

Though the church has been left on earth in a hostile spiritual environment, God assures us that there is given to us more than enough...

Resources for a Golden Testimony

(Availing ourselves of Divine Resources to Fulfil God's Plan for the Church)

Scriptures: *Rev 1: 1-20; Eph 1:15-23; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Ps 48*

Text: Eph 1:21-22 (ESV) ²²*And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,* ²³*which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

Introduction

- A. **Jesus' prayer: "Leave them in the world, but with Resources to overcome and shine!"**
- *John 17:13-23*
 - Jesus was so confident in what He would provide for us that He asked to leave us in the battlefield so that there would be a TESTIMONY to the world!
- B. *Eph 1:21-22. Conquering, Provided for and Completed: the church in Christ.*
- All things are under His feet!
 - He is the HEAD (source) of everything **TO THE CHURCH!**
 - We are His Body to be filled with His fullness.
- C. **John's revelation: in light of the degraded condition of the churches.**
- John received this revelation as the last living apostle. He was about to die as well, and John was concerned about

the condition of the churches and how they would carry on.

- God gave John this revelation to show the victorious condition of Christ and His faithful Ministry to the churches to bring in God's Plan.

D. **Revelation: A letter of comfort about Christ's victory to the churches!**

- Revelation is a love-letter to the churches in trouble, not a theology book on end-time events.
- It is "*a revelation of Jesus Christ...*"
- In 5:6-10 – at the center of the universe is a Lamb to carry out God's Plan of the Ages. (We are in Good hands!)

E. **Satan attempts to keep the church religious and institutionalized to keep her from realizing her HEAVENLY POSITION.**

- Eph 2:6-7
- In Revelation there is a battle between Babylon and Christ's kingdom.

F. *1 Peter 2:9-10. God wants our testimony to shine!*

- 1 Peter 2:9 - 10 (NIV) "*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*"

Prop: The Church must tap into the Divine resources found in the conquering Christ to enable her to overcome present conditions in the earth and bear the testimony of a golden lampstand.

TS: Learn what John learned to become Optimistic about the Plan God has for the churches...

1. GOD CAN GIVE YOU AN ENVISIONED SPIRIT

Rev 1:1-3 (NIV) ¹The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ²who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. ³Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near."

- A. **Without Vision, the church will succumb to defeats of every kind.**
- Prov 29:18 – "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint [Heb. "loosen" – become loose, come apart]"
- B. **John is given a vision of the end: to reassure his heart about the churches.**
- *¹The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John."*
 - It is a **REVELATION** not revelations. The Topic is Jesus Christ. (Notice: 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14)
 - "*which God gave*": it is all that is in the Father's heart: His SON.

- C. **John: Example of a believer with an envisioned spirit in this age.**
- John: angel assisted, word witnessing, Jesus testifying
 - *Read, hear, keep*: three-point survival guide to the last days!
 - **If we will just read, hear and keep the WORD revealed by God, we will be in a victorious condition in these days.**
- D. **The most precious commodity of the church is revelation: It is the only thing the church is built upon (Matt. 16:17-18)**

2. CHURCHES ARE "GOLDEN LAMPSTANDS" IN THE MIND OF GOD

Rev 1:12-13 ¹²I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man..."

²⁰ "... the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

- A. **Golden speaks of the churches Nature; Lampstand speaks of the churches testimony.**
- Gold speaks of divine Nature. (*Everything in temple was overlaid with Gold*).

- That the church is a GOLDEN lampstand means she is of divine workmanship, divine creation.
- Eph 2:10; 2 Cor 5:17
- Psalm 48 – The view of Zion
- Lampstand means we bear a light not our own

B. The church is to bear a Heavenly Witness.

- Matt 5:15 – *"Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house."*

C. The Church has come out of Christ, like Eve came out of Adam. Our starting point is not an earthly system but a heavenly Person!

- 1 Cor 15:47-49 - we must bear the image of the heavenly man
- We came out of Christ in His death and resurrection.

D. The Church is the Vessel of Christ.

- 2 Cor 4:7
- It is not a social institution, a spiritual country club, recreational program, etc.
- It is a heavenly vessel.

E. The Church is the Body of Christ.

- Not de-capitated either!
- The churches origin and starting place is the ascended Christ. We are not living here (earth) to there (heaven), but the other way around!

F. Isaiah 52:1-2. God's prophetic call: Rise up and sit enthroned!

3. HAVE THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF A TRUE CHURCH

Rev. 1:4-8 (NIV) *⁴John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.*

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. ⁷Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. ⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

A. A consciousness of GRACE and PEACE from God!

- *"Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come.."*
- Grace is God's Favour and Blessing. But it is also a Person. Grace is Christ given to us as everything we need.
- Peace is the result: *Shalom* – health, wholeness, prosperity, soundness, health (*Nothing broken, nothing missing*).
- 2 Peter 1:2 – grace and peace are multiplied through our knowledge of God.

B. The TRIUNE God: the support of God's Economy and Arrangement for Consummation with man as God's wife.

- *"... from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth..."*

- This provision to us is from the Triune God: God is triune for His plan to consummate Himself with the church as His wife.
- God is triune for His plan of relating to man as His companion.
- The Father: *from him who is and who was and who is to come*
- The Spirit: *seven spirits who are before his throne*
- The Son: *Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth..."*

C. A Consciousness of three PRIMARY things.

- (1). *To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood*
Our past is gone. Freed = loosed
- (2). *and made us a kingdom*
Made a realm for God to rule with all His resources
The church is a territory on earth for God. Eph 2:22
- (3). *priests to his God and Father*
We have a spirituality God-ward. Our occupation is God.

D. BEHOLDING Him for a new consciousness: placing the Divine scenery of Christ before our eyes!

- *Behold, he is coming with the clouds..."*
- Like Moses, we need The Lord to pass before our eyes: *Exod 33:18-19; 34:5-7*
- 2 Cor 3:18

E. What God began, He will Complete!

- *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

4. AVAIL YOURSELF OF THE DIVINE RESOURCES TO MAINTAIN THE TESTIMONY

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

A. Jesus Christ: The Lampstand Keeper.

- *in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man,*
- He is inspecting the lamps and caring for them to see they stay lit and supplied: Ex 27:21
- *"In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain that is in front of the Testimony, Aaron and his sons are to keep the lamps burning before the LORD from evening till morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come."*
- Heb 7:22-25

B. The condition of the Ascended Lampkeeper:

- *Clothed with a long robe* – His glory
- *And with a sash around His chest* – His righteousness
- *The hairs of His head were white like wool* – His righteousness and wisdom
- *His eyes were like a flame of fire* – His testing, refining, revealing
- *His feet were like burnished bronze* – Judging in our favour
- *His voice was like the roar of many waters* – Authority, Life
- *In His hand He held seven stars* – Holding the messengers to the churches

- *From His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword – Authority of His Word*
- *And His face was like the sun shining in full strength – Glory giving light and life and warmth*

C. **Summary of the Divine Resources for the churches:**

1. "Grace and Peace..." (constant, ceaseless flow of divine favour and approval from Godhead)
 2. "He who is, who was and is to come..." (He is constant in plan for us)
 3. "The seven spirits..." (Fullness of HS and intensification)
 4. "Before His throne..." (connected to the throne. He is mercy-seated. Connected to the power of the throne)
 5. "The Faithful Witness..." (no element of error in what He has done or who He is for us)
 6. "The Firstborn from the dead..." (He is out of the realm of death. Death has no place in Him or power over Him. We are united with One who can eliminate death in our spirit, mind, will, emotions...")
 7. "The ruler of the kings of the earth..." (He is in charge)
- ALL OF THESE ARE OUR RESOURCES. WE HAVE NO NEED TO BE IN A DEFEATED CONDITION.

D. *Eph 1:15-23*. **A Prayer to see the resources of God!**

**5. TAKE JOHN'S POSITION BEFORE THE LORD:
"I FELL AT HIS FEET..."**

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. ¹⁹Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. ²⁰As for the

mystery of the seven stars that 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 are the seven churches.

- A. **"I Fell at His Feet as though dead..."** (Humility and complete dependence).
 - Matt 5:3 - *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
 - All He asks is to be the Head, to be our EVERYTHING!
 - John said: *"he must increase, and I must decrease..."*
- B. **His Support when we make Him First:** *"He laid His right hand on me..."*
 - All His support follows our place of humility and faith!
 - He laid down the stars in His hands to support one who bows before Him in complete humility.
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- C. **The Lord's Position: *Glory, Life and Authority***
 - *I am the first and the last, - GLORY*
 - *¹⁸and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore - LIFE*
 - *and I have the keys of Death and Hades - AUTHORITY*

6. CHRIST HOLDS THE KEYS TO LIBERATE

Rev. 1:18 "I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

- A. **Jesus presents Himself to John as the One who has Conquered Death... For the church!**
 - Resurrection is life that has ALREADY conquered death.

- His “was dead” has terminated the sentence and fulfilled the requirements of justice.
- He is now “alive forevermore”.

B. **Rom 8:37-39. We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.**

- Revelation is not a book of the battle of good verses evil, but the battle for God’s conquering Love to prevail!

C. **Christ is Anointed to Set Free:** Luke 4:18-19

- He has become the Intensified Spirit sent into the earth to care for our liberation!
- Rev 5:6 – SENT OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH: To Free us!

D. **Christ is the churches continual Jubilee:** Lev. 25:8-10, 13

E. **Return to Him who has the Keys!**

Conclusion

Rev 2:4-6

Restore the first place of Love: restore the candlestick to it’s “place”, BEFORE HIM who cares for it!