

“I Am Alive Forevermore”:
The Relevance of the Resurrection
for a Worldwide Pandemic
Sermon Notes

➤ **The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ dethrones and defangs death for all who believe**

**Because Christ is risen today, we can both...*

1. Experience and extend his immediate _____ in our relational _____ (vv.9-11)

2. Know and name his mighty _____ amid our profound _____ (v.12-17a)

3. Receive and release his unerring _____ for our particular _____ (vv.17b-3:20;
1 Peter 1:3; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:17-19, 32, 58; 2 Corinthians 4:13-15)

Next Week: Titus 2:3-4a - “Older Women on Mission”

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of April 12th - 18th

Getting Started

1. Can you think of the last time you were speechless? Speechless in the sense of beings in utter awe and without adequate language to describe or respond to your surroundings? Your experience may be, though does not have to be, 'religious' in nature. If you have one to share, offer your experience with the group. If you cannot think of a time where this was so for you, ask yourself why this is the case.

Digging Deeper

2. In the passage we'll study together below, John doesn't merely find himself speechless - he is even unable to even stand as a result of his encounter with Christ. In the world of theology, this is called a "theophany" (literally a "God-sighting") and John's not alone. Take a look at the following passages and note the persons and contexts you find: Joshua 5:14; Isaiah 6:1-13 [John 12:36-41]; Ezekiel 1:28; Daniel 8:17-18; 10:7-9; Matthew 17:6 and John 18:6. In Revelation 1:17 (as in Isaiah 6:1-13; Matthew 17:6; and John 18:6) we don't simply have a "theophany" but a "Christophany" (a "Christ-sighting"). Sometimes referred to as the "beatific vision", imagine as a group what it will be like to see Jesus face to face one day. What do you most anticipate? What do you most fear?

Open Your Bible to Revelation 1:9-20...

3. The first description in John's vision is the image of "seven golden lampstands: (1:12). The imagery is likely drawn from Old Testament passages like Exodus 25:31-40; 1 Kings 7:48-49 and Zechariah 4:2, 10. The lampstands represent the churches of Christ shining forth in a dark world. In your estimation, does our church shine in this way? Explain why.

4. The one "in the midst of the lampstands" is Christ himself (1:13). The late Bruce Metzger once wrote: "John...wants to let us know that Christ is not an absentee landlord."¹ How does this truth encourage you?

In the same verse, John says he saw "one like a son of man". The title undoubtedly comes from Daniel 7:13-14. Among other things, this name flags Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah for whom God's people have waited since he was first promised (see Genesis 3:15; 2 Samuel 7:12-13). Do you believe that you need to be saved? If so, from what? Do you look forward to the return of Jesus Christ? If so, why? If not, why not?

5. The "long robe" and "golden sash" ought to be taken together. These are either priestly garments (Exodus 28:4; Exodus 39:39) or the clothing of a dignitary or a high-ranking official (Ezekiel 9:2; Daniel 10:5). When you think of Jesus, how often do your thoughts turn to such images (priest / king)? If the answer is "often" then share why. If "not often", share that, too.

¹ Metzger quoted in Grant R. Osborne, Revelation. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, MI. 2002. p.87.

6. Revelation 1:14 says that John saw the risen Christ with “hairs of...white”. In the Ancient Near East, white hair commanded honor and it was taken for granted that the aggregation of many years should yield wisdom (see Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 20:29). In Daniel 7:9, it’s the Ancient of Days (God himself) who has white hair. Consider, too, the clothing of Christ during his transfiguration (Mark 9:3). All of this points to Christ as our all-sufficient wisdom, especially as it relates to the care and the cure of the soul. Why don’t professing Christians recognize this more often (i.e. embrace the convictions of the biblical counseling movement)? Why do you think Paul feels compelled to remind the church of Colossae of such things (Colossians 1:28; 2:3-4, 8-10)? What encouraging signs do you see in our church that we are awake to these truths? What has the practical impact of this been on the health of our fellowship?

7. John says Christ’s eyes “were like a flame of fire” (1:14). Drawn from Daniel 10:6, this image relates to “divine insight”, also “the fierce judgement of God who knows and acts against those who disobey him”.² If this doesn’t sober you, it’s supposed to. The church in Thyatira refused to deal with sin in their midst and it’s this aspect of Christ’s activity in the church that put them in such a precarious situation. Read Revelation 2:18-28 and answer the following questions in light of that particular letter. Do we tolerate such sins in our church? If so, what are we going to do about it? If we don’t repent, what will Jesus do to our church? If we do repent, what do we stand to gain?

8. We’re quickly coming to the end of our study, but John also says he saw that Jesus had “feet...like burnished bronze” (v.15), a voice “like the roar of many waters” (v.15), “seven stars” in his right hand (v.16), “a sharp two-edged sword” in his mouth (v.16), and a face “like the sun shining in full strength” (v.16). See the footnote below and track down the references, seeking to make observations and applications that bring glory to Christ and practical help to our lives. You may wish to use a study Bible in order to get a sense of how to interpret the symbols.³

² Osborne, p.90.

³ Ezekiel 1:7, 24; 43:2; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 26:64; Job 38:7; Isaiah 11:1-4; Isaiah 49:2; Luke 2:35; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:3; Matthew 17:2; Psalm 84: 11; and Isaiah 60:19.