**BBC Men’s Bible Study – A Study of the Book of Revelation 2**

**Hope in the Darkness #2**

**John Loves Jesus, and His Brothers in Christ**

**Revelation 1:9**-**18 -** John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are **ours in Jesus**, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. **10**On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, **11**which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.”

**Jesus Loves John (and You and Me)**

**KEY THOT:** Every image John lists in the follow description of the resurrected Jesus, comes from an Old Testament story, scripture, or promise. Brothers remember, if the Book of Revelation is the Switzerland of the Bible, then Jesus is the main Alp. We will make as much of Jesus as we possibly can in this study! There’s always more to Jesus and more of Jesus.

 **12**I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, **13**and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. **14**The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. **15**His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. **16**In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. **17**When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “**Do not be afraid. I am** the First and the Last. **18**I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

**Jesus Loves His Bride (His Church)**

**KEY THOT:** Revelation 2 & 3 give us a profound picture of how much Jesus loves his Bride—in every place, in every condition, for all time. To say we love Jesus, but not the church, is non-sensical. How can we love Jesus and disregard what he loves the most? If anybody knows what a mess the church is, it’s Jesus! These two chapters show us what Jesus commends in his church, and what he corrects in his church. Taken together, Revelation 2 & 3 give us a composite picture of what a healthy church will look like.

**Rev.1:19-2:7 -** “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. **20**The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angelsof the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

**KEY THOT:** Jesus’ words to the church of Ephesus give us a paradigm of his words to the other 6 churches of Asia Minor. Let’s pay special attention to what Jesus commends, what he corrects, and what he gives us in the Gospel.

 2:1“To the angelof the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. **2**I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. **3**You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. **4**Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. (Love for Jesus and one another) **5**Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. **6**But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. **7**Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

**THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE**

1. Ephesus - A passionate "first love" relationship with the Lord Jesus which spills

over into all other relationships.

2. Smyrna - A glad willingness and preparedness to suffer for our Bridegroom

3. Pergamum - A growing knowledge of the truth of the Gospel and a commitment to defend the faith "once and for all delivered unto the saints".

4. Thyatira - Purity of heart and holiness of lifestyle driven by love and empowered by

grace.

5. Sardis - An aliveness in Jesus generated by His real presence in our midst and hearts.

6. Philadelphia - A commitment to follow Jesus into a life of other-centered living through

evangelism, missions and cultural impact.

7. Laodicea - An undivided and wholehearted allegiance to Jesus which treasures

communion with Him more than the comforts of the world, more than

anything else

Questions for Reflection and Conversation

1. What had the most impact on you from your study during the week, and from Scotty’s talk this morning? What was encouraging, convicting, and/or calling for more clarification?
2. John’s experience of the resurrected Jesus should deeply encourage us. Jesus is always coming to us in the Gospel—no matter our age and stage, no matter our mess, struggles, or fears. How has the Lord been meeting you in these recent months and years? What has he/does he use to restore and refresh your relationship with himself?
3. Speaking of fears... since the most repeated command in the Bible is “Do not be afraid”, can a few of you name your “**default fears**”? It’s quite a gift when brothers can share with each other some of the things that make us feel vulnerable, because those are the things that make Jesus and the Gospel most precious? Some of us are afraid of aging, some struggle with having enough or being enough... some struggle with old regrets or fresh wounds. What about you? How has Jesus met you right at the point of your fear? Encourage each other with your stories!
4. Isn’t it amazing how Jesus wants our hearts and love? For some of us it’s a lot easier to work for Jesus, serve him at church, read and study the Bible, give “big bucks” to missions, etc. All those things are really good, but what does it mean for us to love Jesus like we first did when we can to rest in his grace + nothing for our salvation? What about Jesus do you find easy to love? How has Jesus restored your love for him in the past, and maybe recently?
5. Close with a good season of prayer for each other, and find practical ways to encourage each other during the week!