

A SERIES ON REVELATION: is this the end?

Week 1 – Getting Started

Transition: We are beginning the New Year by digging deeper into the last book of the Bible, Revelation. Revelation is a pivotal book which makes it critically important to all who follow Jesus. Not only does it close out our current age where sin has run amok, it also introduces us to the world yet to come where sin and death, having been conquered and disposed of forever, do not exist. In short, it is both a powerful ending and a wonderful beginning.

Understanding the book of Revelation can be terribly confusing. Biblical scholars throughout the centuries have disagreed over much of its meaning. The reasons for this are complex, which we will not try to resolve with this study. Rather, our hope is to provide you the guidance and information that you need to be able to understand it for yourself while also reminding you that there may yet be some things that remain mysterious.

Context: The book of Revelation is almost certainly the last book of the Bible to be codified. Some scholars date its writing as early as around 70 AD, while others believe it is more likely to have been written in the mid-90s AD. Regardless, it is the last of God's written messages to His people (and to the world) that belong in the Bible. The author identifies himself as John. There are at least three potential legitimate choices of which John this is, but historically (from the beginning of the second century), he was identified as John the apostle, one of the sons of Zebedee.

Scripture: Revelation 1:1-3 and 2 Peter 3:1-14

Discipleship Questions:

- Using a scale of 1-10, with 1 being 'not at all' and 10 being 'extremely', how interested are you in the study of the end times (aka eschatology)? Explain why you are or are not interested in this topic.
- People have all sorts of beliefs about the end times. Why do you think that is?
- What all do we need to do in order to understand the book of Revelation accurately? What role does our attitude play?
- What stands out to you in Revelation 1:1-3? How does this passage challenge you today?
- What is Peter's main point in 2 Peter 3:1-14? In what ways does this influence and/or encourage you today?
- How would you respond to someone who was mocking your belief in the literal, physical return of Jesus Christ to earth?
- What has the Holy Spirit revealed to you today? What will you do in response?