in and the factory that an employee has as he is about a missionary or a pastor. I cannot see in the Scripture any delineation in these terms between secular and sacred. In this sense, everyone is under thy direct and immediate and, should we say, and thus, then this is disobedience, complete control of Jesus Christ.

Now, if you're there in this basic relationship with him, it's a very simple matter for him to say to you, this is what I want you to do, and you'll know, you'll know. When God fixes the hooks of his purpose in your heart, you'll know. You won't know the way I know.

But if God has for you something beyond that which you are now doing, you can be perfectly sure of this, he will make it clear. What about missionary service? I spent three years and four years of my life going around the colleges and universities and churches of the land, challenging young people to go to the mission field. And many responded, and many went.

And tragically enough, many are home with broken hearts and broken hopes and traumatic experiences of failure and grief that are heartache to me. When the mission societies are to that place where they can distinguish between those that are there as the product of someone's challenge and those that are there because of the leading of the head of the Church, it may be that someone such as myself could have that ministry with freedom of heart and spirit. But I would rather turn to you and say there is a world out there filled with sinners for whom Jesus Christ died, and they ought to hear, and someone ought to go.

Your life is his, is it? You are abandoned to him, are you? You are committed to his will, are you? Then you are to look into the face of him, of Jesus Christ, and say, Lord, here am I. Send me. Have thy way. Have thy will in my life.

But I would like to think that you share with me at least some of this, if you don't see it all, that when you surrendered to Jesus Christ in repentance, you have changed the government of your life from your own two fists into those nail-pierced hands, and that when you said, From today on my purpose is to please him, you meant it, and you intended that you would please him however, wherever, whenever, in whatever manner he wished or he chose. This is what the scripture teaches in regard to this commitment, an abandonment of every life in the Church to the total sovereignty of Jesus Christ. He intends it to be that way, and I believe that when this is operating we will have no want of men to fill pulpits and teach and to fill mission stations.

I believe that when you are in that place of utter abandonment to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ has no great difficulty in moving you into the--the geographical aspects of the Christian life are the simplest to change. It's the attitudinal aspects that are so difficult. When he brings you to the place where there is that total, that complete, that absolute commitment to him, that utter, utter abandonment to his sovereignty--now, I don't believe this has reference to a few, to some, but to all.

I refuse to distinguish, because of the fact that I cannot find it in the Word of God, I refuse to distinguish in such dichotomous terms as laity and clergy. Now, I know we have those who function in special relationships to a given congregation, but may I make it perfectly clear to you that the scripture teaches that there is really one basic relationship to the Son of God, and that is redeemed by his precious blood and brought into union with him in death and resurrection, brethren, filled with the fulness of God. He expects the same degree of abandonment on your part as he does the missionary, the same degree of fullness of the Spirit on your part as he does the pastor.

No distinguishing levels. You are to be united. God has no stepchildren.

He doesn't have favorites. You are to be in the place where he puts you, in his vital, in his precious, in his glorious relationship to Jesus Christ, as anyone, anywhere. Now when you are there, it is a very simple matter for the head of the Church to move you here, to move you there, to put you into this ministry, and to take you into that.

But this sovereign head of the Church holds in his hands seven stars. I believe that in his wisdom he has chosen, through the ages past, even as at the time that he wrote, those whom he has entrusted with the responsibility of teaching and preaching the word. I would like to think, I would like to believe, and I think perhaps you would share with me, that the man who edits this paper of which we are so concerned for its extended ministry could be thought of as a star held in the sovereign hand of Jesus Christ, seeing as he waits before the Lord and writing what he sees with the courage to go against the stream of his day and generation and say for Jesus Christ what would be said and need be said.

I wouldn't think of him in any unusual sense. I am sure that in this land of ours there are scores of men who, though they may not have the gift, do have the courage and the stalwart faith and solemn purpose and heartfelt dedication to Jesus Christ. Any man anywhere that has been called of him to stand as a spokesman, as a teacher, as a preacher, as a setter forth of truth, I think even in the twentieth century as well as in the first, would find something of the place that he has held here in the right hand of Jesus Christ.

Certainly no church should want a pastor or anyone to preach for them that wasn't held in that right hand, controlled by that right hand, sustained by that nail-pierced hand, taught by the one who holds them in his hand. Why would anyone sit? Why would they listen? Why would they think, unless this were to be the case? No, I would say, as best I can see the word of God, that the star is simply the one who is there as the setter forth of truth under the control of Jesus Christ in the darkness until the sun himself shall come and spread the clouds and be the light. Till that time he will raise up through the centuries to come as in the centuries past should he tarry in his appearing those who will stand for him.

Our hearts grow weary when we think of the carnage in China. If you did not read Lowell Thomas's article in this current reader's digest of the Rape of Tibet by the Communists, I suggest you read it, read it and weep, read it and grieve, and read it and pray. And we see the church in China as a light almost extinguished.

And all of us that have heard any reports from that land cry out, How long, O Lord Jesus, how long wilt thou let thy travail in church go through the agony of these hours of darkness? But I know one thing, and I say it with all there is in me. If our Lord tarries a thousand years and Communism ravages the earth till every land has been destroyed by its venal influence, I assure you this, the gates of hell shall not prevail, for he holds seven stars in his hand. And there will be the witness to Jesus Christ.

For he said, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This man may go, and that may pay with his blood, and the martyr's crown may be earned by another. But still the Son of God will have the perfect number of those whom he uses.

He will raise up one and still another. I think of the testimony in Ethiopia when I think of the seven stars. The missionaries of the Sudan Interior Mission went into that country in 1938.

Oh, excuse me, 1928, and labored there for ten long, wearisome years. And when they left, they left about seventy baptized believers in three areas, four that were appointed to be pastors. And when the invader came into Ethiopia, the first thing that was done was to take the pastors away from their churches and put them into prison.

And now the young church was left leaderless. What would they do? There was one man that had labored as a servant, a house servant for one of the missionaries, as a translator, as an interpreter. They hadn't thought that he was the stuff that would serve as a pastor.

But the Spirit of God raised him up, anointed him. And when there was no one else, God used him. He called the people to gather, and they would come at night down the ravines and gather in a quiet place, in a cave, a sequestered little valley, in a lonely hut.

He gathered in the elders. They'd come in on Thursday morning, and they'd read the Word and pray all day Thursday, fast and pray. And then on Friday, they'd study the Word together and prepare their messages, for none of them knew how to speak.

They had not been taught. But after a day of fasting and prayer, then there'd be a day of preparation. And then on Saturday afternoon, after the midday meal, they'd slip away, one by one, back to their villages.

And then on the Lord's Day, they'd gather the Christians for worship, and then they'd begin to preach. In 1938, the door closed, and we had no further news from Ethiopia. And I remember joining with others in prayer that God would spare that church from extinction.

I asked one of the missionaries that had labored in one of the larger areas, What do you think we'll find when the door does open? He said, I think we'll find the church, small but there. Well, the time came when the back of the invader was broken. The British government called the missionaries and said, Join us.

We're going down into the area where you served. And they went, fear, trepidation, for now, after these years, they were to go back to find whether anything survived. They came to this one station, and they saw some elders.

And behind them was a company of about 700 men. Said, Who are these? Oh, they're elders of the churches. And in those six years of captivity, the church had grown from 70 believers to over 20,000 baptized believers, with nearly another 20,000 that were preparing for baptism.

From four churches to 70 churches, that right hand held its star. Nothing could extinguish it. And then we notice here he holds the seven churches, not in his hands.

He holds the stars in his hands, and he walks in the candlesticks. Now this candlestick is not to be confused with the one in the tabernacle. The one in the tabernacle, as you recall, had a large bowl, and from it seven branches.

But not this. These are seven distinct, similar candlesticks, each placed in its own ground and standing upon its own basin. Seven candlesticks.

And John said he saw the Son of Man in the midst, walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks. If, as we've said, the stars are those servants of God whom he calls to minister to with blessing to the church, then the church the candlesticks. And what do we find? We find that Christ is sustaining and directing and dwelling in his church.

And furthermore, we find that Jesus Christ is revealing himself through his church. That this is the truth. He is revealing himself to the church through these whom he serves.

Think for a moment of the tremendous blessing and heritage that we have with Martin Luther. Oh, how your heart ought to thank God in every remembrance of this dear man that valiantly stood against his day and dared to hazard the wrath of the invincible church. We ought to think also with the same deep gratitude to John Calvin.

I care not what your background may be, but I trust that there is sufficient charity of spirit that should your lineage be traced to Calvin, you can look with deep gratitude and thanksgiving to God who raised up John Wesley. And should your lineage be through John Wesley, you can look to God with deep gratitude for John Calvin and John Knox and realize that each served well the Lord they loved in the generation to which they were called. But it's not just men that God uses.

He uses men to bless the church and he uses the church to reveal himself. The ultimate revelation of Jesus Christ does not come through a man, either to preach or to teach. The ultimate revelation of Jesus Christ comes through the church, the local church.

I believe in the local church. I am so convinced of it that the history of the church is a history of repeated failures and blessings. The Lord raises up a church, raises up a testimony, raises up a ministry, and has glory from it because of the dedication, the abandonment, the obedience of one generation, of two or three.

And all too often the history has been that the third, the fourth generation have lost the principles that were precious to the fathers. It becomes formal, ceremonial, ritualistic, and dead. What does Jesus Christ do? Does he say the church has failed? No.

He just does it all over again. He may do it right there. He may do it right in the same building.

He may do it in the same place. But it's always the church. The unit that he works with is the church.

It doesn't have to be an organization. It doesn't have to be in a property. The church is not an organization.

It's an organism. It's a company of people that are banded together by the Spirit of God in love for Jesus Christ, in worship of the triune God, and in mutual strengthening and encouragement and in witness. The church is a simple thing.

Two or three gathered together constitute the simplest and most primitive form of the church. It can be a larger company such as this, with the necessity by virtue of the company of officers, of elders and deacons, and those entrusted with responsibility for fiscal matters and organizational interests. I do not believe that there is any particular form of church which is the ultimate.

At least I do not know about it at the moment. I think that brethrenism on the one extreme and the episcopacy on the other, and all the forms that lie in between, are in the same danger from the same source, namely, becoming formal, losing vitality in spiritual reality. I am told that there is nothing more dead than a Plymouth brethren meeting when the glory of Christ departs and the wonder of the presence of the Lord is gone.

I am told by whom? By those most loyal and zealous and earnest brethren. And I am told that there is nothing more dead than the ceremony of the episcopacy when the ritual of prayer is offered by someone who does not understand or believe it. And I have not had experience on either of these extremes, but I have moved about somewhat in the middle, and I can assure you that there is no denominational protection that can ensure the preservation of spiritual life.

And every church is subject to the same kind of temptation, namely, to become ritualistic and dead, and lose thus its light and lose its place and lose its ministry. Now our Lord Jesus has eyes as flames of fire, and from these we discover that he saw right down into the corporate personality of each church. And I wonder what that corporate personality would be if he were to see tonight into our hearts as a people here.

Each letter is a setting forth of that corporate life that the group represents to him. Each one is described as being under God and thus seen by him, known by him, judged by him, responsible to him. Now our Lord Jesus has said that he will reveal himself in the midst of the church.

I believe that the history of the last 2,000 years, as far as the areas and countries that have had Christian testimony are concerned, can be written from the point of view of its people, that you can only understand the history of these last 2,000 years by a Satanic plot to destroy the effectiveness of the church. Usually it's been destroyed by ceremonialism, by ritualism, by doctrinal pollution. But there have been groups that have held doctrinal purity and simple ceremony and yet have lost the blessing of God, because even in this they've lost the sense of his presence and their responsibility to him.

I think you can't understand nor explain the conquest of Russia by communism apart from the decadence and powerlessness and meaninglessness of the Orthodox Church. We are told that the land where the Catholic regime is the strongest is the land where Communism makes its most successful invasion. In Western Europe we are most frightened by the two nations which have the strongest Catholic influence, namely France and Italy.

May I say that just to the degree to which American Protestantism or Catholicism or any other religion you wish loses its grip upon the people, to that degree we become susceptible to any other kind of an invasion. It was Sorokin, the sociologist, that wrote in one of his books in the late thirties that the moment that religion becomes peripheral, that is, crowded from the center out to the periphery, out to the rim, if you want to use the image of a wheel, the moment it leaves the hub and goes to the rim, that society has begun to disintegrate and is susceptible to any type of vigorous ideology that comes in where the idea and the theories and the beliefs are still in the center. Now, beloved, you can be a member of the Gospel Tabernacle Church of New York and still, with all of our doctrine that we love and for which we stand, with our missionary program so dear and precious to our heart, and still have a peripheral type of religious experience.

What is the heart of your life? What consumes you? The glory of Jesus Christ? The sovereignty of God's Son? I think if I could listen to you talk for twenty-four hours I could pretty well say the depth of reality in your experience. What do you talk about? Do you talk about Christ? Do you talk about his word? Do you

talk about his truth? You talk about what's important to you. Now, unless Christ is in the center of your life, unless he's there controlling and governing and your whole life is lived out from this center, then to the degree to which the church is made up of people like you, if this is your case, to that degree the church has lost its light, to that degree the church has lost its revelation of Christ, and to that degree it's coming under the judgment of Christ, because the church is made up of people.

And the place where Christ is seen in the midst of the candlestick is when the members, those who compose the group, whether it be large or small, are consumed with love for Jesus Christ and are utterly committed to him, absolutely abandoned to him. And so when we stop to think about it now, our Lord has revealed in this that the church depends upon those whom he holds in his right hands, who speak to her in love. Do you think that John wanted to write to the church here and say, I will spew thee out of my mouth? He didn't want to do that.

But he was held in the right hand of the Son of God. And consequently, we are brought face to face with this, that we must face what Jesus Christ says to us. And what is he saying? Oh, I would to God I could bring before you Martin Lloyd-Jones of England for a three weeks or a month ministry and let you hear what God is saying from this man on the other side of the water.

Every occasion possible I bring before you Dr. Tozer and others through our missionary convention. This past convention was a declaration from the throne of God and the heart of God that I've never experienced in twenty-five years of ministry. I've never heard such a total message with every man speaking with anointed lips as this year.

Never have I experienced such a thing. And I believe that Jesus Christ is speaking to the church again, seeking to get through it a vehicle to reveal his glory. Now, the church is true and pure and blessable when it heeds what he says through the stars, the messengers, those that speak to it.

And the church, therefore, is to be where the truth is. You'll always find the church where the truth is. Now, this was the great conflict of the Reformation.

The Roman Catholics said, the church is here where we are. We're the church and we tell you what's true. And Martin Luther turned it right around.

He said, no, you're not the church unless you're where the truth is. The church always is found where the truth is. And Romans said, no, truth is found where the church is.

And this summarizes and epitomizes the conflict of the Reformation. The church is where the truth is, and Christ is where the church is. Now, this is the heart of regeneration.

The Roman Catholic Church still preaches salvation. I've picked up their literature and read their doctrinal dissertations on the new birth, and I find absolutely nothing with which to disagree. This is the difference.

The message is true. The method is heretical. The method is heretical.

And so only where the messenger, the malachia, the tsar, stands for what Jesus Christ has to say, can the church be what Jesus Christ would have it be, and can the church bear the light that Jesus Christ would have it bear, and can he be revealed through it. Now, I make reference again to something that came some days ago. I've been reading again, and as I've told you, shall continue, the life and work and ministry of John Wesley.

And oh, how last Sunday night after the service and several times during the week, my heart has melted within me and on occasion tears filled my eyes when I hear this man saying the little group of twelve, the class meeting, the larger group gathering on Friday night nearest the full moon so they could have the light to come and go by, gathering there in love feast and worship and preaching, and then when he had a church that loved Jesus Christ with all their hearts, and they would go to the common and the open and stand there, and the people would come from the coal mines and the zinc mines and the factories and the mills, and one of them, not always Wesley, but often, would stand and speak. Wesley says in his journal, it was as though lightning struck them, and they lay upon the ground. What do you mean? Oh, Jesus Christ had found the candlestick, and he could be shown.

And Jesus Christ is looking for the candlestick, the church, the people that are willing to see him high and lifted up and fall on their faces before him and utter absolute abandonment to him. And such a witness from such a church, he can, he will, steal. He's done it in the past, and he'll do it again.

Revival, what is revival? A revival is a normal church, a scripturally sound church, a church that has the right relationship to Jesus Christ and to each other and to the world. And when he can find a people like that, Christ is willing to presence himself in the midst of the people. And when he does that, sinners will see and fear be converted and come to Christ.

Seven stars, seven candlesticks. He holds the stars in his hands, and he walks in the midst of the candlesticks. I wonder if he's walking in the midst of this candlestick, this church.

Oh, let us meet him, that he may. And if you're here unsaved, wait not for that day, for it's Jesus Christ you believe in, not us, not me. And he's still mighty to save and strong to deliver, and he'll meet your heart need tonight.

And you needn't defer. You fall before him. Acknowledge your sin.

Confess your transgressions. See his wounded side in the fountain of blood that flowed from it. Receive pardon, forgiveness, cleansing, eternal life.

But those of us that name the name of Jesus Christ, let us fall at his feet. Allow him to purge us and cleanse us and fill us with himself and put us in the candlestick through which he can reveal himself. Seven stars, seven candlesticks, and Christ walking in the midst.

Let us pray. Amen. How greatly, our Father, does our generation need the revelation of Jesus Christ in his majesty, in his glory, in his righteousness, in his holiness.

They've heard so much of the platitudes. They've heard so much of stereotype doctrine. They've heard so much of axiom, words, and they've seen so little of the glory of Christ manifest in the candlestick, the lightbearers that glow with the oil, incandescent with the presence of the risen Christ, manifesting the holiness and beauty and purity, the invisible light that sets forth Christ and hides itself.

Oh, Father of our Lord Jesus, how we ask thee tonight to make us such a church. We have above us thy word, the Lord thy God, in the midst of them is mighty. We believe this is thy purpose for every church and for this one.

We believe that only this revelation of Jesus Christ in and through the church is adequate to meet the need of our day, of our weary, disillusioned generation that sees no relevance in Christianity and sees no

significance to church and dares to echo the fact that religion is but an opiate of the people and has no vitality and significance. Oh, God, wilt thou find in us a people that thou canst bless and wherein the Lord Jesus Christ can reveal himself in the splendor of what he is? And in this revelation of what he is, there will be those smitten through the heart by the revelation of what they are, see themselves as sinners, monstrous rebels at war with thee, and they'll fall upon their faces acknowledging their crimes and their transgressions to receive pardon and forgiveness and eternal life through faith in thy son whose side was wounded, whose life poured forth, that he might redeem lost men such as we. Father, we ask thee that there shall come upon us a sense of thy holiness, a sense of awe, a sense of fear.

And, grand Lord, that there shall come to all of us a realization that if we're Christians, in a day when the world's on fire, there's only one proper attitude, a total abandonment to all that Jesus Christ is in himself and will be in us. Then thou will call out those to go forth from us as stars to shine in darkness of Africa and India and China, and stars to shine in their communities testifying to the truth of all thou art. Thou will do it, and we will be that candlestick where we are, revealing the splendor and glory of Jesus Christ.

Such a city of such awful need as this deserves a church here on this corner, in this dark place. It's everything that thou didst intend thy church to be. We plead the precious blood of Christ.

We ask for thy working. We pray, Lord, that the Spirit of God will work with us during the days of this week because of our willingness, because of our waiting, because of our meditation, because of the openness of heart and yieldedness of spirit. May this be a week in which thy glorious purpose is forwarded, when brokenness shall come upon us and openness toward thee shall be our part, and thou canst work that work for which we groan, for which we wait, yea, for which we thank thee in faith.

The revelation of Jesus Christ in our midst, in his glory, for his name. If you're here without Christ tonight, we invite you to stay, remain where you are. I wonder if there's an unsaved person that by upraised hand would say prayer for me.

I know not the Son of God, and I want to know him, and I want you to remember me in closing prayer. Would you put your hand up? We'll see it. Yes, I see your hand.

God bless you. Savior. Another? Anyone? For this one, our Father, whose hand is raised, we pray.

O sovereign God, in all grace, work deliverance in this life. We plead the precious blood of Christ and pray that the Holy Ghost will bring to life in thy dear Son, in his name and for his sake. Amen.

Let us stand for the benediction. Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling and to present us before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and honor, dominion and majesty now and forever.

Amen.

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