




**Do You See Him?** Part One  
Jesus is the Living One who was dead  
and is now alive forever and ever  
**Revelation 1:9-20**

**Sooke Baptist Church**  
Sunday, September 27, 2020, 9am and 11 am  
7110 West Coast Road  
also on Facebook Live Stream and YouTube



**Coffee/Question:**  
What things diminish you?

There is a second question I need to ask...



**Coffee/Question:**  
What things build you up,  
embolden you,  
energize you?

I believe today's passage will answer this question.  
Separated from God every human being is diminished by sin.  
Without God in our lives we are not who we were created to be.

But the glorious news of the gospel of Jesus is that through his substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, for humanity's sin, when one believes in Jesus and receives him, a work of new creation, renewal and restoration is begun that will continue throughout the believer's life... and will be completed – this is the promise of God!

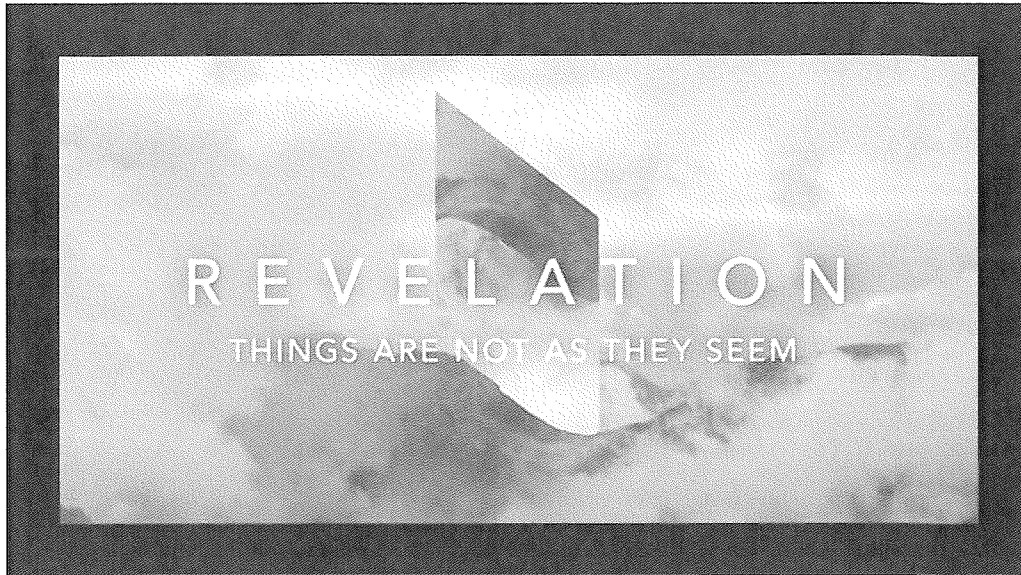
It is the nature of the triune God to reveal himself to mankind.  
He has done so in the creation; in his breathed-out word – the Scriptures; and in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the last book of the New Testament there is one final revelation given from Jesus Christ... about Jesus Christ.

The people who follow the triune God have always lived by faith in God.  
As the writer of Hebrews says...

Hebrews 11:1  
Faith is  
**confidence**  
in what we hope for  
and **assurance**  
about what we do not see.

It is by faith that the follower of Jesus understands, in the words of Darrell Johnson, **"things are not as they seem."**



There is more to reality than can be seen, heard and experienced through our human senses.

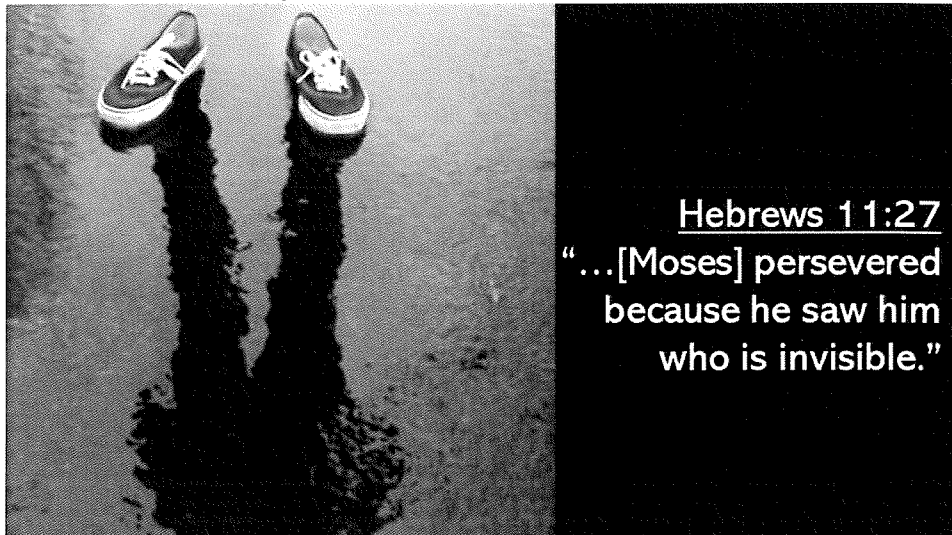
Remember Moses?

Why, at the age of 80, did he return to Egypt?

Why did he not fear Pharaoh's anger, when he was directed by God to pronounce plague after plague that devastated the nation of Egypt?

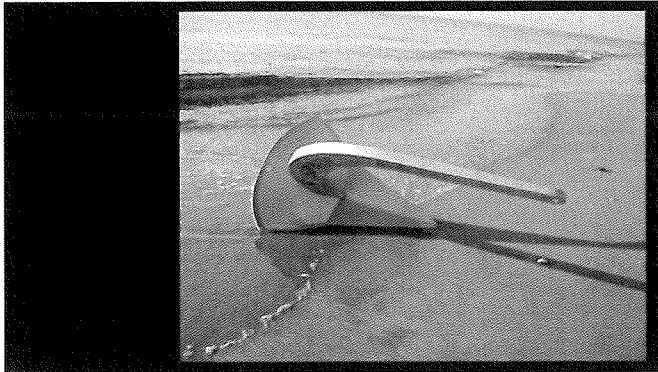
Why did he attempt to lead a nation of slaves out from under the domination of the world superpower of that day?

Hebrews 11:27 explains:



The people of God have always lived by faith on the basis of the unseen reality of God.

This letter, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, presents to the reader gripping, transforming, faith-building, awe-inspiring, highly descriptive word pictures of Jesus Christ...that are intended to be...



...an anchor for our souls.

I invite you to stand as we read today's Scripture passage.



1:9 – I, 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.

John identified himself to the seven churches as their brother and companion. In what?

In the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance. . . "that are ours in Jesus"

The word suffering in v.9 is "thlipsis," which literally means tribulation.

You and I need to know that when John penned the words of this letter, the followers of Jesus had already experienced tribulation for approximately thirty years.

State persecution of the followers of Jesus had begun during the reign of Nero (54-68 AD) and had continued through the reigns of the next six Roman emperors.

- Nero (54-68 AD)
- Galba (68-69 AD)
- Otho (January-April 69 AD)
- Aulus Vitellius (July-December 69 AD)
- Vespasian (69-79 AD)
- Titus (79-81 AD)
- Domitian (81-96 AD)



We need to let that number sink in.

It was not thirty hours.

Not thirty days.

Not thirty weeks.

Not thirty months.

Thirty years.

Can you imagine living under persecution for that long???

During the reign of Domitian, when John wrote this letter, things had become even more difficult for the followers of Jesus.

Roman

The worship of deceased emperors had been practiced in the empire for years. But Domitian was the first emperor to demand that he be worshiped while he was alive.

Even so...for the ordinary person... in the Roman empire this was no problem. Domitian would have been just another of many gods to whom they gave homage.

But for John, and the followers of Jesus of that day... they could not and would not do this.

For them there was only one Lord.

These ruins are the remains of the temple of Domitian found in Ephesus.



What Domitian required and what the state enforced was that everyone had to go to his Temple, take a pinch of incense, put it onto the altar and pay homage to him as God, saying, "Caesar is Lord."

The Christians refusal to do this made them an enemy of the Empire, and resulted in them being ridiculed, slandered, harassed, and ostracized.

Some lost their property.

Some were imprisoned.

Some were martyred.

What is the connection between these three – tribulation, kingdom and patient endurance?

We must ask this because John was deliberate in linking them.



Repeatedly throughout this letter, the Revelation of Jesus Christ... the Holy Spirit will impress upon the reader, how different the rule of God is from the kingdoms of mankind.

It seems counter-intuitive, but the kingdom of God, grows and spreads in this present time...through the believers' patient endurance of tribulation, persecution, suffering.

Tertullian wrote of this paradox.



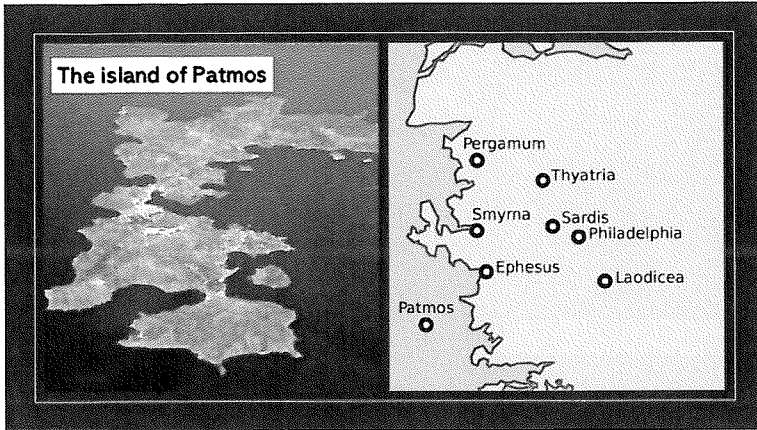
The blood of martyrs is  
the seed of the church.  
Tertullian

In this present time, it is  
normal for the follower of Jesus  
to experience tribulation  
To be in Christ is to face  
what our precious Jesus faced  
1 Peter 2:21 - to this you were  
called!  
3:9 - " " "  
3:14 -  
4:1 -

John was probably in his mid-80's when he wrote this letter sometime around 95-96 AD.

He wrote it from the island of Patmos, where he had been exiled... because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.





v.10 – On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet...

Because it is mentioned, we need to note that this vision happened on the Lord’s Day. *Not Dominions Day. Our LORD rose from the dead.*

For the believer, we know the Lord’s Day is special.

This is the day the church of Jesus worships together... on the first day of the week – in celebration of Jesus’ resurrection...and of his victory over sin and death. Even in exile, John worshiped on Sunday.

John writes that he was in the Spirit. *What does that mean?*

John’s experience on the Lord’s Day was like that of Ezekiel when God revealed himself to him and called him to be prophet.



*to be able to hear God's voice  
to be able to receive God's message & then speak it.*

Similar to Ezekiel, what John was about to write, he did so through the Spirit’s enabling power.

There are several repeated patterns in this letter. Here in our passage for today we encounter the first one.



A number of times, John will write that he heard something and then turned to see what he heard.

In v.10, John writes that he heard behind him a loud voice.

It was not a whisper.

This voice was loud like a trumpet - it was unmistakably loud and clear.

Then in v.12-13... he turned to see the voice.

Next week we will unpack the vision that John saw.

For today let's focus on what the voice said and its meaning.

v.11 – Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches:

to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

Last week, <sup>we</sup> ~~we~~ considered that when John expressed his desire for the churches to experience the grace and mercy of God, he was deliberate in his description of the Three who are One.

v.4

The Father...who is and who was and who is to come. — v. 4a

The Spirit... who is seven-fold... and who is before God's throne. — v. 4b.

The Son...who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, the ruler of the kings of the earth. — v. 5

*The same significance of the number 7. applies to the Spirit + ~~the~~ to the number of churches*  
~~The description of the Spirit as being seven-fold carries the same significance as this letter being addressed to seven churches.~~

The number seven in the Scripture represents completeness.

In this letter we will read of...

**Seven churches.**

**Seven spirits.**

**Seven lampstands.**

**Seven stars.**

**Seven seals.**

**A lamb with seven horns and seven eyes.**

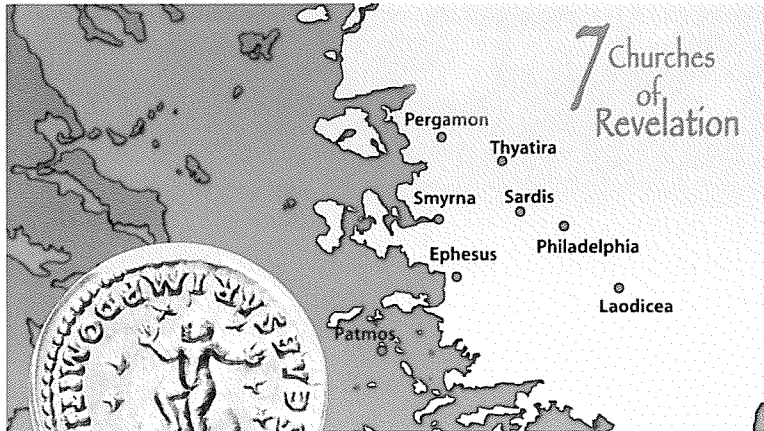
**Seven trumpets blown by seven angels.**

**Seven plagues.**

**Seven bowls of wrath.**

Let me say it again...in every instance, in this letter, the number seven communicates completeness.

What then, was being communicated... by the statement of the voice.... that this letter... was to be written and sent to seven specifically named churches?



*Side note -* It was the voice whom John heard, who determined the churches to which this letter was to be sent...there were more than seven. *in the province of Asia*

The message communicated to these seven churches was time-sensitive and specific to them.

It addressed issues they were facing and circumstances which they were living through.

**Therefore, if we are to understand this letter, we will need to endeavor to understand what the message... spoken to them... meant to them.**

*But why seven?*

But because seven churches were identified, and seven signifies completeness, we are meant to understand that the message to them was intended for all of Jesus' church... in every generation and in every locale.

~~This is not the only instance of this happening.~~

~~The letter to the Philippians was written specifically to the church at Philippi.~~

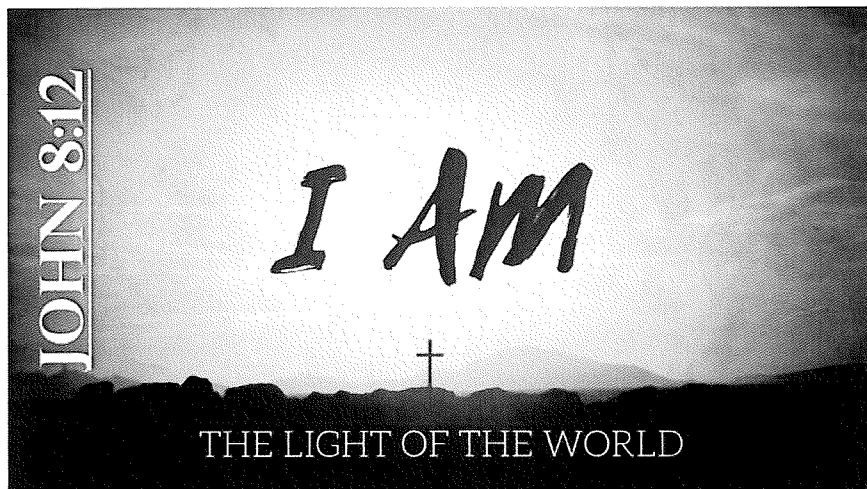
~~But its message was also intended for all followers of Jesus...in this present time.~~

**Therefore, we will endeavor as we study this letter to understand... what Jesus is saying to us... when he spoke to them.**

v.12 – I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands...

What are these seven golden lampstands?  
 Thankfully, Jesus answered that question.  
 Look at v.20c – “...the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”  
 Interesting is it not... that a church is portrayed as a lampstand.

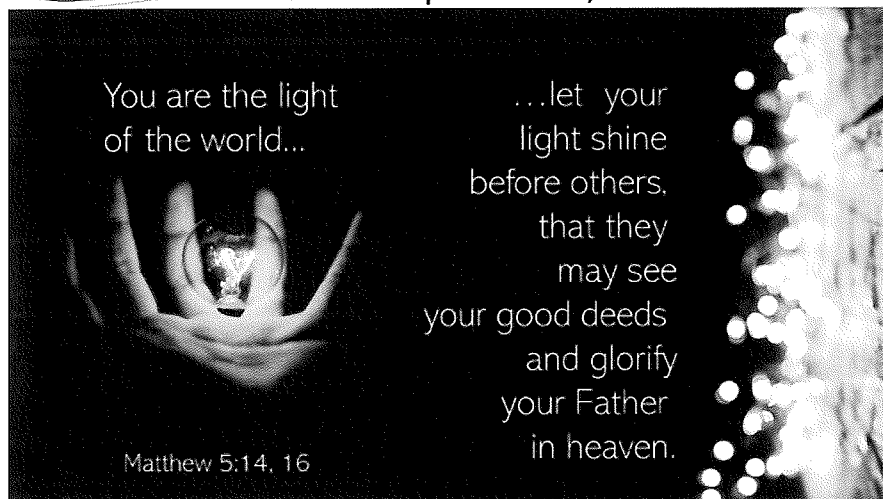
Think about what Jesus said in John 8:12...



Jesus illumines the darkened hearts and minds.... of all peoples, regardless of their language or nationality.

He reveals God to the world and the salvation freely offered through faith in him.

*But the church is a lampstand.*  
*This is why*  
 Because of their relationship with him, Jesus told his followers...



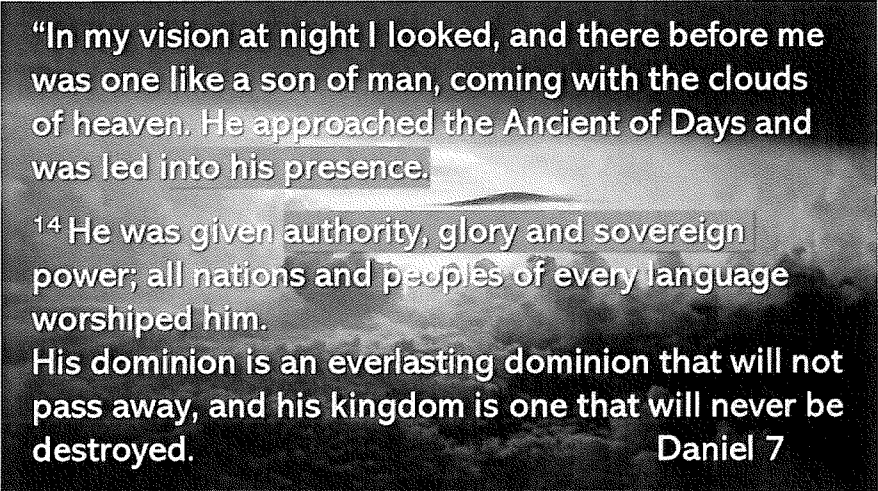
*We are a reflected light*  
*In us the life of Jesus is seen by our deeds*

This description by Jesus of his followers being the light of the world and then this picture of the church, being a lampstand... it is incredible, both in its privilege and in the risk taken by Jesus.

*What a great privilege!  
 What a risk!*

1:13 – ...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. This title, used by John, “someone like a son of man,” would have immediately been understood by his original audience.

It came from Daniel 7.



**“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.**

**<sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him.**

**His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.**

**Daniel 7**

Darrell Johnson writes, “[The Son of Man] refers to the central figure of history, to the One to whom all the kingdoms of the world are given, to the One to whom all peoples of every age owe allegiance.” p.42

And this title, “Son of man” was the one most used by Jesus to describe himself.

**Matthew 8:20**

Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

**Matthew 9:6**

But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.”

Matthew 11:19

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.

Matthew 12:40

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 17:12

But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."

Matthew 17:22

When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

Matthew 19:28

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 20:28

Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 25:31

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne.

Matthew 26:2

As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.

Matthew 26:24

The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.

Matthew 26:45

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners.”

The challenge which was faced by many when they encountered Jesus during his years of his public ministry and heard him speak of himself as the “Son of Man” ...



... was his ordinariness.



As Isaiah had foretold....



Eugene Peterson described the incongruity of Jesus in this way:

**“Jesus juxtaposed  
the most glorious title available to him  
with the most menial of life-styles  
in the culture.  
He talked like a king  
and acted like a slave.  
He preached with high authority  
and lived like a vagabond.”**

Peterson, p.30

This was what confused and angered so many.

Jesus did not act like they thought the son of man should act.

But this was who he was.

And Jesus was insistent that this title was to be understood by who he was and how he acted among them.

Does this not continue to be a source of frustration and anger for people today? They cannot understand why Jesus would associate with the like of those who make up his church, nor why he does what they think he shouldn't and not do what they think he should.

Did you notice where the son of man was when John turned to look?

v.13 – he saw him **among** the lampstands.



Is it not incredible that Jesus is not above his church looking down?  
Nor is he outside looking in?  
He is present with his church.

*To encourage! To sanctify!*

This is why when Jesus spoke a message to each of the seven churches in the province of Asia, he could say to each one, "I know..."

**2:2 – I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance...**

**2:9 – I know your affliction and your poverty...**

**2:13 – I know where you live – where Satan has his throne...**

**2:19 – I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance...**

**3:1 – I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead...**

**3:8 – I know your deeds...I know you have little strength...**

**3:15 – I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot...**

Jesus knows his church  
He knows Sooke Baptist.  
He knows our hard work.  
He knows our perseverance.  
He knows our love for him and one another.  
He knows our faith.

He also knows our struggles.  
He knows our fears.  
He knows our questions and doubts.  
He knows our pain.  
He knows the spiritual opposition we face.

And he is here...among us...when we gather. — *to encourage!* *to sanctify!*

We are his friends...and... his beloved.  
He delights in us.  
As incredible as it is...he seeks our fellowship.

The Table reminds us of all of these things...of all that is ours...because of...the sacrifice made by Jesus.

*He is among us... because of the cross.*

The cross is the enduring assurance that you and I are loved by God.  
The Father did not spare his Son.  
Nor did the Son ask to be rescued.  
In love he bore our sins.  
In us he makes known the glory of his grace.

The Table provides opportunity...

...to state our love for the Father, Son and Spirit

... to ask the Spirit to search our heart and reveal if there is sin that needs to be confessed...sin that would diminish our fellowship with God...

... to confess our sins, assured that the Father is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

O praise his name.

Our precious Savior and God is and will be the theme of our praise, now and forever more!

### The Blessing

See the call to worship