Christ in The Midst of The Candlesticks

"Let them Make Me a Sanctuary"

Introduction:

In our series of studies regarding the steps of Christ as depicted in the sanctuary, we have now arrived at the first apartment of the tabernacle called the holy place wherein we find the seven branched candlestick. Let's discover how the candlestick represents Christ's ministry for us as well as contemplate our response to His step and how we follow Him. We will also be investigating how the antichrist has corrupted the teachings regarding the candlestick. "Anti" is defined as "opposing and exalting" oneself in the place of God, as found in 2Thessalonians 2:4, and we shall discover how the Roman Catholic Church has indeed corrupted the teachings the candlestick represents.

We are following Christ's steps through the sanctuary as found in the last book of the Bible written for the very last days to prepare us for the final antichrist crisis and Christ's return for His church. We have already studied Christ's birth as found in Revelation 12:1-5 in the study "Christ in The Camp of Israel." Our next study focused on the death of "Christ at The Altar of Sacrifice," and how we are drawn to the love portrayed there motivating us to feel our need of a Saviour and repent of our sins. We then studied the resurrection of Christ in our study of "Christ at The Laver of Brass," and how it typified our baptism, our dying to self, and becoming a new creature.

Christ's step in the candlestick:

In the following passage found in Revelation chapter one, we find the descriptions of Christ who is found in the midst of the candlesticks which represent the church eras from the time Christ ascended to His Father's throne, until Christ returns to gather His church home. Christ had promised He would be with us until the end of the world, as represented as being "in the midst of the seven candlesticks." Revelation 1:20 interprets the seven candlesticks as the seven churches.

> Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11) Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12) And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13) And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14) His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; 15) And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. 16) And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18) I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. 19) Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; 20) The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Christ's promise:

Below we read of Christ's promise to be with us unto the end of the world, and that He will not leave us comfortless.

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Christ is the light of the world:

When the earthly sanctuary where God desired to dwell among His people for the purpose of revealing His character, and restoring the broken relationship between God and man, was not discerned by His people, He devised another plan. He would send His Son to live among us that all who would believe in Him might be saved. Just as the candlestick in the holy place was to burn continually giving light to the sanctuary, Christ ministry was to be a continual light for the world. It is only through Christ that we have life as well as light.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Christ's life was to illuminate the world, but Christ is also called the Word of God which also is a light to lighten the world.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2) The same was in the beginning with God. … 4) In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. …14) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Psalms 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, preparing the people for He who was the true light of the world. Christ became the light of the world through His incarnation that through Him all men might believe.

John 1:7 The same (John) came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. 8) He (John) was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9) That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

Paul also reveals the purpose of God's sending His only begotten Son, the express image of His Father as the light of the world by reflecting the Father's glory as the light of the world and representing His character that all might have eternal life.

2Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4) In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5) For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6) For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4) I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Just as God's people could not discern His character through the sanctuary teachings, the church could not comprehend the light as reflected in the life of Christ.

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

It is through "the deceitfulness of sin," by taking "pleasure in unrighteousness," that men prefer darkness to light.

2Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, (the antichrist) whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

It is not how much we know, but what we reject and not just what we reject, but why we reject the light that brings condemnation and death.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Hosea gives us some insight into why those who reject the knowledge of the truth of the mercy of God are destroyed.

Hosea 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. … 6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Our response to Christ's step:

As long as Christ was in the world, He was the Light, but because men rejected the Light, the next plan in the salvation of man was to have His church become the light of the world.

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36) While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.

Acts 13:47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15) Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Christ admonished us to let our light shine before men. He warned us if we hide the light we've received, the light will go out and become darkness. We must be fully committed to receiving the light revealed in the word of God lest focusing on evil causes our light to become darkness.

> Luke 11:33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. 34) The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. 35) Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. 36) If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

By reflecting on Christ, the Word of God, we will be changed into the same image of Christ.

> 2Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

When we are changed into the likeness of Christ, we will arise and shine, giving glory to God by witnessing to the world the power of God to change darkness into light.

> Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2) For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. 3) And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

The very last sign to be revealed in the gospel plan that will allow Christ to come, is the reproduction of the character of God in His people.

> Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

The corruption of the teachings by the antichrist:

The antichrist seeks to replace the True Light by claiming to be the only light able to interpret Scripture.

Second Vatican Council, 1965 — Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum, paragraph 10:

"But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1992 — paragraphs 85 and 100:

"The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone."

And: "The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him."

Council of Trent, Profession of Faith (Creed of Pius IV), 1564:

"I also admit the Holy Scriptures according to that sense which Holy Mother Church hath held and doth hold, to whom it belongeth to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

First Vatican Council, 1870 — Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chapter 2:

"In matters of faith and morals, appertaining to the building up of Christian doctrine, that is to be held as the true sense of Holy Scripture which our holy Mother Church hath held and holds, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; and, therefore, that it is permitted to no one to

interpret the Sacred Scripture contrary to this sense or likewise contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Catechism, paragraph 119, quoting Dei Verbum 12:

"All that has been said about the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgement of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God."

Pope Leo XIII, 1893 — Encyclical Providentissimus Deus:

"St. Irenaeus long since laid down, that where the charismata of God were, there the truth was to be learnt, and that Holy Scripture was safely interpreted by those who had the Apostolic succession."

And again: "the sense of Holy Scripture can nowhere be found incorrupt outside of the Church, and cannot be expected to be found in writers who, being without the true faith, only gnaw the bark of the Sacred Scripture, and never attain its pith."

Council of Trent, 1546 — Decree on the Edition and Use of the Sacred Books, Fourth Session:

"In order to restrain petulant spirits, it decrees that no one, relying on his own skill, shall — in matters of faith and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine — wresting the Sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said Sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which Holy Mother Church — to whom it belongeth to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures — hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; even though such interpretations were never intended to be at any time published."

One nuance worth noting: these texts say the Church alone has the authentic or authoritative interpretive office — not that no one outside her may ever read or study the text. The Catechism even quotes Augustine: "I would not believe in the Gospel, had not the authority of the Catholic Church already moved me." That's the sharper formulation — Scripture's credibility itself rests on the Church's prior authority.

Summary:

This study continues a sanctuary series tracing Christ's steps through the tabernacle, focusing on the seven-branched candlestick in the holy place. It symbolizes Christ's ongoing ministry and the church's call to be light, while arguing that the antichrist (2Thessalonians 2:4) has corrupted these truths through the Roman Catholic Church's claim of exclusive interpretive authority.

Earlier studies covered Christ's birth, death at the altar, and resurrection at the laver. The series follows Revelation's sanctuary steps.

Revelation 1:10–20 portrays Christ in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, that is the seven church eras from His ascension until His return. He is present among His people, fulfilling His promises to be with them always (Matthew 28:20), not to leave them comfortless (John 14:18).

The candlestick's continual light points to Christ as the true Light of the world (John 8:12). He is the Word in whom is life and light (John 1:1–14; Psalm 119:105). The knowledge of God's character shines in the face of Jesus Christ (2Corinthians 4:6). Those who reject this light love darkness because their deeds are evil (John 3:19–21) and they are destroyed for lack of knowledge through the deceitfulness of unrighteousness (Hosea 4:6; 2Thessalonians 2:10).

After Christ left, He intended for the church to reflect the light of His Father's character (Matthew 5:14–16). Believers must let their light shine, walk in the light, and be transformed into His image by beholding His glory, that is His character (2Corinthians 3:18). The gospel must be preached worldwide as a witness before the end, marked by the reproduction of Christ's character in us (Matthew 24:14).

Catholicism has replaced the true light by asserting sole authority to interpret Scripture. It cites *Dei Verbum*, the Catechism, Trent, Vatican I, and Leo XIII, which entrust authentic biblical interpretation exclusively to the Pope, bishops and priests, who forbid contrary private interpretations. Such claims constitute an antichrist corruption that places the Papal authority in the place of Christ's authority and the open Word.