

See Him Now

Part Two, Revelation 1:9-20

Sooke Baptist Church
Sunday, October 4, 2020, 9 and 11 am
7110 West Coast Road
also on Facebook Live Stream and YouTube

Coffee/Question:
What things have you seen that you cannot forget?

The Philippians believers were exhorted to...

...continue to work out your salvation
with fear and trembling,
¹³ for it is God who works in you
to will and to act
in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Philippians 2:12-13

For the believers, to whom John wrote this letter....the Revelation.... their salvation had to be worked out in a context of suffering and tribulation.

Their cost to follow Jesus was high.

- Ridicule.
- Ostracization.
- Loss of property.
- Imprisonment.
- Exile.
- Martyrdom.

When they calculated the cost, what convinced them to lose everything in order to gain Christ?

What persuaded them to endure, to hold on, without knowing for how long?

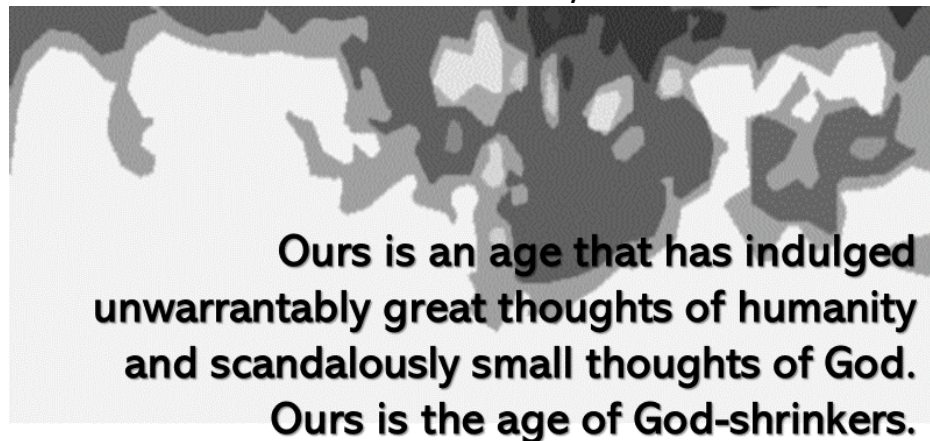
How were they not smothered by despair?

How did the lie of Satan not gain a foothold in their life... the lie that insinuated they had been forgotten by God...or that he was not strong enough to rescue them?

Our situation today is not the same as it was for those early believers.

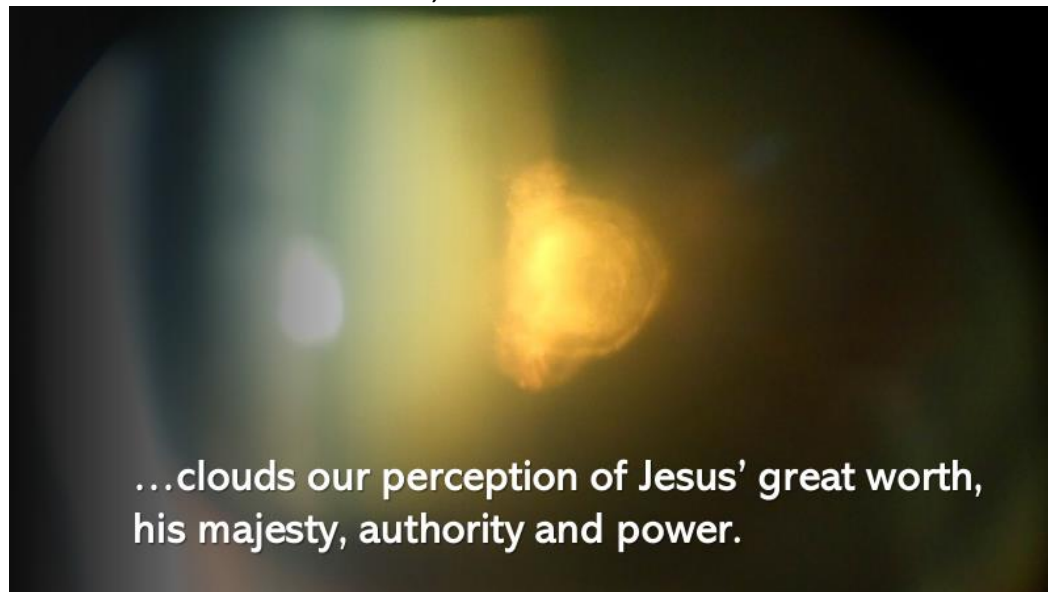
But we too... have our own challenges.

J.I. Packer describes our time this way:



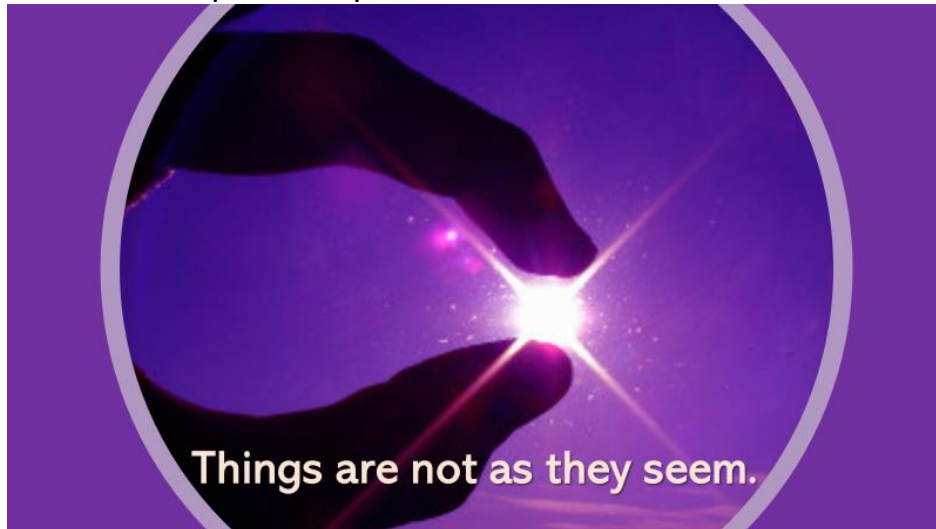
J.I. Packer

The culture in which we live, like a cataract...



This message from Jesus...the Revelation...was intended to transfuse fresh hope and courage... into his followers in the province of Asia... but also into the hearts of his followers in every generation who read this letter.

This vision impresses upon the reader that...



I invite you to stand as we read God's word –



The reason I ask you to stand is in respect of God's word, but also in anticipation of receiving the blessing that is promised in verse 3.

I keep reminding myself of what Eugene Peterson has said about this letter...

“I do not read Revelation to get additional information about the life of faith in Christ. I have read it all before in law and prophet, in gospel and epistle. Everything in the Revelation can be found in the previous 65 books of the Bible.”

Eugene Peterson

What the Spirit of God does in this letter is show to the reader how all that was foretold in the Old Testament is realized in the person of Jesus Christ.

We continue on from where we left off last week.

John heard a voice behind him – v.10.

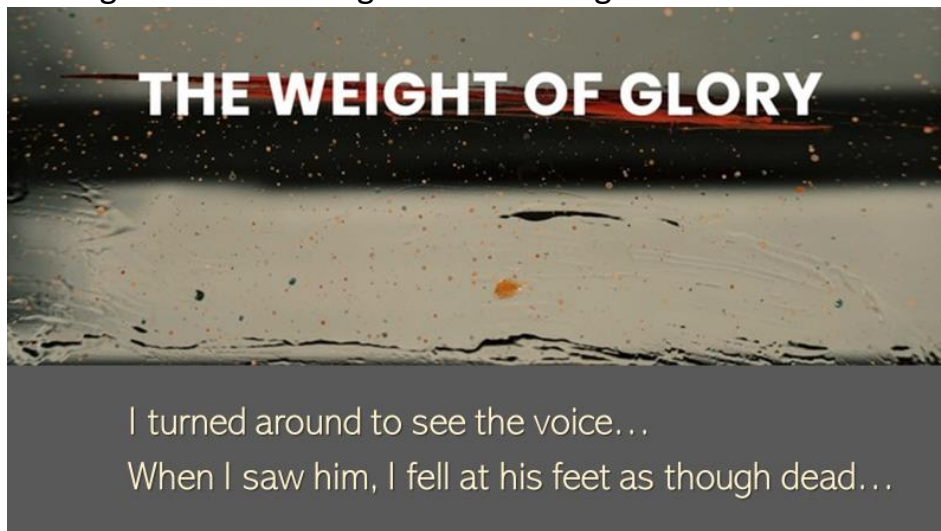
He then turned to see the voice that was speaking to him – v.12.

What he saw was seven golden lampstands and among those lampstands one who was like a son of man.

The seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The one like a son of man was Jesus... as Daniel had seen him in 7:13-14.

This sight of Jesus brought John to the ground.



John was overwhelmed.
He could not move.
He could not breathe.
He could not speak.
He could not respond.

Like John, we too need to remember...to be reminded that the One who is among his churches is holy.

That he would love us...that his mercy would move him to deal with us kindly... that his grace would save us... leaves us in awe... it puts us face down on the ground.

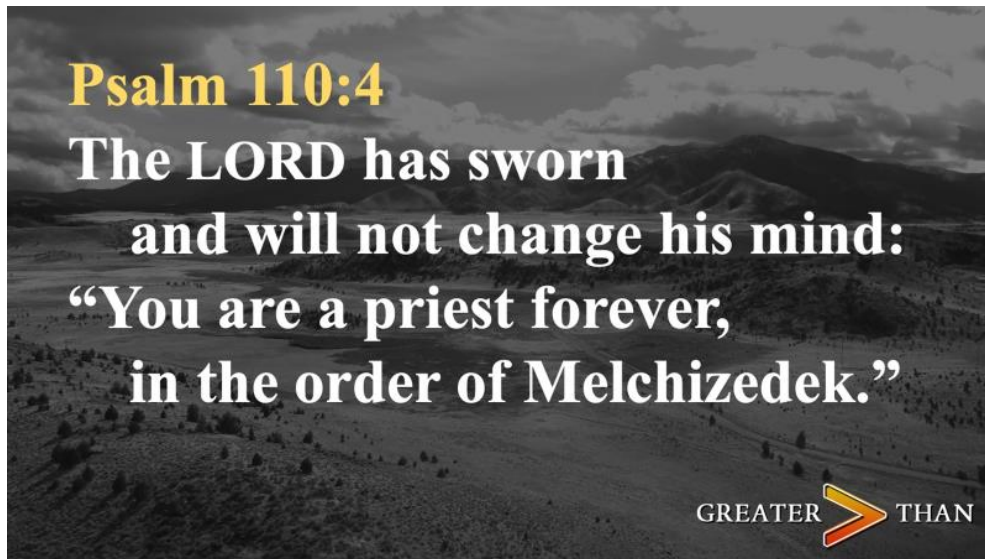
v.13b – he was “...**dressed** in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.”

Clothing is one of the first things we notice about a person.



Often, based on what a person wears, we can discern what they do.
Eugene Peterson writes: “Before we know what the Son of Man looks like, John gives us a glimpse of what he does.” p.33

What does the Son of Man do?
Psalm 110 foretold that he would be a priest.



Hebrews 7-8 confirms this – a new covenant...a new priesthood.

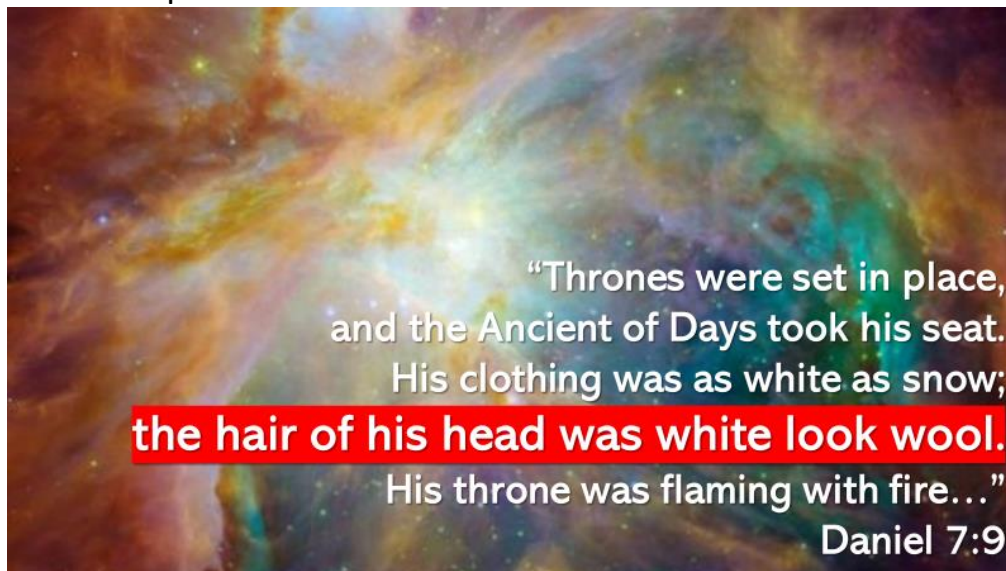
Many commentators believe... that what John saw the son of man wearing... was the clothing of a priest.

Just think of it – the One who is among his churches is our mediator... who has bridged the gap that existed between us and God because of our fallenness.

Let's keep reading.

v.14a – “The **hair** on his head was white **like** wool,
as white as snow...”

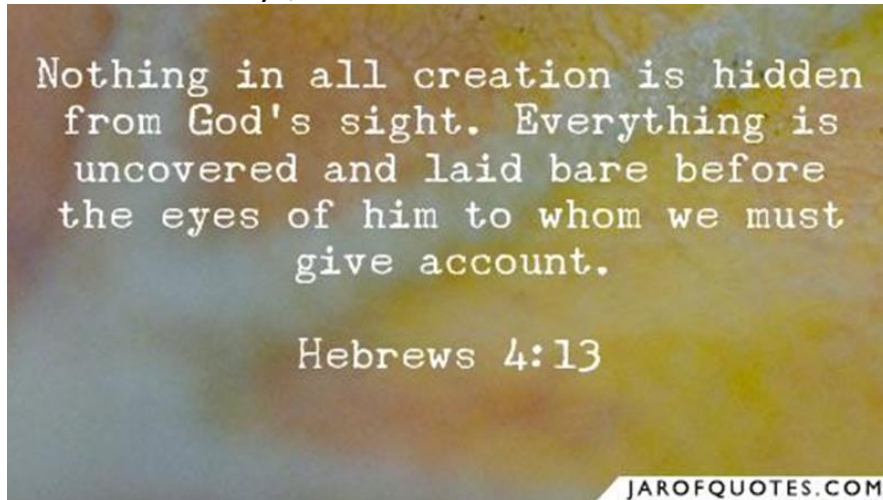
This description echoes what Daniel saw.



Jesus, the son of man... is like the Ancient of Days.
He too is God... he too is ageless.... he too is pure. DJ, p.44
To see him is to see the Father.

v.14b – “...and **his eyes** were **like** blazing fire.”

As Deuteronomy 4:24 says, “The Lord our God is a consuming fire.”
Hebrews 4:13 says,



Jesus, the son of man, not only sees us...his gaze penetrates into the very core of our being. Krodel, p.95

v.15a – “**His feet** were like bronze glowing in a furnace...”

This description echoes back to the book of Daniel ...to the great image dreamed of by King Nebuchadnezzar, in 2:31-45.
The image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream represented his own kingdom and those that would follow.



In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands.

This rock struck the feet of the image and it was broken to pieces and became like chaff swept away by the wind without leaving a trace.

The foundation of every human empire has been flawed.

This is why none endure.

But Daniel assured Nebuchadnezzar...

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people.

It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

Daniel 2:44

John's description of Jesus' feet is intended to draw a sharp contrast between the foundations upon which the kingdoms of mankind have been built and the foundation of God's kingdom.... the person of Jesus Christ.

v.15b – "...and **his voice** was like the sound of rushing waters."

This description echoes back to a vision seen by Ezekiel, 43:2...



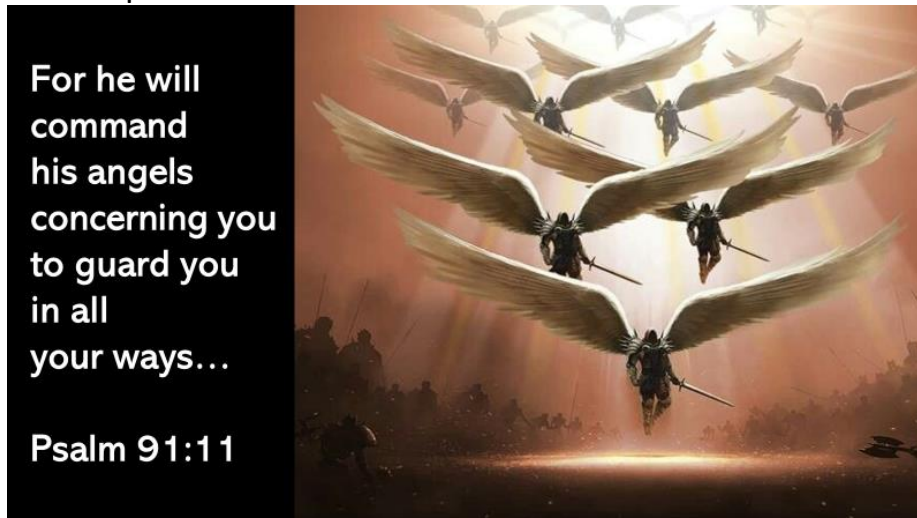
The voice of the son of man, like his appearance is awesome and commanding.

Peterson, p.36.

He is greater than out all other voices... because... the son of man is like God himself.

v.16a – “In **his right hand** he held seven stars...”

In v.20, Jesus told John that the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. John’s audience would have known Psalm 91...and the promise of how God cares for and protects his own.



What was revealed to John, is that what God does for his people individually, he also does for his churches.

What this means is that an angel of God has been assigned to Sooke Baptist Church... to mediate God's grace and word to us.

This is the testimony of Scripture.



In the holding together of all things...Jesus uses the holy angels of God.

v.16b – “...and coming out of **his mouth** was a sharp, double-edged sword.”

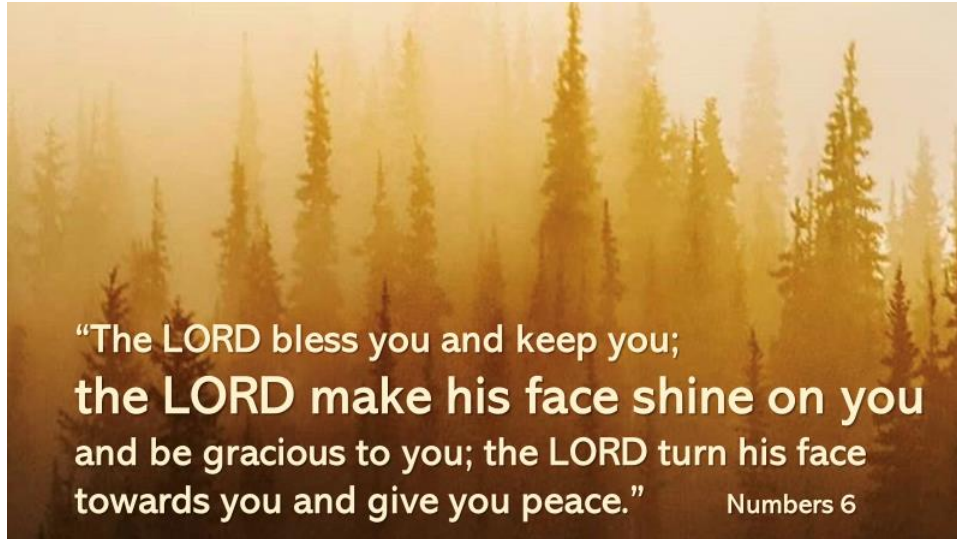
This description echoes back to the prophecy of Isaiah, 11:1-5...
From Jesse's root a branch will come. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him...



Like a sword that penetrates a body, so the words of the son of man powerfully and effectively penetrate the soul of a person, judging and convicting.

v.16c – “**His face** was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”

God told Aaron how to bless the people of God.



Like the Ancient of Days, the son of man is light and in him there is no darkness.

For the follower of Jesus, light is the fundamental reality in which we live.
And as the gospel of John says in 1:5, the darkness “has not overcome it.”

For the follower of Jesus this talk of light is not just philosophical, but personal.
The person of Jesus Christ illumines our lives.

As we began reading these verses, I pointed out to you that as John saw the
brilliant majesty of Jesus, he was instantly overwhelmed.

v.17a – When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.

But Jesus did not leave John on the ground.
Look at what he did.

v.17b – Then he placed his right hand on me and said...

Is this not incredible?

This was what repeatedly surprised and shocked people during Jesus’ years of
public ministry.

Jesus touched lepers.

He touched the dead body of a little girl when he raised her back to life.

He was not afraid that disease or death would somehow contaminate him.

He took children in his arms.

He had time for them.

He stretched out his hand and took hold of Peter when he was sinking in water.

He did not draw back from Peter's little faith.

As Darrell Johnson says, "Jesus does not remain aloof." p.47

We read...that in love Jesus touched John... his terrified disciple...and then spoke to him.

v.17c – Do not be afraid.

Afraid of what?

When Jesus came to the disciples walking on water, and they were terrified, do you remember what he said to them?



Jesus did the same with John.

Jesus told John to not be afraid because he was with him.

And then he specified three unseen realities, powerfully reminding him that things were not as they seemed.

v.17d – I am the First and the Last.

The Christian Courier website writes that this title speaks to the eternity of Jesus – like God the Father, there never was a time when Jesus didn't exist and there will never be a time when he ceases to exist – he is the First and the Last.

See also Isaiah 44:6

v.18a – I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive forever and ever!

On humanity's behalf Jesus surrendered himself to the darkness.

He let death take him captive.

And then, on the third day, he rose from the dead and in doing so, brought about the death of death.

What had been foretold to Isaiah was fulfilled by Jesus.



v.18b – And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

In this statement Jesus says to his followers that we do not need to fear the Domitian's of the world.

Even if our faith in Jesus costs us our life... Jesus assures us...we will live.

He holds the keys of death and Hades.

His authority extends over them.

His resurrection from the dead assures yours, mine... ours.

This glorious appearing of Jesus to the apostle John impresses upon us that our hope in Jesus is not just for the future... but also in this present time.

Jesus is among his churches.

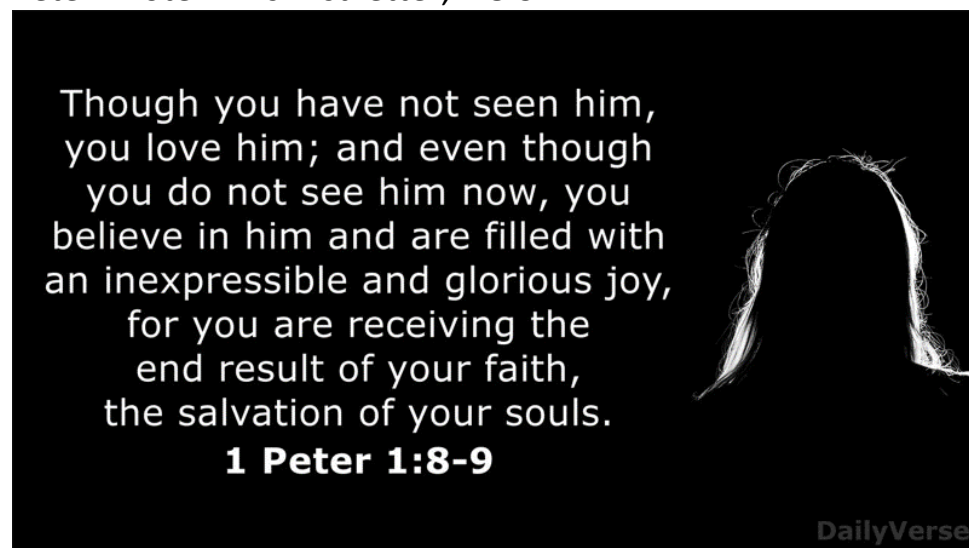
It is his will that you and I... not fear.

He has not given us a spirit of fear... but of power, love and a sound mind.

This letter, the Revelation, impresses upon us that things are not as they seem.

Though we may not see Jesus as John saw him...by faith we perceive him through his word.

Peter wrote in his first letter, 1:8-9...



As the First and the Last, Jesus is with you right now in the middle of what you are living.

His sovereign goodness and authority is so complete and comprehensive, that he uses all things for the achieving of his glory and your salvation.

Therefore...do not be afraid.

Take your eyes off your circumstances.

See Jesus...as he now is.

As the Living One, who was dead and is now alive forever, there is no circumstance you are living through that can separate you from Jesus.

This is his assurance spoken to you in his word.

Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or sword cannot separate you from him, nor from his love for you. See Romans 8.

Our Savior knew the day you and I would be born.
He knows the day we will die.
And he knows all the days in between.

Like David...w will not die until we have served God's purpose in our generation

**Now when David had served God's
purpose in his own generation,
he fell asleep; he was buried with
his ancestors and his body decayed.**

Acts 13:36

This frees us to live with abandon.
Not a careless abandon.
But a faith-filled, confident abandon.

As followers of Jesus we are privileged to spend our lives for the glory of our God,
confident in his sovereign goodness and power.

The Blessing
- refer back to the call to worship