

ALL THINGS NEW
WEEK 3 DISCUSSION GUIDE
"THE END"

READ

This week we continued our "All things New" series and looked at the end of the world through the book of Revelation. This is a letter written by the Apostle John to seven churches during a time of widespread Christian persecution. All other apostles had been killed.

After a failed attempt to kill John by throwing him into boiling oil, he was exiled to a remote island, Patmos. There he penned this letter about a vision he had, a glimpse into heaven, while on the island. It was written in Apocalyptic style and born out of oppression with the intent to inspire hope. This style of literature uses images of fantasy to describe reality. It is cryptic and symbolic.

In the beginning of John's vision, the throne room of heaven is revealed. God has a plan to deal with pain and suffering written on a scroll. The scroll is sealed and it looks like no one can open it until... *"I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne..."* (Revelation 5:4-6).

Triumphant, Jesus is the one who can carry out God's plan. The Bible is not crystal clear about the specifics of the end of the world, even Jesus when asked says not to worry about the details. Revelation is not a timeline meant for interpretation, instead it is a poem intended to inspire hope. In the face of pain and suffering, God is working to overcome evil.

When Jesus returns, his victory over evil is complete. He puts an end to death, pain and suffering. We learn that it is not really the end, rather a brand-new beginning.

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" (Revelation 21:1-5).

DISCUSS

What comes to mind when you think of the end of the world?

Has there been a time in your life when you hoped Jesus would return that day so you would not have to continue in your current circumstances? What did that look like?

How have you seen Jesus walk with you through difficult circumstances, pain and suffering?

Revelation reminds us of the hope we have in Jesus, he is making everything new, bringing a new beginning.

Tell about a time you found hope in a new beginning.

What has this looked like as a follower of Jesus? How have you seen a new beginning, new life and restoration as a follower of Christ?

PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP

Pray that we would have hope, even in the midst of difficult seasons, as we reflect on the new life and restoring work of Christ.

PRAY FOR FCC

Pray that we would share the hope of Christ with our community. Pray that our stories of faith and new life in Christ will encourage others to seek Him.

PRAY FOR OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS

Pray for our global partners in Southern India who operate the Common Ground International School, where they educate toddlers through 7th grade students, in addition to operating an IT business to share the Good News of Jesus. Pray for their ministry, for strong attendance to continue. Pray for God to open the doors for purchasing additional land for their ministry to grow and serve children with special needs and their families. Pray for new employees needed in the IT business.

India is listed as one of the top ten most difficult places to be a Christian. Pray God will make a way; changing laws and regulations to combat the pressure being put on foreigners with work visas, especially Christians.