

REVELATION
Of Jesus

Dear Congregation,

Welcome to the beginning of a new series in REVELATION. During this series I will attempt to send out electronically study helps for this series. My hope is that this information will be a blessing to you and during your own study. I also trust it will be of value during the sermon of our worship on Sundays.

Disclaimers: First, I may not send out weekly information and this information may or may not correlate with the current sermon.

Secondly, I do not see myself as an expert on Revelation, nor do I intend to debate this study. I will try to give as much information and background as I can as I preach in this wonderful book and I am aware the details of this book are often debated. I intend to do my sermon preparation from a variety of resources (commentaries, notes from seminary, etc.) and most importantly, the WORD OF GOD!

Third, I will not be staying in this Revelation series for one long setting through all twenty two chapters. I have various ideas, which may include the possibility of doing smaller (Bite sized) series in among other biblical sermon series, having a future bible study, or inviting you into continued personal study of this wonderful book. I am starting this series with the desire to get through the letters to the churches and then see evaluate how the Holy Spirit is using this series in regards to congregational life being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

FOR SUNDAY 01/13/19

REVELATION:

1. Please read the Chapter on your own before Sunday. We will read it again as a congregation. I plan on doing more congregational “reading” of scripture.
2. Look for key words and common themes.
3. Who was this information divinely given to and how did it come about (we will talk about this Sunday). Who is the letter (book) addressed to?
4. Consider keeping a journal and write down questions you may have. See if your questions get answered as we work through the book.
5. Consider doing some of your own research as to “when” this book was written and the identity of the authorship.
6. There are basically 4 major approaches to interpreting Revelation (some define 5);

1. NON LITERAL OR ALLEGORICAL VIEW- This says Revelations is a great book but it is an allegory, a story, not to be taken literally. This view developed in the Greece in a city called Alexandria. This was a place of great learning where a library known as the Alexandria library existed. There was a great library there with thousands of books and volumes of books were found. This view says that everything in the book is Allegorical and what matters is that when we get to the end the Devil loses and we win.
2. THE PRETERIST APPROACH – This view says that that Revelation is a record of the conflicts that occurred in the early church especially with Judaism and paganism. This view says Revelation is directed to first-century Christians, encouraging them with a message of hope of how God plans to deliver them from the evils of the Roman Empire and that the only important part of the book is Chapters 20-22.
3. HISTORICAL APPROACH- Revelation offers a prophetic outline of church history from the first century until the future coming of Christ. Another way of saying this is that Revelation is a symbolic presentation of the total of church history that culminates in the Second Advent. That is, when you open the book, it begins with the opening of church history. As you go through the twenty two chapters what you come up with is that all these things “are happening” or “have happened” and the final thing we are waiting for is chapters 20-22. The first three views boil down to that you should not put a whole bunch of stock in the first 19 chapters.
4. THE FUTURISTIC APPROACH- Revelation sees most of Revelation (Chapters 4-22) as prophetic of the end of times. It is concerned with what will happen at the end of history. It teaches whatever you can take literally, you should take literally, and whatever you cannot take literally you might view it symbolically. Some believe Revelation start with the “future”, beginning at chapter 4 and that once we leave the seven churches of Asia Minor (Chapters 1-3), the church is noticeably absent from the book of Revelation in the events of Chapters 5-19.

The futuristic position allows for a literal view of the book of Revelation. The Preterist and allegorical do not allow for a literal view of the book and changes the way you read the book.

Some would say there is a fifth approach to interpreting Revelation

5. ECLETIC- This approach combines the strengths of several approaches, taking seriously the message to the original readers, acknowledging portions of the book that await future fulfillment, and finding relevant spiritual messages for Christians in every age.

REMEMBER: Revelation is prophetic in character and Apocalyptic in form. Apocalyptic writing has two opposing forces in a war. In this case; God and Satan. In Apocalyptic language the outcome, the end result is rigidly determined. In this language, the writer writes in such a way that the people understand that the time table that is being laid out is in the hands of God and nothing can alter the timetable. This is important! When Jesus speaks to John in chapter 1 “These things are going to be”, he is saying nothing is going to stop it. All these things have to happen before Jesus intervenes in Chapter 19. Apocalyptic language essentially teaches us that

everything is moving down the road and nothing can be changed. We might think we can alter history but nothing can.

REMEMBER- Nothing in God's word is insignificant! Let's study together!

Key Themes of Revelation 1:1-3

- God is revealing his plans for consummation human history.
- The prophetic vision centers on the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
- God's revelation comes through Jesus Christ to the apostle John, who testifies to everything he saw.
- Believers who hear and obey the prophecy will be blessed by God.

Beatitudes in Revelation: The book of Revelation includes seven beatitudes, or "blessings" (cf. Matt 5:3-13; Luke 6:20-23). The beatitudes in 1:3 and 22:7 promise a blessing for faithfully appropriating the book (i.e., reading the prophecy aloud or obeying its message). Take a look at the blessings;

Revelation 1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14 = seven!

Enjoy and live blessed!

Pastor Jon