

Shining the Light of the Glorious Gospel

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Sub-title: The local Church, a Lampstand in the Community

- Today we are turning to the last book in the Bible, the book of Revelation
- In Revelation chpt. 1, Jesus Christ appears to Ap. John, and gives him seven different messages to seven different churches
- Specifically, Jesus told John to record what he heard & saw, write it in a book & send it to seven churches in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey)
- Each of the seven churches received a specific message from Jesus, as dictated to John, as well as the entire book of Revelation
- Jesus concluded each of the seven messages by saying:
“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”

1. Seven specific Messages to Seven different Churches

Revelation 1:12–16 (NKJV) *Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.*

- John saw seven golden lampstands (menorahs)
- He also saw Jesus Christ standing in the midst of the seven lampstands
- Jesus had seven stars in His right hand
- Both the lampstands & stars were figurative terms for certain entities

Revelation 1:17–20 (NKJV) *And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*

- In Vs. 20, Jesus explained to John the mystery of the stars & lampstands:
 - The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches
 - The seven lampstands are the seven churches
- The seven churches are (were):
 - The church of Ephesus (the church that lost their first love)
 - The church of Smyrna (the persecuted church)
 - The church of Pergamos (the compromising church)
 - The church of Thyatira (the corrupted church)
 - The church of Sardis (the dead church)
 - The church of Philadelphia (the faithful church)
 - The church of Laodicea (the lukewarm church)

2. Each Local Church is a “Lampstand” in its Community

- It is significant to note that Jesus used the figurative term of a lampstand for each of these seven churches
- The purpose of a lampstand is to bring light into dark places
- Every local church is (supposed to be) a beacon of light in its community
- Specifically, when we uphold & preach Jesus Christ & proclaim the Word of God, we bring spiritual light to our community

Matthew 4:12–17 (NKJV) *Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And **leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali,** 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: 16 **The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.**” 17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

- In John 8:12, Jesus said: I am the Light of the World
- When He moved to Capernaum, Light came to a spiritually dark place
- He was the Light, and when He began to preach the gospel, He brought spiritual light to people who had sat in darkness for a long time
- The same is true when we bring Christ to a family & teach them the Word of God, we bring light to people who had sat in darkness for a long time

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NKJV) *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who*

do not believe, lest **the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.**

- Satan tries to blind people's minds to keep them in darkness
- When we share the gospel of Christ, the light of the gospel shines on them

(Isaiah 60:1–4 (NKJV) *Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the **darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people;** But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 **The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.)***

3. Different Churches shine at varying Levels of Brightness

- It would be fair to say that the seven different churches in Revelation chpts. 2 & 3 would have shone their light at different levels of brightness
- Presumably the persecuted church at Smyrna would have shone more brightly than the dead church of Sardis
- The faithful church of Philadelphia would have shone more brightly than the lukewarm church of Laodicia
 - Jesus commended the Philadelphian church for keeping His Word

Revelation 3:8 (AMP) *I know your [record of] works and what you are doing. See! I have set before you a door wide open which no one is able to shut; I know that you have but little power, and **yet you have kept My Word and guarded My message** and have not renounced or denied My name.*

2 Timothy 4:1–5 (NKJV) *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 **Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, **with all longsuffering and teaching.** 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

- Paul charged Timothy to preach the Word
- Timothy, keep the light turned on by teaching the Word of God
- Times are coming when people will not endure sound doctrine
- Don't turn away from the truth and start to proclaim fables
- The church is a bastion of the truth

- Churches, in particular, ministers, must preach the truth of God's Word

4. The Church is the Lampstand, and the truth we proclaim is the Lamp

Psalm 119:104–105 (NKJV) *Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way. 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV) *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

- God used the light of the gospel to bring us out of spiritual darkness into His marvellous light

2 Peter 1:19 (ESV) *And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

5. What can we do to let our light shine more brightly?

- Collectively as a church
- Individually as people and also as families

John 1:45–49 (ESV) *Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” **Philip said to him, “Come and see.”** 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 **Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”***

- Nathaniel came to know Christ because Philip invited him to meet Jesus
- Invite friends and family to church
(Upcoming Christmas Carol Service , 40 Day Campaign in early 2026)
- Forward links of Youtube messages to friends and family
- Bring friends and family to an Alpha Course (2026)
- Join e-night to learn how to present the gospel in 7 minutes (G7)
- Join our Girls or Boys Brigade Team to reach young people
- Assist financially towards out TV Production Equipment