

# A WORD ON WORSHIP

## REVIEW OF MESSAGE FROM AUGUST 9, 2015

BY PASTOR ANDREW KICKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

*Hear Sunday Sermons at [www.SunriseTC.org](http://www.SunriseTC.org)*

### Revelation 2:7

*“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.”*

Have you ever put yourself in the shoes of John as he is trying to write out the revelation that has been given to him from our Lord Jesus? He is the last apostle standing. In John 21 Peter had been grumbling when Jesus told him they would bind his hands and lead him where he did not want to go and he wanted to know why John's fate was not going to be his. But at this time all of the other apostles, as far as we know, are dead and only John is left. He is no longer a young man, and his time for departure is very near - whether that be from old age or his exile on the island of Patmos as a prisoner.

The churches that are addressed in the Book of Revelation are moving from first generation churches to second generation churches. When we consider the history of Israel, after God has moved in a powerful way the transition between generations was never easy. The same is true for generations in the church. In Acts 19, we are told that the gospel spread throughout all of Asia (modern day Turkey). The idol makers were greatly distressed because of the hit that their businesses took. Even imposters like the seven sons of Sceva tried to get in on the rising tide of God's powerful work. Even people of Ephesus cleared out their books on the occult and idol worship, taking them out to the city square and burning them. And yet Jesus tells them He has something against them.

The first generation church, based on what they saw and experienced, realized the sufficiency and the power of Jesus Christ in their lives. But that was nearly forty years before. It was a distant memory for the older generation and merely a story that was told to the next generation as they heard their parents repeat yet again what God did “back then.” I cannot help but think John was sitting on the island of Patmos and wondering what all of this meant for the ensuing generations and what this would mean for the future of Jesus Christ's church.

This should cause each of us this morning to pause for a moment. If it had been roughly forty years after the church at Ephesus had been born when Jesus gave this revelation to John, we should remember that is drawing very close to the age of Sunrise Community Church. The passing of time is not always good. Churches, like human bodies, tend to have life spans. Unless love is continually kindled, bodies move from old to cold. And so I wonder if the problems the church at Ephesus faced at the writing of this letter may not be too different than the problems that face us today. I believe this letter is one we should listen well to what is said.



**Sunrise Community Church**  
*Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst*  
**EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.**

AUGUST 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

## The Hymns We Sing

COURTESY OF THE CYBER HYMNAL™

<http://www.hymntime.com/>

## Rise Up, O Men of God

<http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/r/i/s/riseupom.htm>

[http://www.hymntime.com/tch/mid/f/e/s/festal\\_song.mid](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/mid/f/e/s/festal_song.mid)

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”

Matthew 6:19



William P. Merrill  
1867-1954

**Words:** William P. Merrill, 1911; first published in the Presbyterian newspaper *The Continent*.

Nolan R. Best, then editor of *The Continent*, happened to say to me that there was urgent need of a brotherhood hymn...The suggestion lingered in my mind, and just about that time I came upon an article by Gerald Stanley Lee, entitled “The Church of the Strong Men.” I was on one of the Lake Michigan steamers going back to Chicago for a Sunday at my own church, when suddenly this hymn came up, almost without conscious thought or effort.

— Laufer, Calvin Weiss. pp. 132-3, *Hymn Lore*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1932.

**Music:** *Festal Song*, William H. Walter, in the *Episcopal Hymnal with Tunes Old and New*, by John Ireland Tucker,

Rise up, O men of God!  
Have done with lesser things.  
Give heart and mind and soul and strength  
To serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God!  
The kingdom tarries long.  
Bring in the day of brotherhood  
And end the night of wrong.

Rise up, O men of God!  
The church for you doth wait,  
Her strength unequal to her task;  
Rise up and make her great!

Lift high the cross of Christ!  
Tread where His feet have trod.  
As brothers of the Son of Man,  
Rise up, O men of God!

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SUNRISE August 2015

Aug. 2	8:45 AM	Revelation 2 verses 1-7 <i>Ephesus: Lost Love Part 1</i>
	10:30 AM	Second Hour
Aug. 7	6:30 PM	Game Night
Aug. 9	8:45 AM	Revelation 2 verses 1-7 <i>Ephesus: Lost Love Part 2</i>
	10:30 AM	Second Hour
Aug. 14	7:00 PM	Friday Night Fellowship
Aug. 15	5:00 PM	Westminster Presbyterian Church Barbecue <i>Sunrise Community Church invited</i>
Aug. 16	8:45 AM	Revelation 2 verses 1-7 <i>Ephesus: Lost Love Part 3</i>
	10:30 AM	Second Hour
Aug. 21	6:30 PM	Game Night
Aug. 23	8:45 AM	Revelation 2 verses 8-11 <i>Smyrna: The Suffering Church</i>
	10:30 AM	Second Hour
Aug. 28		Friday Night Fellowship
Aug. 30	8:45 AM	Revelation 2 verses 12-17 <i>Pergamum: Sin City</i>
	10:30 AM	Second Hour
Sept. 7		Labor Day

## Vietnam's 'God's smuggler' tells of amazing miracle story of getting Bibles to the unreached

CAREY LODGE • [HTTP://WWW.CHRISTIANTODAY.COM/](http://www.christiantoday.com/)

A Christian carrying Bibles through Vietnam was able to pass through police checkpoints unhindered in what has been hailed as a miracle. According to Merv Knight, co-founder of Voice of the Martyrs Australia (VOM), the unnamed man felt called by God to take Bibles to a remote part of Vietnam, and his only way to do so was to travel on a public bus. These go through regular police checkpoints, and anyone found to be carrying Bibles would expect to be taken to prison, and possibly tortured.

However, a uniformed police captain sat next to the man, placing his hat on the box of Bibles. The officer then fell asleep for the entire journey, and because of his hat, the contents of the box went unchecked. “Repeatedly during the next 10 hours, checkpoint after checkpoint, the police captain slumbered and the guards quietly moved by without ever checking the box,” VOM reported.

The story has gained traction for being very similar to those shared by Brother Andrew, reknowned as “God’s smuggler,” who distributed Bibles in Communist countries during the Cold War. The Vietnamese constitution guarantees freedom of religion in principle, but, like China, the Communist government tightly controls independent religious practice. According to the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), it represses “individuals and religious groups it views as challenging its authority, including independent Buddhists, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Catholics, and Protestants.”

A number of advocates for religious freedom remain imprisoned in the country and authorities have “moved decisively” in recent years to restrict freedom of expression and religion even further, the USCIRF says. Religious groups have to formally register with the government, but are routinely denied. The Hmong Protestants have experienced particular persecution in the last few years, and Vietnam has been named a ‘country of particular concern’ every year by the USCIRF since 2001.

Despite this, the Vietnamese Bible Society has been working in the country since the late 1800s. The Bible in Vietnamese Common Language was first published in 1993, and since then more than 700,000 Bibles and two million copies of the New Testament have been printed and distributed in Vietnam.

