

Jesus In The Feasts (Part Six): The Eighth Day

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Well, I do not know about you, but I miss Charles Whitaker. Charles was a good friend of mine. I could almost call him a great friend of mine. I wish he had lived closer and me to him. I stayed at his house in Bolivar when I traveled to visit the Louisburg congregation, which I do once a year. And staying in his house we had lots of time to talk. I cannot remember how many consecutive years I did that. It was a lot. I traveled with my dad for a great many years and we would do the same rounds; get to Louisburg every year and stay in Bolivar with Charles.

At the time, Charles, with John and Dolores Reid, would come down to the airport and pick us up and wait around with us to get our luggage out of the carousel and then we would talk the 40 minutes or 45 minutes home to Bolivar. And those 40-45 minute conversations in the car were great. Usually, they were catching up with certain things and talking shop in a way. He would take Dad and me or just me with Dolores and others that through the years we went out to eat together, and we talked more and then back to his house, and in the morning before services we would talk and back at his house after services—we talked a lot for that weekend. And it was it was fun. I enjoyed those talks immensely.

When it was just Charles and me, we would talk classical music. Charles was very well educated in classical music. He was himself, I think, a very fine classical pianist. He did not like people to know that because he did not want people to ask him to play. He did not like public performances, but he was an excellent pianist and proved himself an excellent teacher as well. And I miss that now. I did not really realize how much I missed him until he was gone. And gone, to me, so suddenly. To us it was the first round of deaths from COVID.

But I bring him up because in his great intellect, he taught us words that we did not know existed. I am a word guy. I have been told I have a very

extensive vocabulary. But man, the size of his brain! I mean, I think he knew several thousand more words than I did—and used them. But yeah, like I said the other day, he taught us *hapax legomenon*, among others. I mean, not even an English word, that was a Greek word. And *zeitgeist* and others.

Now one that we probably all remember, those who were with us 10 to 15 years ago, is a particular figure of speech used in rhetoric. It is often found in ancient literature and specifically it is found in Scripture. And that is the word merism. Do you remember what merism means? I see a lot of blank faces. Understandable. It is not a word we use a lot. But it is actually not a difficult concept to understand, it is actually rather simple. Charles himself defined it in one of his sermons as "a figure of speech where opposites represent an entirety." If you look it up in a dictionary, it might say, "a reference to something by its polar extremes." I like Charles' definition better.

Charles used the example, "he moved heaven and earth to find his car keys," saying it was a hyperbolic statement indicating he looked everywhere for them. Here is another, "we searched high and low." That would amount to the same idea. That you search everywhere to find something that was lost. Here is another one, a little different, but it fits the definition, "I put up with that barking dog day and night," which means he barked all the time.

Let us go to Genesis, the first chapter, the first verse. Believe it or not, God starts out His Word with a merism. The first one in the Bible, obviously.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Those are the two extremes—heaven, earth—and a merism says those represent everything in between. So the first verse of the Bible says that God created everything. There was nothing created that He did not create. There is no thing, no material thing or spiritual thing in all the universe that He is not the source of. So I think that is very understandable.

Another well-known merism appears in the third chapter. This one is spoken by Satan, the serpent.

Genesis 3:4-5 The serpent said to the woman, "You shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

This comes from the chapter before about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. And that tree represents all knowledge, from all the good to all the way down to all the bad. What this means is the serpent here was promising Eve that she could choose and then experience for herself anything she wanted along the whole spectrum of knowledge.

Now God was going to give her and Adam the knowledge that they needed from Him. He was the one that was going to choose what kind of knowledge that they had and that they could use. But she went around Him, took of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and she became the chooser. He would have guided them into learning the truth not mixed with anything else. But she wanted to make those decisions on her own, thinking that being in that position, she would become wise. So, God was going to limit the knowledge, but she went ahead and leapfrogged over that and took the knowledge to herself—all of it.

So merisms are throughout the Bible. We find them in such phrases as "the goodness and severity of God," "evening and morning were the first day." I skipped over that from the first chapter, that means the whole day. Jesus has talked about "from the least to the greatest." That means everybody. "God knows my sitting down and my rising up." That means He knows us all the time, whatever we are doing. Daniel 12:4, "people run to and fro." That means they are running everywhere. They are to-ing and fro-ing, you might say. You learn things or preachers and teachers teach things "both old and new," a wide spectrum of teachings from God's servants. Ecclesiastes 3:2-8 gives us 14 straight merisms, beginning with "a time to be born and a time to die."

Let us just say that this rhetorical device, the merism, is throughout the Bible and it is very important for us to understand. And a particular set of merisms

is important to this sermon. So I want you to stick this knowledge in the back of your head because we are not going to get to it until the end. But I just want to start with that, laying this foundation.

This is Part Six of my sermon series of "Jesus in the Feasts." And I have posited in these sermons that while the holy days do indeed have prophetic implications in terms of showing major steps in God's plan, their primary purpose is to point us to Christ. And, as a matter of fact, that is kind of the backbone of this particular sermon. That we need to be pointed to Christ in His various offices and roles.

So we have along the line of festivals that Christ is our Passover. In Unleavened Bread, He is our bread of life. In Pentecost, He is our firstfruit or He is *the* firstfruit. In Trumpets, He is our divine King who is present. In Atonement, He is our atonement. He is our sacrificial offering. In the Feast of Tabernacles, He is the perfect tabernacle, the One we are supposed to live in throughout our journey.

And finally, in this Eighth day, what do you think He is? Well, I will just tell you. He is our *all in all*. Or maybe make it even plainer, He is *everything*.

Let us go back to Leviticus 23. We were here a few times today already. I was not kidding when I said I would take David's notes and basically give the same thing.

Leviticus 23:33-36 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day [that is today] you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly [which is very important, as David pointed out this morning], and you shall do no customary work on it.'

Leviticus 23:39 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the

feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.'

I am just going to preface this whole paragraph or so with, as David said this morning, actually, James said it too, Martin, you may have said it too—except for the offerings to be given on this holy day in Numbers 29:35-38, this is the totality of scriptural instruction about the Eighth Day. It is very rare in the Bible for any kind of instruction to be given about this day in particular. There is also a passing reference to it in Nehemiah 8:18. We will not go there. It just basically says that they kept this day. And in the New Testament, before you understand the symbolism and everything of this, using the time markers in John 7, chapters 8 through 10, about halfway through chapter 10 may have occurred on the Eighth Day in the last Feast of Tabernacles of Jesus' life. So that gives us some things to talk about, what happens in John 8, 9, and the first half of chapter 10 before the Feast of Dedication is spoken about there.

But that is it. That is basically all we have to go on about the Eighth Day unless you begin to start putting things together, and I think God has revealed some of these things to us in the last few years so that we can understand more about this particular holy day. It is not readily apparent what the Eighth Day is all about just from a straight through reading of the text. Because the way it is in the texts, most people just say that it is just a continuation of the Feast of Tabernacles. That is how it is presented in Leviticus 23. There is the first day you have a holy convocation. You keep the feast on the Eighth Day, you have a holy convocation, a sacred assembly, a Sabbath rest.

That is what it seems, but what we have been finding is that that particular understanding is, to me, a severe oversimplification of what this day is all about.

Now, last year on this same day, David Grabbe gave a sermonette. He called it "The Sacred Assemblies," and we published it this past August as a two-part *CGG Weekly*, and he used some of it in his offertory sermonette today. He found something in Scripture and did a bit of corresponding word study

that was to me at the time completely new. I had never heard it explained before. And it revolves around what is said in verse 36 about the Eighth Day. Let us just jump in the middle.

Leviticus 23:36 On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.

It is the phrase "sacred assembly" that was the big aha! phrase for us. Because the sacred assembly, we thought, was just the same thing as a holy convocation, but when you dig into it, you find out that it is other. There is more there. So only the Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Day of Unleavened Bread are sacred assemblies. And like I said, it is different from a holy convocation. It *is* a holy convocation. It *is* a Sabbath rest. It *is* a holy day, but it is also designated specifically as a sacred assembly.

Now the word study deals with the Hebrew word underlying sacred assembly and as he mentioned this morning, it is *atzeret*. It is *Strong's* number 6116. I found that actually to be interesting because that is a numerical palindrome, makes it easy to remember: 61-16. A palindrome is something like a word or a phrase or even numbers that are the same backwards and forwards. So *atzeret* is 6116.

And as David said today, a sacred assembly, an *atzeret*, is a holy convocation with a special purpose. It makes the Last Day of Unleavened Bread and the Eighth Day of the Feast different, special. Both of these obviously end week-long feasts. A sacred assembly occurs at the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a week-long festival, and also on the Eighth Day after the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now *atzeret's* root is *atsar*. It is *Strong's* number 6113. And as he mentioned this morning, it contains the ideas of closing, stopping, restraining, and retaining. And understanding these ideas in the root helps to explain the purpose of the sacred assembly. Closing is understandable. We just went through that as these holy days end their feasts. Stopping or ceasing and restraining comes when we think of it as a Sabbath rest. On a Sabbath rest,

we stop, we cease, we do not do our daily work. We rest and we restrain ourselves from our normal everyday activities. We do not do on these days what we normally do on a normal day. Finally, we are to retain what the feasts teach. We are to take in, listen to, think about, and retain the things that we are taught during these feasts. We are to meditate on them and consider what they mean to us, what we should put into long-term memory, if you will, and begin to put into action in our lives.

So what does this mean in terms of pointing us to Christ on this day? As I mentioned, simply that He is our everything. In Him He encapsulates all the lessons, all the examples, all the reasons, all the hope, all the good things that have been revealed to us through God's festivals. I mean, if you did not have the words on the paper that we have in our Bibles, if there was some other way that God could reveal Himself to us, it would be showing us Jesus Christ Himself. Because He is the Word of God. We know everything about Jesus that God wanted to reveal for what is printed in the Book. And then later on when we are called and converted, given God's Holy Spirit, Jesus himself begins to reveal through our experiences with Him other things about Jesus Christ—all based on the Word.

What I am getting at here is, He is the source of the Word. And He, in Himself is everything that we could learn from this Book. So He is everything that is good, right, and true. Remember what He says about himself in John 14. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is basically saying, I am everything that you need. I am the way to go. I am the truth you are supposed to follow. And as we heard earlier, He is our life. He is *that* eternal life that gives us eternal life. He is everything.

Within Him, which He gives to us freely through His Spirit, are all the tools, all the power, all the wisdom, all the holiness, to enable us to attain to God's Kingdom. He is *everything*! There is nothing that we need that cannot be found in Him.

Let us go to Ephesians 1 to start to back this up. We will read verses 15 through 23. I want you to be cognizant of Paul's argument here, if you want to put it that way, what he is leading to, how he constructs this to give us

information, edification, and hope, building us up. So be careful as you listen to see his manner of speech here, the rhetorical devices, if you will, to convince us.

Ephesians 1:15-23 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at the right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet [under Christ's feet], and gave Him [Christ] to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

After explaining the wonders of our redemption through Christ and the receipt of the Holy Spirit, which is, as he says here, a down payment which guarantees our inheritance in God's Kingdom, Paul then turns to the question. What now? What happens? What is supposed to happen once these great things have been done for us? What do we do? I mean, what the Father has done in giving us these things through Christ is astounding! But we are not supposed to be static upon receiving these things. We are supposed to move forward.

And so he begins in his argument, in his declaration here, by extolling their faith and love, saying, I heard of your faith and your love, and because of that, he does not cease to give thanks for that because those attributes, those virtues are necessary to what is next, what they need to do from the point that they are started out on in this road of sanctification.

So in saying this, he implies that their growth is just beginning and they are just starting on a grand adventure and they have the necessary things that they need. It has been told to him they have faith and love, and that is a wonderful start. That is a wonderful beginning. So he prays that God would give them all that they would need. Everything else. They had the starter pack, but he wanted them to have the whole series. And so he says he prays that God would give them *all* of what they needed.

Now he begins to list these things. He prays that they will be given the spirit of wisdom and revelation. That they would be given enlightenment. That they would be given a sure hope, something to reach out for. He asked that they would be given understanding of the riches of their inheritance, just how great it is, what it entails, because that is a motivation that can keep you going. You can see the wonderful riches of God that He has out there for us, and we can keep them in mind as we, you know, slog through the mud of this world. It *is* going to get better. I just need to endure. I need to get to the end. So understanding the riches of our inheritance is an important thing.

He also asked that we get a sense of God's power as shown, as seen in the life of Christ. Because think of this, *God loves you as He loves Jesus Christ*. It actually says that. Pat [Higgins] did some wonderful articles about this early on. "As You have loved Me," Jesus said. The Father loves all His children. And if He was willing to display His great power in the life of Jesus Christ as a human in this world, He is willing to expend the same kind of power out of love for *you* in this world. Remember, the apostle John said we are as Christ in this world because we are going through the same training regimen that Jesus Christ went through. Now, he came at it with the character of God and the Holy Spirit without measure. He did not mess up like we do. But God is taking us through the same obstacle course and we are running through it the best time we can. We try not to stumble over the stumbling blocks and fall in the pitfalls, but He is giving us the power to get to the end and to rise to the occasion and put on the image of Jesus Christ.

And of course, we are also supposed to think of what happened once Christ died. That God expended His power to raise Him from the dead and have Him ascend to His right hand with all that eternal power and glory. We are on the same course. We need to understand that the motivation that we get

from that sort of knowledge will help us in what is next—from our baptism all the way through to our death and resurrection.

By the time he gets to verse 22, he is beginning to bring his argument around to what it means for us, for His elect. He mentions that Christ's sovereignty extends to the church. Yes, Jesus Christ was raised to the Father's right hand, sitting on His throne. He is not just given all authority over everything else, but He is especially focused on His church, His elect ones. And he shows, like I said, in verses 22 and 23, that we are hierarchically connected to Him. That because of what He did, He is now the head. He has all this authority and power. He is the ultimate Sovereign for us, under the Father, of course. But right now the way things are, He is our head. So He is the head of the church and we are His Body. We are not just connected but unified, intertwined, we might say, even intermingled with Him. Because of this head and body analogy we are one. Like we are one person, one entity. Where does Christ begin and we end? We are just all together with Him.

And he ends then this chapter with, yeah, we are His Body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. What a statement! It is amazing to think about. The Body is the fullness of Him who fills all in all. That is incredible! What does it mean?

First, we need to understand that the word *fullness* here modifies "His Body." It is just the way the syntax is here. The fullness modifies His body, which is His body, the fullness of Him. How is the church the fullness of Christ? Some have even asked, "Do we fill or complete Him or does He fill and complete us?" Well, because of the little bit of grammar I just showed you, since all the fullness of God dwells in Him, I have to believe that Paul means that He fills *us* rather than the other way around. Although we are the fullness of Him, so it is a little bit of both. We are the fullness of Him but He fills us. He fills all in all, so He is much greater than us.

As a matter of fact, we could ask, what can we add to Him? It is very little. But we are His bride and in that way, we complete Him. So in that way we can think of it as that we fill Him through our being, our loyalty, our faithfulness, our love for Him. And we become a part of Him and give Him abilities, you might say, that He has had to do only by Himself up to now. But now He has members to do it with Him.

On the other hand, He has so much to add to us. Everything of eternal value comes from Him. We bring to Him a lot of physicality and temporariness, stuff that will not last, but everything that we have that is eternal has been a gift from Him. So I think the balance of evidence here weighs heavily in His favor, that He fills us a whole lot more than we fill Him.

Look at Colossians 2, over a couple of pages.

Colossians 2:10 [Paul writes] You are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

The ESV has here, "You have been filled in him."

Back to Ephesians, chapter 4 this time, we will see a similar phrasing that shows that it is more that He fills us rather than we fill Him.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

So in this way it shows that we do not have the fullness of Christ. We start pretty much at empty and we need to be filled with the fullness of Christ until we get to the point where we are of His measure and stature.

Ephesians 4:19 Who, being past feeling [he is talking about the Gentiles], have given themselves over to. . .

Ephesians 4:24 And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

So we start out where we need to get rid of a lot of our humanity and begin backfilling with the new man. And those things that we are putting on reflect true righteousness and holiness.

Let us go back to Ephesians 1 and to the phrase under question here, "The fullness of Him who fills all in all." and let us look at the phrase "all in all." This is a literal translation in the English as shown in the New King James.

The Greek phrase is *tapanta enpasin*. Now, if you know your Greek roots, you know, like Pan-American Airlines. That means it went all over the entire Americas. You have pan-Asian cuisine, which means you go to a restaurant, you can get cuisine from Japan and China and Korea and Thailand and all the other places of Asia. That is what *pan* means. Both *panta* and *pasin* are from the same base word in Greek. It is *pas*. And that root means all, or the whole, the entirety or the totality of any object. It means all of it, the whole shebang.

Panta, which is the neuter plural, and that makes a difference if you are into Greek grammar, but the neuter plural connotes wholly, like whole, the adverb there, wholly, altogether, in all ways, or in all things. So, this is why various Bibles have it translated a little bit differently because they are wanting to give you an idea of the wholeness or entirety of this statement. You know how Hebrew doubles things up so that it makes it superlative: the Holy of Holies, the Song of Songs. Those phrases mean that the Song of Songs means it is the best song. The Holy of Holies means that it is the holiest of all.

Well, in Greek, they have done it a little bit here by using a doubling up of this *all* idea. *Tapanta enpasin*; both meaning all. So the NIV translates it as, "Who fills everything in every way." The Amplified Version says, "of Him who fills and completes all things in all believers." The Lexham Bible and the Holman Christian Standard Bible both read, "who fills all things in every way." And the Modern English Version has it as, "who fills all things in all ways." And so thus you have the New King James, and I believe the old King James with this phrase, "all in all." And you are supposed to get the idea nothing is left out. In every way He fulfills all things that we need, to us, His Body.

So the upshot of all this is that Paul is assuring believers that as the Body of Christ we share in the divine fullness through Him. That is amazing. Did you ever think of that? We share in Christ the divine fullness! I do not think of myself that way. I think of Christ in me and I have a, I do not know, mediocre understanding of what that means. But Paul is saying, "Look guys, God's fullness dwells in us." I mean, talk about a mind-blowing moment. He imparts, Christ in us, Christ is our head, imparts all these divine gifts and powers to us because we and He are one. He cannot help being Himself. And

He is in us, every one of us, and in us collectively as His Body. I almost do not know what to say.

So as God's elect, Christ fills us with *everything* we need in *every way*. There is no lack of His goodness and blessing. Because that is the God we serve. He wants to give us every good thing and every blessing and every opportunity and every—all those good things that He has to give. He wants to fill us with all righteousness and all holiness. I feel like a piker. I do not feel like I demonstrate even a little bit of that. All the fullness of God! I can hardly imagine. But Paul is assuring us that we lack nothing and it is all because of Him, of Christ in us.

Let us look at I Corinthians 12. This is the body analogy chapter in I Corinthians. I just want verses 4 through 6. He says,

I Corinthians 12:4-6 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. [That is the means by which He dwells in us.] There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

And He is working it in you and He is working it in me and He is working it in you and you and you and you and you. If you are in the Body, He is working all of those things to bring you to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Himself and therefore to be His bride. And live forever serving, giving, doing, working, creating, all those things that God does.

Let us move on to Revelation 1. I mean, this is just incredible to think about. I do not think we think about it enough. I do not think we acknowledge enough that Christ is in us. If we did that more often, we would sin less. We would make mistakes less. We would honor God more. We would serve more. Let us read starting in verse 4.

Revelation 1:4-11 John, to the seven churches which 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, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over all the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us

kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

Revelation 1:17-18 And when I saw him I fell at His feet as dead [meaning he had seen the glorified Christ]. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 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."

John introduces us to Christ here in his salutation and he does this by listing His titles, which are things that He accomplished, that He faithfully witnessed God's way of life as a human. He had a sinless life and He proclaimed the gospel, left us an example. Christ rose from the dead. He conquered death and became our High Priest. And then of course He ascended to God's throne, and He took up all authority in heaven and earth.

Next, John goes on. He tells us more of what Christ did for us. He is reading Christ's resumé here and telling us as we begin to go through this book just how awesome Jesus Christ is. And he tells us He loved us and because He loved us, He cleaned us up by sacrificing Himself to pay for our sins. And He has been hard at work preparing His elect for their places of responsibility in His Kingdom. And for this, He receives all glory, honor, praise, and dominion forever.

Then John tells us to get ready. He is coming. Time is short. Do not be put off by what the world thinks of Him or how the world wants to draw Him or what happens to them because of their rejection of them. Remember, this is a look into the Day of the Lord. And Jesus Christ, yes, He is the Lamb of God, but yes, He is also King of kings and Lord of lords, and He comes with a sword. Do not let that put you off to think that He is mean or something. Because He is being just. They deserve what they get. So he is telling you, stay faithful. Endure. Things will get bad, but you must stay close to Jesus Christ.

And finally Jesus Himself speaks. And He speaks comforting words to His faithful elect using merisms. (I told you to stick that in the back of your head.) He uses merisms to confirm that He is our *everything*. "I," He says, "am the Alpha and the Omega." Alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet, Omega is the last. So He says, I am everything in between, too. He says, "I am the Beginning and the End." He is with you all the way, from beginning to end. Whatever period of time you are talking about, whether it is from the time They came up with this plan of salvation to the time that it is totally fulfilled, Jesus is there. He is always there. He is always working hard to make sure it comes to pass. Or if you are limiting this to just your own interaction with Him from your calling to your glorification and on into eternal life, He is there. He is working. He never gives up.

We could say that He is the great "I AM." It talks about it a couple of times just in this first chapter. It does not say that. It says, "Him who is and who was and who is to come," but that is essentially what "I AM" means. He is the Eternal One, the One who is there forever.

And then He says, "I am the First and the Last," if you did not get it from Beginning and the End and Alpha and Omega. He is telling us that He is these things and everything else that would be laid upon that spectrum.

In this final book of the Bible, in Revelation, analogous we could say, to the final holy day of the year, the Eighth Day, He shouts out to us as we begin here, "Do not be afraid! Cheer up! Understand that you lack *nothing* in Me.

You've got what it takes. And if you don't think that you've got what it takes, you have Me." That is what He says. He says, "I am your all in all. I am what you need to retain. I am your example. I am your teacher. I am the teachings."

So we do not need to worry. We do not need to be afraid no matter how bad it gets. We already have the fullness. Now we have not inherited fully. That is why He wants you to endure, because there are things that have to happen. You have to keep on keeping on all the way to the end. But you have in you, by Jesus Christ, what it takes. And hey, even if you fear death or martyrdom or any kind of suffering and persecution, He has got our back there too because He conquered death and the grave. so there is no reason to fear. He has got you!

All you have to do is endure. Stay the course. Because He is sovereign, He is in control. Do not let anybody tell you that anybody else has any kind of control of what is going on here. Not Trump, not the coming beast, not the false prophet, not Satan the Devil. None of them make any impression on God in terms of His sovereignty. They do not matter.

So why fear? You have the fullness of Christ, the divine nature within you by His Spirit. And hopefully you are growing in that divine nature by putting on the image of Jesus Christ with the goal of the measure of the stature of our great King and High Priest.

So do not worry. Do not stress. He has what we need to overcome and endure and attain the victory. So just keep close to Him. Keep that relationship sound. Keep your eyes focused on Him. And this is what will be said:

Revelation 22:12-14 "Behold [Jesus says], I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the great gates of the city into the city.

Revelation 22:16-17 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of

David, the Bright and Morning Star." And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:20-21 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.