Here we have the risen Lord Jesus Christ speaking directly and personally from heaven to the apostle John who was imprisoned on the island of Patmos. Notice that the words he speaks are intended for us: “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches” (22:16). Here we have what Jesus wants his church to know.

Notice how Jesus tells us what he wants us to know: “I, Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you...” (22:16). The you is the apostle John to whom this revelation was given by our Lord. Christ sends his angel to testify to John so that John can write what he has seen and heard for the churches.

It is not the case that God has given an angel to each one of us, so that we each have our own revelation. Christ has revealed all that we need to know through the Old and New Testament Scriptures that he has given to us through the apostles and prophets.

What Jesus reveals here is that he is the bright morning star. Astronomers refer to the planet, Venus, as the morning star, which catches the rays of the sun just before dawn. When the morning star appears, it is an indication of the dawning of a new day.

Jesus Christ was born into the world as a baby. He was despised and rejected and nailed to a cross. But he rose triumphant from the grave and ascended on high. And he said to his disciples, “I will come again...” (John 14:3).

Jesus is the bright morning star. When he appears in glory, the long night of human history with its relentless drumbeat of sickness, sin, violence, suffering and death will give way to the dawn of a new day. So this is a marvelous statement of hope.

Jesus is described as “the morning star” three times in the New Testament and in each of these places there is a particular application of the hope that he brings.

**Jesus Christ Is the Light of the World**

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star” (Revelation 22:16).
What are “these things” that Jesus wants his church to know? They refer to the entire book of Revelation, which is both an explanation of the world in which we live today and a prophecy of what is yet to come. The book of Revelation lays out the great forces of evil that are already at work in the world and will be unleashed with even greater ferocity in the future.

Revelation poses and answers one central question: Who can deal with the relentless evil that stalks human history and in the last days will be embodied by a ruler who will be the antithesis of all that is good?

Turn with me for a moment to Revelation 13, where we are told about a beast that rises out of the sea. The reference is to a person who, more than any other dictator in human history, will be the embodiment of evil. This person is sometimes referred to as “the antichrist” or “the man of lawlessness,” but here this person is depicted as a monstrous beast.

Notice what is said about the mouth of the beast: “The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words... It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven” (Rev. 13:5-6).

Here you have, in the last day, a person who is the embodiment of evil who rises up on the stage of history. He hates God. He hates heaven. And he hates the people who live there. This beast becomes very powerful: “To it [the beast] the dragon [the devil] gave his power and his throne and great authority... and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?’” (Rev. 13:2, 4).

There is a great movement in the culture and notice how they respond: “Who can fight against the beast?” The people who worship the beast are quite sure that no one can. This is the great question in every generation. Who can fight against the dark forces of evil that keep rising up in this world?

That is surely a question that many are asking today. What is the future for our children and our grandchildren? Staggering scenes of violence and terrorism have been played out before us in the past year alone. Who can overcome the relentless evil that blights the world?

The answer is given in Revelation 17, where we read about ten kings (17:12) who hand over their power to the beast, because they are of one mind with him: “They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings...” (17:14). If you boil down the entire message of this book to two words, it would be: “Jesus wins!”

There will come a time when it will seem that the whole earth will be covered by darkness, so we should not be surprised when we see manifestations of hatred for Jesus and for his people. Jesus says, “I am the bright and morning star,” and when the morning star shines a new day will dawn.
The great optimism of our secular world is based on an evolutionary view of life that says we are all good, and that every generation will be better than the one that went before. And it is only a matter of time until the world becomes a place of universal peace and joy. But what we read in the Bible is very different. Jesus Christ says, “I am the bright morning star.”

Hope for this world does not lie in the next generation or the one after that getting it right! The light of a new day will not dawn for the world by any of us getting it right, even a thousand generations from now. Hope for the world lies in Jesus Christ. It flows from him and through him, and it is found in him.

**Jesus Christ Is the Light for His People**

We have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts... (2 Peter 1:19).

Here we have another reference to Jesus as the morning star, and we are told that when the days dawns, the morning star (that is Jesus) will rise in our hearts – Peter is writing to Christian believers.

Now “the day” refers to the glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. “They will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26).

That’s the day that Peter is talking about. But notice what Peter says next. You would expect him to say, “Until the days dawns and the morning star rises over the world. There will be a new creation!” That is the wonderful truth we find in Revelation 22, but that is not what he says here. When the days dawns the morning star will rise *in your hearts*.

A new day will dawn for the world. Evil will be judged and removed forever. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. God’s redeemed people will be ushered into it. And Peter says, “The morning star will rise in your hearts.”

Peter is describing a profoundly personal experience. What is he referring to? All of us know what it is to walk through dark places in our lives. Being a Christian does not protect you from the painful realities of life in this world. We sometimes know what it is to sit in darkness: “When I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me” (Mic. 7:8).

For some of you the darkness is a loneliness that is hard to bear. For others it is an injustice that has never been recognized or put right, and perhaps in this life it never will be. For someone else it is the mystery of why God allowed a great loss in your life. For someone else, it may be a sense of shame that came upon you because what another person did to you, or
disappointment that what you hoped for did not come to pass. Here is the promise of God to you: The morning star will rise in your heart.

A scholar by the name of George B. Caird has a marvelous comment on this: “In the realm of the spirit [the soul, not the Holy Spirit], it is not the passage of time that brings daybreak and the end of darkness, but the morning star dawning in your hearts.”

People sometimes say that time is the great healer, but we all know that is not true. The truth is that time merely dulls the pain. Christ himself is the great healer. His presence is our light. When the morning star rises in your heart, you will be able to say, “The darkness has gone and it is light for me now!”

Until that day comes, you have the Scriptures. Your Word is a lamp to me feet and a light to my path! God has given us sufficient light through his Word, until we have the full light of his presence. As long as we live in this dark world we need the lamp of the Scriptures. But when the day dawns, faith will be turned to sight, and we will enjoy the full light of his presence.

Here is the hope for every person who belongs to Jesus Christ: Where there has been darkness for you, there will be light! That day will come! When the day dawns, the morning star will rise in your heart. Until that day comes, hold on to the promise that God has given to you in the Scriptures.

**Jesus Christ Is the Light of Heaven**

“I will give him the morning star.” (Revelation 2:28).

This promise was given first to believers in the church at a place called Thyatira. These Christians lived in the shadow of great evil. Christ calls them to stand firm and overcome, and then he gives this marvelous promise: To the one who overcomes, *I will give him the morning star...* (Rev. 2:28).

This is Jesus Christ speaking, and he says of the overcomer, “I will give him the morning star.” Christ gave himself for us and here he says that he will give himself to us. Christ is the great reward of his people.

Suppose someone you love very deeply lives in another part of the country or another part of the world. It has been a long time since you have seen them. One day your phone rings and they say that they are coming home for Christmas. Your joy lies not in what they might give you as a gift, but simply in the fact that they will be with you and you will be with them.

That’s how it is for a true Christian with Jesus Christ. The great gift of heaven is not a bunch of goodies that we will find there, it is Jesus Christ himself! When you arrive in heaven, your mind
will not be taken up with the gifts that he may give you, your joy will be that at last you are in the presence and the company of the one you love.

Last Friday I had the honor of giving the commencement address at the graduation ceremony at Trinity International University. It was a marvelous event and at the end we sang the University hymn, the words of which were written by Lois Fleming, a member of our church who serves in our choir. Here are the words of the last verse:

*Transform us, Holy Spirit to serve our risen Lord.*  
*Reflect His perfect beauty, in thought, and deed and word.*  
*Wholehearted in your service – empower our work O Lord;*  
*Until we stand in glory, Your presence, our reward.*  

Christ himself is the reward of his people. If you are his, Christ will be yours. You will know him and enjoy him forever. To the one who overcomes, Christ says, “I will give you the morning star.”

**Jesus Christ Is the Light for All Who Will Come**

“I am... the bright and morning star.” The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” (Revelation 22:16-7)

This Lord Jesus Christ who is the hope of the world, the light of his people, and the joy of heaven, offers himself to all without exception. Who invites you to come?

The Spirit and the Bride say “Come.” The Spirit here is the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to lead people to faith in Jesus. The Spirit says, “Come!” God himself is inviting you to come and receive all that Christ came into the world to give.

The Bride says “Come!” The Bride is the church. If you are not yet a committed follower of Jesus Christ it is very likely that a Christian somewhere has been praying for you and longing that would come, so everything that is in Jesus Christ would be yours.

What are you holding onto in your life that is so good that it would be worth missing out on all that is found in Jesus Christ?

It is my privilege to speak for the Bride and invite you to come. Come to the one who offers the water of life without price! (Rev. 22:17).

---

1 Lois Fleming, *University Hymn* (sung to the tune of *The Church’s One Foundation* by Samuel Wesley), 2014.