

To Dream & Stop Dreaming: The Epistemology of Worship & Revelation

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Revelation 1

Peter Hiatt

“Higher” by Creed

When dreaming I'm guided through another world
Time and time again
At sunrise I fight to stay asleep
'Cause I don't want to leave the comfort of this place
'Cause there's a hunger, a longing to escape
From the life I live when I'm awake

So let's go there
Let's make our escape
Come on, let's go there
Let's ask can we stay?

Chorus:
Can you take me higher?
To the place where blind men see
Can you take me higher?
To the place with golden streets

Although I would like our world to change
It helps me to appreciate
Those nights and those dreams
But, my friend, I'd sacrifice all those nights
If I could make the Earth and my dreams the same
The only difference is
To let love replace all our hate

So let's go there
Let's make our escape
Come on, let's go there
Let's ask can we stay?

Chorus

Bridge:
Up high I feel like I'm alive for the very first time
Up high I'm strong enough to take these dreams
And make them mine

Up high I'm strong enough to take these dreams
And make them mine

Chorus

“Lord Jesus, we thank You that that song was, I believe, the VH1 song of the year, that these guys are being nominated for a couple Grammy’s, that they won all kinds of awards, and that it was Billboard’s #4 or so song of the year. Because, Lord God, that means there are *millions* upon *millions* of people who are singing this song. They don’t even know it’s a prayer.

“But, God, I pray that You would answer their prayer even though they don’t know Who they are singing it to. We thank You that we know exactly Who we are singing it to. Lord Jesus, You said You *will* . . .

take us higher,
open our blind eyes,
and take us to a place where
streets are paved with gold.

“And You are the one who whispers, ‘Awake, O sleepy one, and I will give you life.’ Thank You, and it’s our prayer right now, Jesus. In Your name we pray, Amen.”

Revelation 1:9-20: I, John, your brother, who share with you in Jesus the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast; his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters;

In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand upon me saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Now write what you see, what is and what is to take place hereafter. As for the mystery of the seven stars which 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. . . .”

Wow! That's pretty incredible.
Do you believe it? Do you?
 You believe it as a metaphor, right?
 Because you don't *actually* believe
 Jesus had a sharp, two-edged sword
 Coming out of His mouth!
How could He talk?

Do you *actually* believe He had seven stars in His hand? **Do you *actually* believe Lookout Mountain Community Church is a *lampstand*? Was Jesus actually on Patmos? He is at the right hand of the Father on high . . . so was He actually at Patmos or was it more like a *dream*?**

Dreams are important. Psychologists say dreams are critical. They are metaphors that help us work through realities. But dreams are not real . . . are they?

In a recent Rocky Mountain News article on people's belief in the paranormal, a Professor Baker is quoted as saying, "Modern Americans aren't so different than primitive humans who thought that when lightning struck it was God throwing thunderbolts. So many things about the world and nature are absolutely mysterious to them. [Do you remember Jesus said, "I will show you the mystery"?] The desire to find supernatural explanations for natural events is still with us, and will be until more people get good basic scientific educations."

Professor Baker and Professor Preston talk about how important it is for folks who believe in things like UFO's and crystals, and folks who are fundamentalist Christians, to get good, *basic*, scientific education. **What *is* scientific education?**

The scientific method verifies hypotheses
 that can be tested and comprehended
 in a controlled environment.
It studies this world of space and time.

When I was a teenager, Mark Reinke, who is in my small group now, would sometimes come to speak to our youth group pastored by Gary Reddish. I remember he told the youth group at some point that he had actually conclusively disproved the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ using the latest, cutting-edge, scientific methodology.

You see, Mark Reinke had obtained several laboratory mice from Colorado State University . . .

- He established a controlled environment, which simulated in great detail the ancient city of Jerusalem circa 33 A.D.

- He then took some of the laboratory mice and swore them into the ancient office of the Roman Praetorian Guard. He named one of the mice Herod, another Caiaphus, and another Pilate.
- Then he took another group of mice and actually circumcised these mice . . . a very delicate procedure. He circumcised them according to the ancient rituals of the Torah.
- He then dressed these mice in first century Palestinian garb.
- He took twelve of these mice and fed them a diet of bread and wine.
- Also simulating the gospel account in great detail for the advancement of human understanding, he crucified one of these mice. This mouse had been previously designated as the “Jesus Mouse.”
- Then he took the Jesus Mouse to a small, papier-mâché tomb and laid the body there.

After three days Mark returned with great anticipation. And the Jesus Mouse! . . . was still dead. **The Jesus Mouse was dead! I’m sorry to shatter your faith, but there you have it!** I’m going to go watch football. See ya!

“Wait a minute. Well . . . that’s *stupid*.”

Yes! It is stupid! But it’s no more stupid than any of the “scientific arguments” that have been advanced in the twentieth century against miracle, revelation, and God. And we have swallowed them hook, line, and sinker.

Even Christians have come to believe that the only things that are really real are things that can be demonstrated with the scientific method; that is, things that can be **comprehended and tested in a controlled environment** . . . space- and time- tested.

Satan took Jesus to the top of the temple and said, “Let’s run a little test. Let’s test the hypothesis. Throw yourself down, and we will see if Scripture is true, if angels will come and bear you up.” And Jesus said, **“Thou shalt not put the Lord your God to the test!”**

This last century argued that the only things you *can* believe are things you put to the test. And Satan smiles, for that means we cannot believe in God. **We may know more facts than any people in all the world . . . a million facts . . .** and none of them have any meaning.

So our children kill themselves today
at an unprecedented rate.
Teenagers sing, “Take me higher, take me higher

to a place where blind men see and I can see.”
The adults say, “Nice thought . . .
beautiful metaphor . . . sweet dream.”
The Lord God thunders, “*Do not* put me to the test.”

Why? I suppose it’s because it is insanely arrogant to act as if God were a laboratory mouse. Yet even more than that, it’s profoundly stupid. **For if God *were* to act like a laboratory mouse and submit to our test, we wouldn’t believe it was God.** What would we do? Probably crucify Him. And if He rose from the dead, we still wouldn’t believe, because it wasn’t a controlled environment or a repeatable event.

Anything really good can’t be proved by science anyway . . . like goodness itself. **What scientific laboratory has ever discovered *goodness*? Or justice? Or truth? Or beauty? Or love? For that matter, the scientific method cannot even be proved by the scientific method!** Any real scientist knows that.

That’s why I don’t think the Rocky Mountain News quoted real science. One of the men was a professor of psychology; the other was a professor of English, not a physicist or a natural scientist. They don’t understand science, and more than that, they haven’t been paying attention. For in this last century, scientists have said some incredible things . . .

- They discovered the universe had a beginning—a Big Bang.

It was quite a shock to learn that **15 billion years ago, relative to us, the universe sprang into existence.** But now, if you were standing at the *point* of the Big Bang, it would be more like about seven days. “Why seven days?” Well, because time is relative to the speed of light and specific gravity. Do the math like the physicists at MIT.

Even saying “the point of the Big Bang” is a misnomer because, speaking ontologically, ***before the Big Bang there were no points because points are places in space and there was no space, according to science. No space and no time, so then what?*** It must have been a *who* . . .

- Science has also demonstrated that at the subatomic level the quantum state of matter mysteriously depends not on a *what* but a *who*—a person who perceives it.

Rich Passamaneck was at the last service. While the band was playing he told me this amazing story. (He was a physicist at Cal Tech, and now he does all kinds of things.)

He said, “Peter, years ago I was in a meeting with several other physicists and Carl Sagan. Carl started going on his spiel about . . . ‘the universe . . . all that is and was and ever shall be.’ [Remember how he used to do that?] One of the

physicists in the room held up his hand and said, ‘Carl, stop. We are not your TV audience. Don’t give us that stuff.’”

It must really be hard to be a materialist these days when science has shown that matter itself is like a dream. It was quite some time ago (Carl Sagan should have known) that Albert Einstein said, “Reality is an illusion albeit a very persistent one.” He also said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” Do you see what he is saying?

Dreams are somehow more real than fact! That’s wild.

Have you ever had a dream that you were dreaming? I mean by that, have you ever dreamt that you were dreaming, but the dream in your dream is actually a person in the waking world trying to wake you up? How do you know what in a dream is *dream* and what is *real*? Even when something just wakes you up, how do you know?

When we are wakened from a dream,
the thing that wakes us is
a reality that won’t fit in our dream.
My dream can all be explained by *me*.

I’m the *sport* of my dreams;
I’m the *center* of my dreams;
I’m the *source* of my dreams.

So, yes!—some of them are very *weird*, but they all have their source in me; they all emanate from me. It’s all about *me*. But when someone or something wakes me, my mind can’t make that reality from the outside waking world *fit* into the interior reality of my own dream world.

If you wake someone too quickly from a dream, you can kill him, just with the shock. Did you notice that John fell down as though dead until Jesus touched him and said, “Fear not”? The loving thing to do when waking someone from a dream is to wake him up slowly. You do that for your kids. You whisper in their ear, “Sweetheart . . . hey, buddy . . . you’re having a bad dream. Wake up. It’s a bad dream.”

To the dreamer in his dream there is a gradual realization that the whisper in his ear can’t be explained by the dream. For a while it’s like the whisper is a part of the dream—an incongruent part of the dream.

So this is my question:

Are there things in your world that are incongruent?
That don’t fit? That can’t be explained by this world?
Paradoxes, mysteries, things you can’t comprehend?

Maybe they are *real*, and this entire world is the dream. Maybe it’s somebody whispering in your ear, “Sweetheart, wake up, and I will give you light, and I will give you life. Awake, O sweet one.” Wow!

About those people who believe God is actually somehow behind thunder, Professor Baker said, “So many things about the world and nature are absolutely mysterious to them.” **Maybe that’s because *they* are waking up!** . . . and Professor Baker is entirely enchanted by his own dream world.

No mystery . . .
No meaning . . .
No paradox . . .
No wonder . . .
Because he’s entirely asleep.

John records in his gospel (and I think it’s the same John who received the revelation) that during one point in Jesus’ ministry a voice came out of the sky and said, “I have glorified it [his name] and I will glorify it again.” Some standing there said it thundered. Others said, “That was *more* than a thunder!” Who was dreaming and who was awake?

What I am saying is, maybe Jesus really *did* appear to John. Maybe Jesus really *did* have a sharp, two-edged sword coming out of his mouth. **Maybe Lookout Mountain Community Church really *is* a lampstand. Maybe it’s not just a metaphor.**

**And the mystery, paradox, and wonder
Don’t mean it’s *less* real than this world,
But that it’s *more* real than this world.**

How can we know things *more real* than this world? For that matter, how can we ever know anything in *this* world. Science can’t even explain itself!

In 1884 a man named Edwin Abbot published a book called Flatland: A Romance in Many Dimensions. Some of you may have actually seen the movie, because the book was made into a cartoon movie to show to Jr. Highers in order to explain to them some of the concepts of geometry.

But Edwin Abbot didn’t write the book in order to explain geometry as much as he wrote the book to help people believe in God. I never read the book, but I did see the movie. The movie is about a land called “Flatland,” an entirely two-dimensional world. The beings of Flatland can only perceive two dimensions.

One of the persons in Flatland has a revelation. For a few moments, he is lifted out of Flatland and can see three dimensions! When he goes back to Flatland and tries to explain what he saw, everybody thinks he is dreaming. Why? Because he says things like, “It’s not a simple square, it’s a *cube!*” and “That’s not just a *circle*, it’s a *sphere!*”

And Jesus said, “You’re not just a church, you’re a lampstand”—a paradox—a mystery. But we Flatlanders say, “Nice metaphor. Nice dream, Jesus.”

If we were Flatlanders, our world would look like this [holding a thin board approximately 2' x 3']. We would only be able to perceive two dimensions: squares, circles, triangles, etc. Now let's suppose that a three-dimensional object entered our world and passed through it, like this sphere that looks remarkably like a basketball.

If this sphere passed through our world, what would we Flatlanders see? A circle! What would we call it? A miracle. Why? Because all at once a point appeared in our world, then it grew into a circle, then it shrunk back to a point, and then it was gone. **“Ahhhh! What was that?”**

But now let's suppose there are three-dimensional objects intersecting and staying in Flatland all the time . . . spheres, cubes, cylinders . . . do you see what that would mean? It would mean Flatlanders would be surrounded by *miracle* all the time. But they wouldn't see it that way. They wouldn't know it, except, of course, for the one who had the revelation.

He would say things like this: **“That's not just a square! That's a cube!”** They would answer, “That's nuts. You're dreaming.” They couldn't even comprehend it.

- We would say things like this: “Hey, that guy over there is reading the Bible.” But the guy with the revelation would say, **“No! The sword of the living God is piercing his soul.”**
- We would say, “Look—some of those high schoolers are talking to homeless people.” He would say, “They're encountering the living God.”
- We would say, “Look—a church.” He would say, **“It's a lampstand!”**
- We would say, “Look—that guy is giving a cup of cold water to a little kid in Jesus' name. What a nice thought.” He would say, “Behold, Jesus the Christ is drinking His own love.”
- We would say, “Hey look—a baby in a manger.” And he would start singing with the angels.

Why? His world would be full of miracle and full of meaning. He couldn't explain it all, but he could believe it. **He couldn't explain paradox, but he could believe it.**

For example, if a cylinder intersects Flatland, what would Flatlanders see? A circle. Now, what would happen if the cylinder intersected Flatland sideways? What would Flatlanders see? A rectangle. **What is a cylinder?** It's an infinite number of circles and rectangles.

Flatlanders would say, “No way! Inconceivable! Incompre-hensible!” And the guy who had the revelation would say, “It's true!” *Paradox.*

You're a church . . . and you're a lampstand.

What if I took three fingers and stuck them through Flatland; I spoke to Flatland and said, **"Behold, all three circles are one. They are all me. Three yet one. I am trinity."** Flatlanders would say, *"What?"* But it would be true.

Do you know you were chosen before the foundation of the world? You came to Jesus maybe at a Jr. High camp, but it's *true*. **Chosen in Him, yet chosen to choose. That's a paradox for me! I can't comprehend that!** But it's *true*.

Now suppose time is one of the dimensions of Flatland. For instance, here [pointing to the bottom of the 2' x 3' board] might be 33 A.D. Up here [pointing to the top of the board] might be 2001 A.D. If I took Flatland and held it all just like this [embracing the board], a millimeter away from my being, and I spoke to Flatland saying, **"Behold, Flatland! The kingdom of Peter is at hand! The time is near!"** would that be true? Yes.

And where *I* intersected Flatland, I would be *present* at all those points in space and time. Now let's say I intersected Flatland at *every* point in space and time. Let's say that Flatland was a two-dimensional plain inside of *me*. Then what could I say to Flatlanders? "Behold, in me you live and move and have your being." And they wouldn't even know it . . . unless they believed.

In fact, you could say I was a *reality* in Flatland, that I was present in Flatland wherever people *believed* . . . wherever they *saw*, not with their eyes, because their eyes can only see two dimensions, but with their *hearts*.

What would really be cool is if I could somehow *enter* Flatland as a two-dimensional being. I don't have that capability. Wouldn't it be cool if somebody did?

What I want you to see is that . . .

Mystery,
 meaning,
 paradox,
 miracle,
would all seem like dreams in Flatland. Yet those dreams would be *more real* than anybody in Flatland could even comprehend.

Mystery,
 meaning,
 paradox,
 miracle.

Here's an interesting question: Do you ever experience paradox in *this* world of four dimensions?—breadth, length, height, and time? Do you ever experience paradox?

Time . . . and eternity.
Mystery . . . and meaning.
Justice . . . do you ever long for justice? **What is *justice*! They've never found that in a scientific laboratory!**

Or love,
 Or truth,
 Or meaning,
 Or beauty!

Those things cannot be isolated and tested in our three- or four-dimensional world! And did you know that now, in order for physicists to make their calculations work for the Big Bang and the first few moments after the Big Bang, they have postulated at least—*at least*—nine dimensions of space and time?

We are talking about physicists! And we are Christians! We're the ones who believe God made all those things and is . . .

**bigger and better, and
before and after, and
smaller and larger, and
outside and inside *all* of them!**

Do you understand what I am saying? Stop taking this world so seriously. **Stop taking these three or four dimensions so seriously. Ironically, it's many fundamentalist Christians who take space and time—this world—so *seriously*! What do we do? We spend our time arguing about exactly when the Great Tribulation will be, and never stop to ask, "What does it *mean*?"**

We worry about the science of how the moon could turn blood red . . . so we can convince our non-Christian friends. Or how the locusts in Revelation 9 could have human faces and little, gold crowns. Do you know that in the Left Behind series they actually *do*? I *like* that book—I'm just saying it has to mean *more* than that. I *believe* the locusts have faces in some dimension at *least*, but I think it has to be more than a curiosity piece for first century Christians.

What was John getting at writing to Laodicea? **"Hey, guys, guess what! In the year 2049 there are going to be really weird bugs!"** I bet it had some *meaning!*—like "don't trust every human face you see, because even if it wears a crown, it may be a locust from the pit of hell."

I don't know . . . but maybe . . .

Someone asked Madeleine L'Engle, "Do you believe that Genesis is literally true?" She said, "*Literally* true?! I believe it's *more* than literally true!"

If you believe the Revelation is *literally true*, that's great! I think I do, if I understand what you mean by that. It's *more than a metaphor!* But it's also more than literally true. It's about far more than space and time in this world, and your life had better be about far more than space and time in this world.

Not every glass of water
Given to a child
Is an encounter with
The living God.

It must be given in Jesus' name . . . in faith and in love.

For on that day many will say to Him, **“Did we not do many, mighty wonders . . . miracles . . . works in Your name?”** And He will look at them and say, “Depart from me. For behold, I never knew you.”

You may do all the two-dimensional works of a Christian and look good to everybody in Flatland. But God knows you never knew Him. Maybe you just went around drawing squares, acting like you were believing in cubes. Not every square in Flatland is really a cube. And there is more to being a Christian than just being square.

You may own every graph mapping the Revelation.
You may know every detail.
You may comprehend the science of a
blood red moon and still not know its meaning.
Jesus reveals its meaning.
Jesus *is* meaning . . . Logos . . . Word . . . Truth.

What happens right here in chapter 1? Jesus reveals the meaning of the stars. Did you get that? “John, I’ll tell you what the stars are.” And right here in chapter 1 Jesus reveals the meaning of the lampstands. “John, I’ll tell you what the lampstands are.” But you see, we are going to have to trust Jesus to reveal His meaning for the rest of the book as well.

Jesus is the uncreated Creator,
From beyond and before space and time,
Who enters our four-dimensional world,
And reveals meaning.

He is the Lamb that opens the scroll;
He entered this world,
Limited Himself in our four dimensions,
In order to reveal truth.

He purchased us with His blood,
From principalities and powers

Which kept us in darkness and bondage,
And He's waking us up to life in *His* world—

The Kingdom of God.

In order to wake up you must dream His dreams. You must dream His dreams in order to stop dreaming. His dreams are more real than all this world. One day you'll see they *aren't* dreams; they're reality.

- How can we know *anything* truly real? Only through revelation. (We could go on here for a long time, because that has to do with science and all kinds of things . . .)
- How can we ever encounter anything truly real? Only through revelation. And that looks like . . . worship.

Other people say, "You are dreaming there on Sunday mornings." *Worship.*

Did you notice that John was "in the spirit on the Lord's day"? The Lord's day probably refers to Sunday. When the church worshipped God they would all gather together on Sunday. He was in the spirit on the Lord's day *when* he received the revelation.

Did you notice he was *in* the spirit *when* he received the revelation? ***Receiving the revelation was not *being* in the spirit. So what *was* being in the spirit? I think it was worship!***

Prayer,
Praise,
Wonder,
Song,
Worship . . .
In God in Christ.

Worship is the opposite of the scientific method. It's not conquest; it's submission.

In an experiment a scientist tests things to comprehend things. In worship God tests us and comprehends us. In worship we surrender to God, and God in His grace reveals His glory. Do you want to know God? Do you want to "go higher"? Then worship Him, in spirit and in truth.

Worship in Jesus and surrender to the dreams He gives you.

John Shea is a priest from Chicago. He shares about when he first encountered the living God, at least in a way *he* knew it. He was thirteen years old and an altar boy. He and a

friend of his were assigned by the parish priest to sit in the sanctuary for one-half hour and meditate upon the communion wafer—what Catholics refer to as “the host.”

A half-hour is a long time for a thirteen-year-old boy. He says that he sat there and looked around the room for a while . . . he kept looking at his watch . . . then he glanced up at the host on the table. Suddenly the host spoke without speaking. It said, “I’m more than a host, you know.”

He looked at his friend, the fat kid with the big, floppy ears. Everybody made fun of him in school. His friend spoke without speaking, “I’m more than a fat kid with floppy ears, you know.”

That night when he left the church he walked in the dark and saw a widow standing on the street corner with a cane. She glanced over at him and spoke without speaking, “**I’m more than a wrinkled old widow, you know.**” **He glanced up at the sky, and the sky thundered, “I’m more than the sky, you know.”**

Maybe God *does* hurl thunderbolts, you know.

People have sat here in worship, and they’ve seen visions and they’ve heard words. A thing like that, to be honest with you, has really only happened to me maybe once or twice. But the one time it did happen, I really believe God was revealing this to me:

Peter, everything in your world is more than you know. Those flannel graphs in Sunday School, Peter? Those emotions you felt at youth group as a kid? The kisses you received as a child in My name? Peter—they were *ME*. Peter, *you* are more than you know, for I am waking you up from the bad dream of a fallen world.

Have you ever felt love in worship? John wrote, “He who loves is born of God and knows God.” That’s more than you know. **Have you ever felt love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control in worship?** You thought you must have some chemicals in your blood responding to a great song. Well, the Apostle Paul would say, “That’s more than you know! **The spirit of the living God is giving birth to life in you!** That’s the fruit of the spirit.”

Have you ever been in worship and felt gratitude? “Every good and perfect gift comes down from the father of lights in whom there is no shadow or variation due to change.”

You don’t have to have experiences like John Shea or like the one experience I had or even like John the Revelator. **Just worship!** And pay attention to the dreams he gives you.

Besides, God has already given you a dream—the book of Revelation. It only seems like a dream because this world is a dream. For it reveals that this world is asleep more than you know. And *God* is more than you know, and *you* are more than you know.

You are not just a non-profit entity, Lookout Mountain Community Church! And you are *more* than “like a lampstand.” You *are* a lampstand. I’m speaking here more than *just literally*. You *are* the light of the world.

And there is an ancient dragon
Who rages in fury
Because he *does not want you* to know that,
For you might let your light therefore so shine!

But there is a lion
Who became a lamb
Who hung on a cross
Who suffered and died and rose again.

He sends His spirit
Even now
Into this room
In order that you would believe.

I’m not much for poetry. I was a geology major. But I am going to end with my favorite poem.

*They tell me, Lord, that when I seem to be in speech with you,
Since but one voice is heard, it’s all a dream, one talker aping two.*

*Sometimes it is, yet not as they conceive it. Rather, I
Seek in myself the things I hoped to say, but lo!, my wells are dry.*

*Then, seeing me empty, you forsake the listener’s role and through
My dumb lips breathe and into utterance wake the thoughts I never knew.*

*And thus you neither need reply nor can; thus, while we seem
Two talkers, thou are One forever, and I no dreamer, but thy dream.*

- C. S. Lewis

St. Paul wrote, “It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives within me.” And we say, “Nice metaphor.” **Wrong.** Absolute truth.

“So, Lord Jesus, I am still introducing Revelation. We need to ask You to open our eyes. Open the eyes of our hearts, Lord. That’s our prayer in order that we might know the hope to which You have called us—the riches of Your glorious inheritance in the saints—the immeasurable greatness of Your power at work in us who believe.”
[Song – “Open the Eyes of My Heart”]

So in this world there is a whisper everywhere you see beauty, everywhere you think of truth, every time you ask, “Does my life have any meaning?” There is a whisper, and I know Who is whispering to you. He is whispering, “Wake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and I will give you life.” Are you tired of this world? Listen to that longing—that mystery.

If you don’t know Jesus, you are imprisoned in this world. But He can set you free. Talk to Him right now in the silence of your own heart. “Jesus, come to me and set me free. Forgive me for my sins. Thank you for dying in this world for me. I ask You to be my Lord and to ‘take me higher.’”

If you just prayed that and meant it, you were chosen before the foundation of the world, and you just found out.

With your eyes closed, if you prayed that for the first time, could you raise your hand, wherever you are?

If you prayed that before in your life, would you raise your hand? You are more than you know. Would you believe that? And you’ll live in a way that’s beyond what you know.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Last night after the service a wonderful gal came up to me and said, “Peter, you bless me so much when you preach.

But tonight I didn’t know what the heck you were talking about!”

So if you didn’t know what the heck I was talking about, let me reduce it to two words: *Trust Jesus*. Now you might say, “Then why were we here for an hour and a half? What was all the explaining about?” Well, I was explaining why we *can’t* explain. Because you have been steeped in a culture of explanation and science.

I was also explaining why if we *could* explain, we wouldn’t be dealing with God. We would be dealing with a laboratory rat. All of that, in a way, is a bit insulting. Because it means that we are Christians not because we figured it out or because we can explain the whole thing, it means we’re Christians because God in His infinite grace opened our eyes.

What does *that* mean? All glory belongs to Him, forever and ever and ever and ever, Amen.