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Introduction





Introduction

The Revelation Facts

AUTHOR

The Revelation reveals its title and its author both in its opening lines: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” Although we often think of Revelation as being authored by John, the first verse makes clear that Jesus is the One doing the revealing and that John is acting more as a recorder of the visions shown to him by Christ.

Some do not attribute the Revelation to the Apostle John citing differences in the Greek style and theological emphases; however, the Revelation and John’s other literature do share some thematic elements (such as Jesus as Lamb and Word of God). Additionally, several early church fathers attribute Revelation’s recording to the apostle who joined Peter and James in the inner circle of Christ’s disciples.

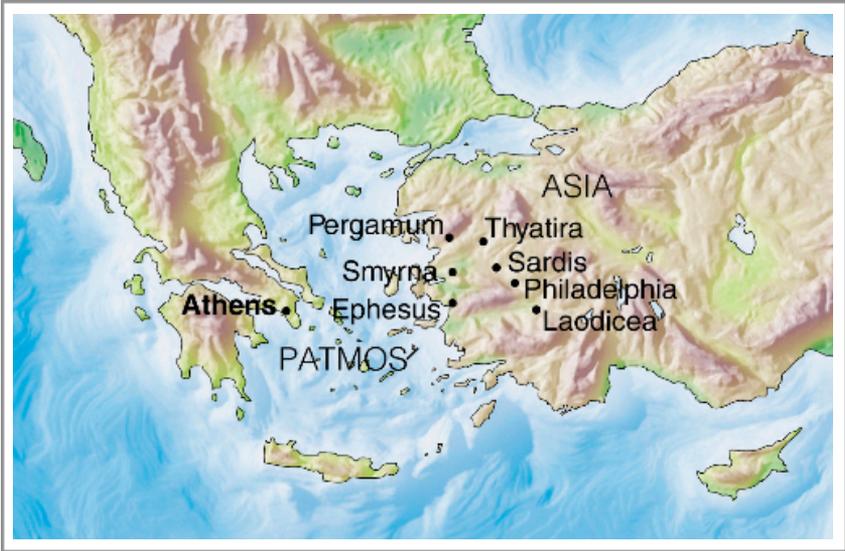
DATE

The church father Irenaeus states that “John received the Revelation almost in our time, toward the end of the reign of Domitian” (Against Heresies 5.30.3). Domitian’s reign ended in A.D. 96; therefore, most date the Revelation in the mid–90’s. Those who see the Revelation as history rather than prophecy will attempt to create a date during Nero’s reign that precedes the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; however, the issues facing the churches in the early chapters of Revelation would more likely support the later date.

SETTING

The Revelation is addressed to the “seven churches that are in Asia,” namely Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia,

and Laodicea. John had been exiled to the island of Patmos which was just southwest of Ephesus off the coast of Asia.



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OUTLINE

The structure of our study of the Revelation is based on Revelation 1:19.

1. The things that John saw (1:1-20)
2. The things that are (2:1-3:22)
3. The things that are to take place after this (4:1-22:21)

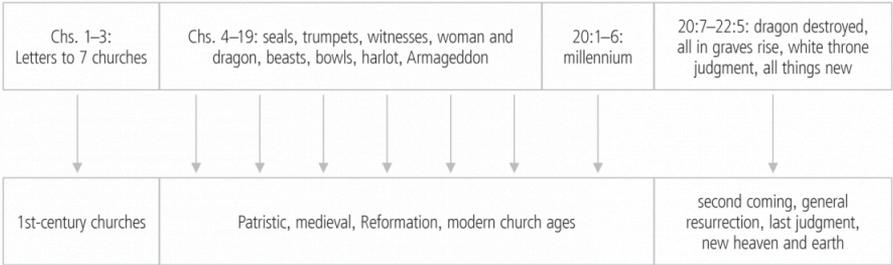
Theological Perspectives

INTERPRETATION THEORIES

While we join with traditional Baptists in our eschatological views, considering ourselves pretribulation and premillennial, we find benefit in understanding other theological perspectives concerning the end times and the Revelation. The following charts are those found in the ESV Study Bible.

Historicist School

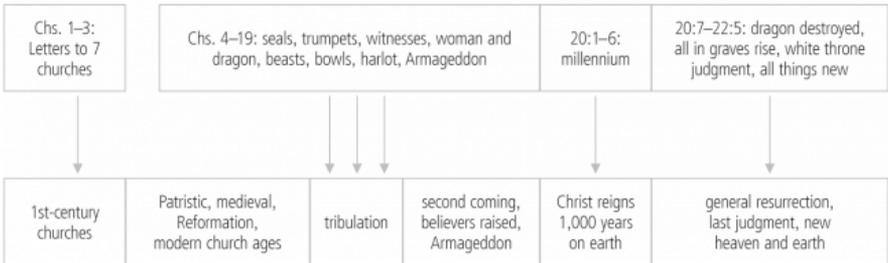
Revelation's Visions



Historical References and Events

Futurist (Posttribulation Premillennialism)

Revelation

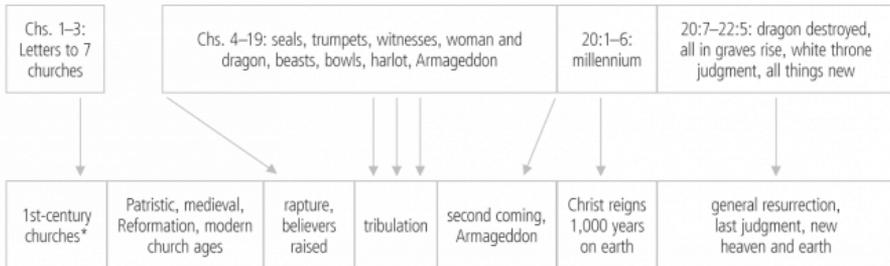


Historical References and Events

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Futurist (Dispensational Premillennialism)

Revelation's Visions



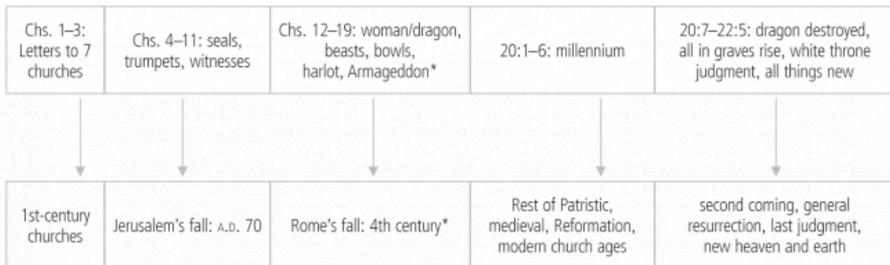
Historical References and Events

* Some dispensational interpreters think the churches addressed in chs. 2-3 predict different periods in church history.

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Partial Preterist School(s)

Revelation's Visions



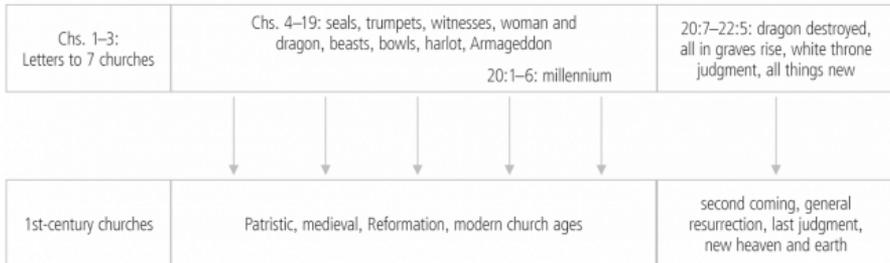
Historical References and Events

* Partial preterists differ on what would (from the original recipients' viewpoint) precipitate the millennium. This chart represents the view that sees ancient Rome as the church's main enemy. Others would understand Second Temple Judaism as the church's main enemy.

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Idealist School

Revelation's Visions



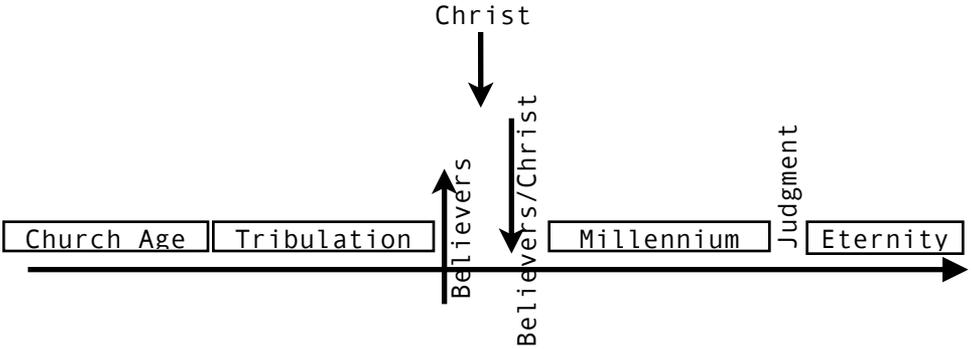
Historical References and Events

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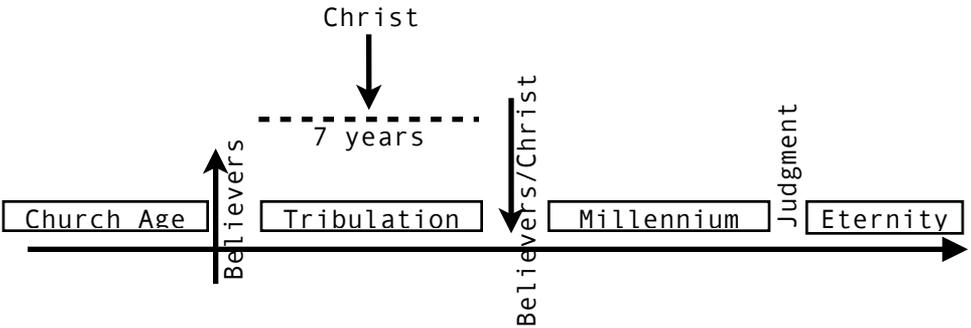
MILLENNIAL VIEWS

The following charts picture the different views of the millennium and its relationship to the other historical and future events.

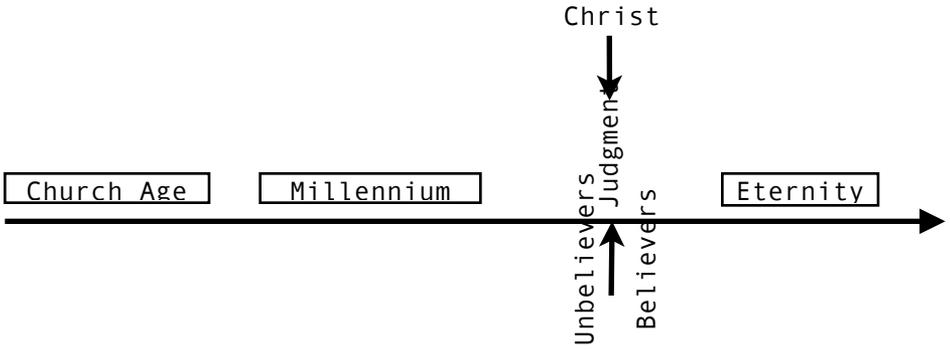
posttributational premillennialism



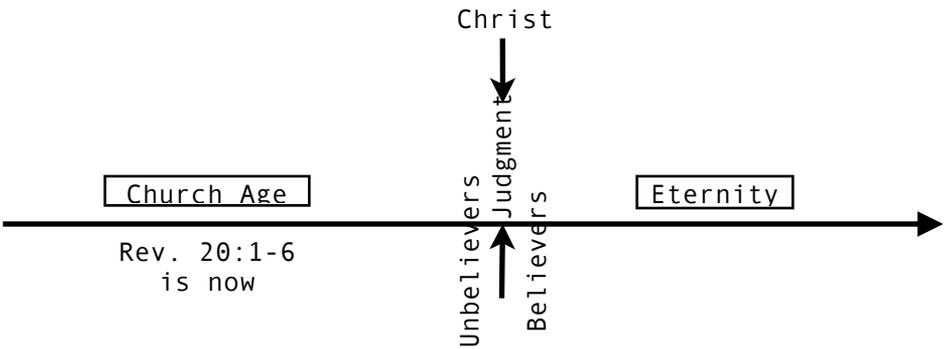
pretributational premillennialism



postmillennialism



amillennialism





Bible Study

The things that John saw

1-The Lord-Christ / Rev 1:1-20

Read Revelation 1:1-3

Ω Explain what the phrase “the revelation of Jesus Christ” means. Consider whether or not it means the revelation **from** Jesus or the revelation **about** Jesus.

Read Revelation 1:4-8

Ω What divine attributes of and truths about Jesus Christ are evident in John’s greeting to the seven churches that are in Asia?

Ω What aspects of the gospel are evident in John’s description of Jesus Christ here?

Read Revelation 1:9–20

Ω Consider what the different aspects of Christ’s appearance signify about Him.

aspect	significance
hairs white like wool	
eyes like fire	
feet like bronze	
roaring voice	
two-edged sword out of mouth	
face like sun	

Ω What is the significance of the golden stars in Jesus’ hand and the golden lampstands that He walked among according to Jesus?

Ω Considering that the Greek word for angel, literally means messenger, about whom was Jesus talking when He mentioned “the angels of the seven churches”?

The things that are

2-The Apostolic Church / Rev 2:1-7

Read Revelation 2:1-7

Ephesus facts:

- ★ 250,000+ people
- ★ chief Asian seaport
- ★ large pagan temple dedicated to Artemis
- ★ two temples dedicated to the emperor
- ★ most influential church in world at end of 1st century

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω What does Jesus commend the church in Ephesus for?

Ω What does Jesus mean by rebuking the Ephesian church's abandoning the love they had at first?

Ω What does Jesus propose as the solution to get them to return to their first love?

Ω Why is their abandonment of their first love so serious that it would justify Christ's removing of their lampstand from its place if they would not repent?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will eat from the tree of life in the paradise of God?

Ω What does 2:7a reveal concerning the intended audience of the messages to the seven churches?

Nicolaitans:

we don't know much about the Nicolaitans other than that they were heretical (since Jesus hates their works here), and that they encouraged God's people to pursue idolatry and immorality (2:14-15).

3-The Persecuted Church / Rev 2:8-11

Read Revelation 2:8-11

Smyrna facts:

- ★ smaller than Ephesus
- ★ still a key Turkish city
- ★ fiercely loyal to Rome

- ★ temples honoring the emperor and goddess of Rome
- ★ home of Polycarp, the martyred bishop of Smyrna

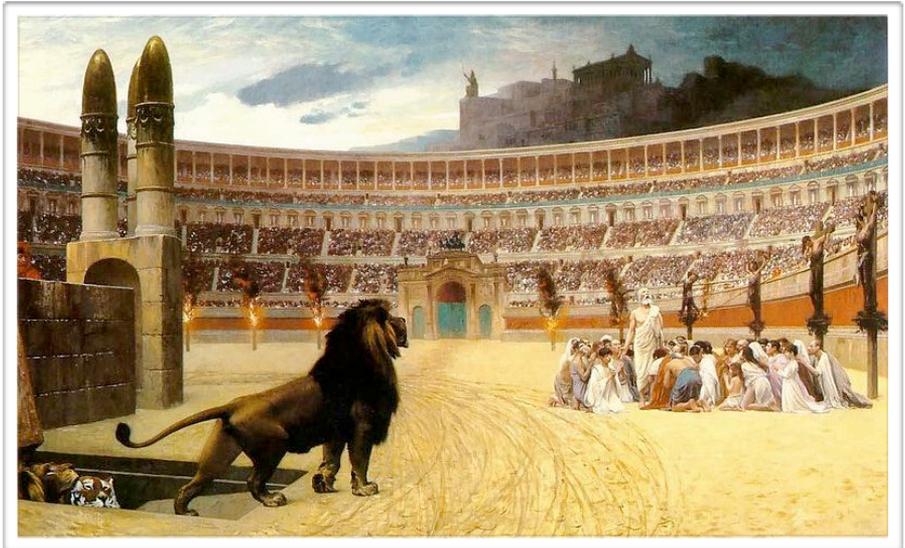
Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus' repeating the ideas of life and death in His letter to the Smyrnan church.

Ω How does Jesus comfort the members of the Smyrnan church in His message to them?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus blaming the devil for the persecution taking place in Smyrna?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will not be hurt by the second death?



4-The Compromising Church / Rev 2:12-17

Read Revelation 2:12-17

Pergamum facts:

- ★ smaller than Ephesus
- ★ political capital of Asia
- ★ center of imperial worship

- ★ temple honoring Asclepius, god of healing, whose symbol was a serpent
- ★ governor enjoyed “right of the sword” to execute whomever he liked

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus’ twice mentioning that Pergamum was where Satan’s throne/dwelling was?

Ω Why would the whole church of Pergamum need to repent if only some of its members had followed the corrupt teaching

Ω What sword does Jesus wield that comes from His mouth? (cf Hebrews 4:12)

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will receive the hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name?

The White Stone:

Historically, a white stone was given to victors at games for entrance to banquets; such a stone was also used by jurors at trials to vote for acquittal.

5-The Corrupted Church / Rev 2:18-29

Read Revelation 2:18-29

Thyatira facts:

- ★ center of trade and manufacturing

- ★ dominated by trade and craft guilds

- ★ guilds promoted pagan worship and carousing

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω How does Jesus' description of the Thyatiran church differ from His description of the Ephesian church (2:1-7)?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus' focus on works in His statement to the Thyatiran church? Consider especially Jesus' comments about the church's problems.

Ω How do those who remain true contrast with those who are corrupt in the Thyatiran church?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will be given authority and will rule with a rod of iron?



6-The Protestant Church / Rev 3:1-6

Read Revelation 3:1-6

Sardis facts:

- ★ city built on a mountain
- ★ known for its wealth

- ★ center for dyeing and fabric works
- ★ captured twice because the guards lacked watchfulness

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω What is the significance of the Sardis church's reputation as opposed to its reality?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus' emphasis on waking up and preparing in His statement to the Sardis church?

Ω What is the significance of Jesus' repetition of the word name in these verses?

Ω How had those who had "fallen asleep" in the Sardis church soiled their garments (in contrast to those who had not and are worthy 3:4)?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will be clothed in white garments, and will never have his name blotted out of the book of life?

7-The Missionary Church / Rev 3:7-13

Read Revelation 3:7-13

Philadelphia facts:

- ★ known for agricultural prominence, esp. vineyards
- ★ very susceptible to earthquakes

- ★ home to a prominent Jewish synagogue
- ★ commercial discrimination and mob violence affected Christians

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω Consider Romans 2:2-29 to determine how one can know what a true Jew is as opposed to a those of the synagogue of Satan.

Ω What is the significance of Jesus' emphasis on holding fast and keeping His word in these verses?

Ω What encouragements does Jesus give in these verses to those who are suffering persecution?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will be a pillar in the temple of God and will have God's name and God's city written on him?



8-The Faithless Church / Rev 3:14-22

Read Revelation 3:14-22

Laodicea facts:

- ★ richest city in district
- ★ famous for Zeus worship
- ★ received water via aqueduct from nearby springs

- ★ piped in water created vulnerability
- ★ thriving commercial, medical, and textile industries aided wealth

Ω What is the significance of the description of Christ in these verses?

Ω What is the significance of the fact that the Laodicean church not only didn't realize their horrible condition, but they also thought they were successful? How does one reach this point of delusion?

Ω Considering Isaiah 64:6, what is the significance of Jesus' advice for the Laodicean church in 3:18?

Ω Considering the context and to whom this is written, what is the significance of Jesus' statement in 3:20?

Ω What is the significance that the one who conquers (or overcomes) will be granted to sit with Christ on His throne?

The things that will be

9-The Throne Room / Rev 4-5

Read Revelation 4:1-11

Ω Consider 1 Thess 4:13-18; what similarities do you see in Revelation 4:1-2?

Ω Consider Isaiah 6:1-4 and Ezekiel 1:4-28; what similarities do you see in Revelation 4:2-11?

Ω What is the significance of the thunderstorm imagery in association with God?

Ω Based on what they say and where they are at, what is the implied responsibility of the four living creatures?

Ω What attributes of God are evident in the songs of praise that are sung in God's throne room?

Ω In all of the passages reflecting the throne room of God, we see people falling on their faces; what attitude does this reflect?

Read Revelation 5:1-14

Ω Note the accomplishments of the Lamb in this passage that are reflected in the praise to Him. How did Jesus accomplish the things attributed to Him?

Ω What is the song sung in praise to the Lamb saying about Him based on 4:11?

Ω Why does the Lamb's triumph make Him worthy to open the scroll?

Ω What do you learn about worship based on the entirety of Rev 4-5?



10-The Seventy Weeks / Rev 6

Read Revelation 6:1-17

Ω Use the following chart to record what will happen when each of the seals on the scroll is broken.

1st - 6:1-2	
2nd - 6:3-4	
3rd - 6:5-6	
4th - 6:7-8	
5th - 6:9-11	
6th - 6:12-17	

Ω What is represented by the four horsemen based on their description in 6:2-8?

Ω How do you see Isaiah 2:6-22 fulfilled in Rev 6?

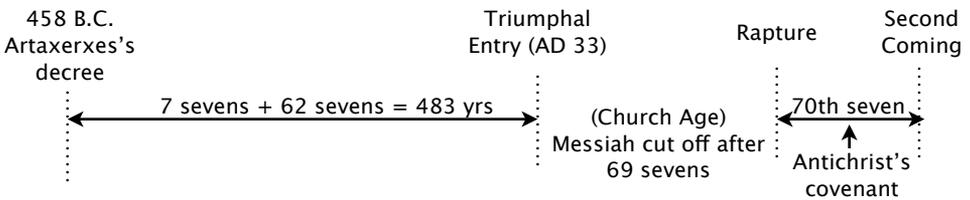
Read Daniel 9:24–27

Ω What was God going to take seventy weeks to accomplish?

Ω How many weeks until Christ (the anointed one) came?

Ω What would happen to Christ after the sixty-two weeks?

Ω What will happen to the nation of Israel after Christ is cut off?



Week:
the week in Daniel 9 could be literally translated sevens. Therefore, it literally says seventy sevens.

Anointed One/Prince:
the first two uses are the Hebrew word from which Messiah is derived; the third use is a completely different Hebrew word.

11-The Trumpet Judgments / Rev 7-9

Read Revelation 7:1-17

Ω What is the significance of the fact that God's people are sealed before God afflicts the land and the sea with the final judgments?

Ω What is the significance of the fact that the robes of the great multitude will be made white in the blood in the Lamb as they came through and out of the tribulation?

Ω How did where the great multitude came from contrast with their current state.

Read Revelation 8-9

Ω Considering what happens in these verses, why does God interrupt the opening of the seals with the events of chapter 7?

Ω What is the result of the opening of the seventh seal?

Ω What is the significance of the silence and prayer in heaven before the preparation to blow the trumpets?

Ω Use the chart below to record the events of the trumpet judgments.

1st - 8:7	
2nd - 8:8-9	
3rd - 8:10-11	
4th - 8:12-13	
5th - 9:1-12	
6th - 9:13-19	

Ω What is the significance of the fact that God limits the first four of the trumpet judgments to only a third?

Ω What is the significance of the response by the rest of mankind to the trumpet judgments?

12-The Two Witnesses / Rev 10-12

Read Revelation 10 and Daniel 10:4-12:13

Ω Compare what happened in and after Daniel's vision to what happened in and after John's vision; what is the significance of this angel with the little scroll?

Ω What is the significance of the angel's words in 10:6, 7 in relation to the question asked of God in 6:10?

Ω What is the significance of the sweet taste but bitter stomach caused by the scroll?

Read Revelation 11:1-14

Ω What does the account of the two witnesses reveal about God? about humanity?

God: _____

humanity: _____

Ω To what extent is every Christian's responsibility and protection like those of the two witnesses?

Read Revelation 11:15-19

Ω What is the significance of the song that is sung as part of the seventh trumpet judgment?

Read Revelation 12:1-17

Ω What is the significance of the woman and her offspring in these verses?

Ω What do you learn about Satan and his character from these verses?

Ω What do you learn about the people of God and their relationship to Satan from these verses?

13-The Anti-Christ / Rev 13

Read Revelation 13

Ω Contrast the beast in 13:1–10 with Christ; why is this person called the Antichrist?

Ω From where does Satan get the power, throne, and authority that he gives to the beast? (cf. Ps 24:1; Matt 4:8–10; John 8:44; 12:31; 2 Cor 4:4)

Ω How does the second beast in 13:11–18 contrast with the Holy Spirit in his words and actions?

Ω What is the significance of the fact that the beast only receives his power for a limited period of time?

Ω Consider the “mark of the beast” in 13:16–18; based on the explanation here, why would any unique identification number that technology might make available to become a part of our person not be the same as this mark?

Ω What does Satan’s goal seem to be in empowering the two beasts of ch 13?

14-The Divine Wrath / Rev 14-16

Read Revelation 14:1-20

Ω What is celebrated about the 144,000 in 14:1-5?

Ω What do the messages of the angels in 14:6-13 reveal about God and His character?

Ω What is God trying to picture with the image of the two harvests in 14:14-20?

Read Revelation 15:1-8

Ω What is the significance of the song that is sung in praise to God before the final judgments commence?

Ω What attributes of God are emphasized in the song?

Read Revelation 16:1-21

Ω Use the chart below to record the events of the seven bowls of God's wrath.

1st - 16:2	
2nd - 16:3	
3rd - 16:4-7	
4th - 16:8-9	
5th - 16:10-11	
6th - 16:12-16	
7th - 16:17-21	

Ω How would you defend God's justice as described in 16:5-6 against possible attacks that God is mean or judgmental?

Ω What is the significance of the reaction of the inhabitants of earth to the bowl judgments (16:8-11)?

Ω Describe the topography and look of the earth after these judgments?

15-The Divine Victory / Rev 17-19

Read Revelation 17:1–18:24

Ω What sin of the woman is emphasized?

Ω What is the repeated reason for the nations' mourning the demise of the woman?

Ω What is the connection between the woman's sin and the reason for the nations' mourning?

Ω Where does the woman seem to derive her influence and power over the world?

Ω What is the significance of the fact that the beast and kings of the earth turn on the woman?

Ω What stands out about the destruction of the woman in these chapters?

Read Revelation 19:1-21

Ω How do the responses in heaven and the world contrast when the woman is destroyed?

Ω What past event comes to mind when you read the response of heaven, especially the twenty-four elders?

Ω Who receives the praise in preparation for the marriage of the Lamb?

Ω What is the significance of the source of the Bride's clothing?

Ω What attributes of Christ are evident in the description of the Rider of the white horse? note who is following Him!

Ω Note the destiny of the following people:

beast: _____

false prophet: _____

the rest of humanity: _____

16-The New Heaven/Earth / Rev 20-22

Read Revelation 20:1-15

Ω What does God do with Satan for the time being?

Ω What aspects of the kingdom are emphasized here?

Ω Describe the events at the end of the thousand years.

Ω Contrast the two resurrections described in this chapter.

Ω Contrast the two books that are opened at the Great White Throne. Why is the second book necessary?

Read Revelation 21:1–22:21

Ω Note some of the features of the New Heaven and Earth.

Ω Contrast the destiny of one who is thirsty with the one who is described in 21:8.

Ω Are any of the sins listed in 21:8 true of you? What gives anyone the right to drink of the water of life and be called God's son, then?

Ω Note some of the features of the New Jerusalem.

Ω What does John note is missing in the New Jerusalem? Why are these things missing?

Ω Where else in Scripture do we see the tree of life?

Ω What is the significance of the all of the repetition from the rest of Revelation found in 22:7-21?

Ω What appears to be the main application God would want us to make after reading Revelation?

Review



1-The Lord-Christ / Rev 1:1-20

- Ω Discuss the impact that Jesus is the One “who is to come.” What difference does it make to you? How should this truth impact the way you react to circumstances and treat those around you?
- Ω Consider again the different descriptions of Jesus throughout this chapter. Take some time to thank Jesus for Who He is and what He has done; then discuss how these different truths about Jesus should impact your life.
- Ω In 1:6 John says that Jesus made us priests to His God and Father; how can you act like a priest as you serve the Father?

2-The Apostolic Church / Rev 2:1-7

- Ω Discuss your own actions and words in relation to the fact that the Ephesians had left their first love. Discuss how can we remain true to our first love, and reveal that to others in our actions and words.
- Ω Discuss what it means to be an overcomer, and how you can know that you will eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God.

3-The Persecuted Church / Rev 2:8-11

- Ω Discuss persecution, including what it is and what it isn't. Consider if there are things that we call persecution that aren't really persecution, and how you would respond if you faced real persecution.
- Ω Discuss the comfort that faith in Jesus gives during a time of persecution or trial. How have you experienced Jesus in the same way that He describes Himself to the Smyrnan church?

4-The Compromising Church / Rev 2:12-17

- Ω Discuss ways in which the reality of Satan is evident in our present culture as it was in the city of Pergamum. How ought a Christian to respond when living in the dwelling place of Satan?
- Ω Discuss the Word of God as it is described to the church in Pergamum and in Hebrews 4. How have you experienced the Word of God acting as a sharp sword in your life?

5-The Corrupted Church / Rev 2:18-29

- Ω With the prevalence of guilds in the city of Thyatira, the believers found it difficult to live morally. Discuss times in your life when you have run into moral conflicts in your business or social life. How ought these types of situations to be handled?
- Ω In contrast to the Ephesian church, the Tyatiran church was strong on love but weak on resisting false doctrine and immorality. Discuss why someone would be more lenient toward heresy in both belief and practice. How can we guard against either extreme?

6-The Protestant Church / Rev 3:1-6

- Ω Discuss the human tendency to depend upon our reputation at the expense of reality. How can we guard against the temptation to invest in our reputation only and ignore our reality?
- Ω Discuss the effects of being so laid back spirituality that we fall asleep. Discuss how we can be awake and strengthened.

7-The Missionary Church / Rev 3:7-13

- Ω Discuss the importance of holding fast and keeping the Word of God. What practical steps can you take to avoid the tendency to let go or leave the Word of God?
- Ω Discuss the effect of having little power as the Jesus describes the Philadelphian church. How can you accomplish anything while having little power?

8-The Faithless Church / Rev 3:14-22

- Ω Discuss the uses of hot and cold water, and the lack of use of lukewarm water. How can you remain hot enough or cold enough to be effective? What tends to draw you toward lukewarmness?
- Ω Discuss acting like your rich spiritually while remaining poor. How can you avoid this tendency?

9-The Throne Room / Rev 4-5

- Ω Discuss what the Lamb has done for you. What ought to be your response when you consider all He has done?
- Ω Discuss the fact that you are a priest of God's and a part of His kingdom. What responsibility do you have in these roles?

10-The Seventy Weeks / Rev 6

- Ω Discuss the events of the seal judgments. What ought to be your response to these events? How can these events affect your life today?
- Ω Discuss the fulfillment of the prophecies God gave Daniel. How does God's commitment to keeping His Word impact your life today?

11-The Trumpet Judgments / Rev 7-9

- Ω Discuss God's care for His people in the sealing of the 144,000 and the great multitude. What aspects of God's care are evident in these events? How has God cared for you in the same way? How should this care impact your life?
- Ω Discuss the silence and prayer in heaven before the trumpet judgments begin. What does this reveal to you about God? What ought to be your response to these events? What other evidences of mercy do you see in these chapters? What evidences of mercy do you see in your own life?

12-The Two Witnesses / Rev 10-12

- Ω Spend some time in worship of God as happens with the seventh trumpet judgment. Consider how much of your life ought to be consumed with worship.
- Ω Discuss what God does for the witnesses in chapter 11. What does this reveal to you about God? How ought you to act in light of what God will do for the witnesses? Discuss your faithfulness in witnessing of God's love.

13-The Anti-Christ / Rev 13

- Ω Discuss the power and authority of Satan. How can/should you live in light of the reality of Satan's presence and power? What impact should the description of the Antichrist have on your life?
- Ω Discuss the mark of the beast and the worry many people seem to share over it. What confidence can you have as a Christian concerning the mark of the beast?

14-The Divine Wrath / Rev 14-16

- Ω Discuss the testimony and purity of life of the 144,000. How can you have the same or similar testimony and purity of life today?
- Ω Discuss the quote of the angel in 16:5-6. To what extent should we celebrate the destruction of the wicked?

15-The Divine Victory / Rev 17-19

- Ω Discuss the spiritual adultery that took place with the woman. In what areas do you find yourself tempted to commit spiritual adultery? How can you keep yourself pure in your relationship with Christ?
- Ω Discuss the victory of Christ in ch 19. How ought this victory to impact your life? What confidence can you have in light of this victory that is still future?
- Ω Discuss God's sovereign control and how it is evident in these chapters. How important is it for you to remember God's control in your own life? How can you avoid the fate of those who are destroyed?

16-The New Heaven/Earth / Rev 20-22

- Ω Discuss the eternal state as it is described in these chapters. What aspects of that time are you looking forward to most? How ought those things to impact you today?
- Ω Discuss the final question from the Bible Study section for this chapter. How can you best implement what you feel God would have you to do in light of the Revelation?