



SERMON DISCUSSION

JANUARY 31, 2021

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## THE PASSWORD TO UNLOCKING REVELATION (REVELATION 1)

### TAKEAWAY:

The primary objective of Revelation is not to reveal the Antichrist, but Jesus Christ.

### INTRODUCTION

- What comes to mind when you think of the Book of Revelation?
- What was your initial internal response when you heard we were going to begin a study of Revelation?
- What is one thing you learned in Pastor Greg's teaching on Revelation 1?

When we think of the Book of Revelation, many of us think of terrible prophecies to come. However, the center of Revelation is Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:10). In fact, there is no better book to help us understand these difficult days than the Book of Revelation. It brings sense to our suffering. But for that to happen, we must read it, hear it, and apply its truths to our lives. God wants us to learn about the future so that we'll be motivated to live right in the present.

### UNDERSTANDING

› Ask a group member to read Revelation 1:1-8.

- Considering this vision took place 2,000 years ago, how do you account for the words "quickly" and "the time is near"? Do you believe Jesus could return today? Why is it important that we live like "the time is near"?
- How did John describe God the Father in these verses? How did he describe Jesus? How did he describe believers?
- From verses 5-6, what three things does Christ do for us? How has your life been changed by each of these actions?
- Verse 7 could be considered the theme verse for the Book of Revelation. What does this text tell us that we should expect to find in Revelation? How are we to live today, in light of this verse?

› Ask a group member to read Revelation 1:9-20.

- Name characteristics of the glorified Jesus from Revelation 1:12-16. What do the images John saw suggest about Jesus?

- Jesus said that He is victorious over death and Hades (v. 18). What are the implications of this truth for your current circumstances?
- Verse 19 summarizes the three sections we find in the Book of Revelation. What are they? Which of the three are you most interested in learning about? Why?
- Pastor Greg said that we are now living in the “things which are” category. In your own life, how does your past impact the way you live now? How do the things you know are coming impact the way you live now?

## **APPLICATION**

- What did Pastor Greg mean when he said, “When you fear God, you fear nothing else; whereas, if you do not fear God, you fear everything else”? Can you relate? Explain.
- How would you live differently this week if you were to truly live with the anticipation of Christ’s return?

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for the unshakeable hope John’s revelation gives every one of us. Pray that God would continue to use it in our lives to encourage us to live fearlessly in these days in holiness and on mission for His kingdom purposes.

## **COMMENTARY**

### Revelation 1:1-20

1:1. Revelation, which means “unveiling,” translates the Greek word apokalypsis. Its use here indicates that the book of Revelation is apocalyptic literature, like Daniel in the Old Testament. The revelation of Jesus Christ could mean the unveiling about Jesus, the unveiling by Him, or both. His slaves refers to all Christians.

1:2. Standing true to God’s word and to the testimony about Jesus Christ caused John to be exiled to the island of Patmos (v. 9).

1:1,3. Must quickly take place and the time is near have been used by critics to claim that Revelation’s prophecies have failed since they have not been fulfilled in the 1,900+ years since the book was written. However, Christ’s imminent return does not carry with it a timetable but communicates a sense of urgency that is an integral part of the New Testament message as expressed by John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles. Christ’s first coming marked the time when history entered its last phase before eternity.

1:3. The reading of this prophecy carries with it a promise of blessing. The reading in view is not just mental. The reader must also keep (i.e., “take to heart” and apply) what is written. This is the first of seven significant “blessing” statements or beatitudes in the book of Revelation (Revelation 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7,14).

1:4. The One who is, who was, and who is coming (v. 8) means that God not only exists now, but always has existed and always will. The seven spirits before His throne may refer to: (1) “the angels of the seven churches” (v. 20; chaps. 2-3), (2) other angels seen in the book (e.g., 8:2), or (3) the fullness of the Holy Spirit described in Isa. 11:2.

1:5-6. Jesus is the faithful witness. The firstborn from the dead looks back to His resurrection, the guarantee of the future resurrection of all believers and unbelievers (20:4-5; 1 Cor. 15:20,23). Though Christ has all the authority to be universal ruler now (Matt. 28:18), He will not fully exert it until His second coming (Rev. 19:11-21). Set us free from our sins by His blood does not mean we are automatically saved by Christ’s death on the cross, as if all humanity is saved regardless of their beliefs. Revelation stresses the need for repentance (9:20-21) and a faith-response to the gospel (14:6-7).

1:7-8. This collage of Scripture from Dan. 7:13 and Zech. 12:10 expresses the theme for Revelation.

1:10. In the Spirit refers to the exalted spiritual state that John was in as he received the visions of the Apocalypse. The Lord’s day is likely a phrase referring to the first day of the week—Sunday, the day of resurrection—which had become the day of worship for Christians (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).

1:12-18. The seven gold lampstands are the seven churches (v. 11; chaps. 2-3).

1:14. The similes of the Son of Man’s head and hair being white like wool, depicting wisdom and purity, and His eyes being like a fiery flame, picturing piercing holiness, fuse the vision of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9) and Jesus’ appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:2).

1:16. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches (v. 20). The sharp double-edged sword that came from His mouth symbolizes the power of the Word of God to judge (Heb. 4:12).

1:17. That John fell at His feet was an act of fear and awe at the Lord revealing Himself so profoundly to mankind (Dan. 8:17).

1:19. The risen Christ here commanded John to write, just as in verse 11. What you have seen is the vision of verses 12-18. What is refers to the present state of affairs in the churches in chapters 2-3. What will take place after this refers to the body of the book (chaps. 4-22), which begins with “after this” (4:1).