

Seven: Hope from Jesus in the Revelation
Part 2
Sunday, February 24th, 2019

Revelation 1:6-8 (NLT)

6He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father.
All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

7Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven.

And everyone will see him—
even those who pierced him.

And all the nations of the world
will mourn for him.

Yes! Amen!

8“I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,” says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.”

The usual responses to life are either anxiety or apathy.

God promises to set all things right one day.

**All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins
by shedding his blood for us. (Rev. 1:5b NLT)**

John begins with the Gospel. This is the foundation of all our hope.
Jesus loves you. He gave everything to set you free, and He promises to
finish what He started.

When you know how things will turn out, it changes you.

What you believe really makes a difference.

Revelation 1:10-11 (NLT)

10 It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. 11 It said, "Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

"He was worshipping..."

Revelation 1:17-18 (NLT)

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave."

"Only when my imagination is captured by the powerful beauty of Jesus and how he set me free, am I motivated to go the direction he points me." -René Schlaepfer

What you focus on changes what you expect. Focus on God's power and you expect victory. A simple shift in what you choose to focus on can move you from despair to hope.

Ephesus was a city of overachievers and apparently, the Christians at Ephesus took on this aspect of their culture. They were straight-A students.

A busy lifestyle is not always productive spiritually. In fact, it can actually drain your love for God and for others very easily.

1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

(Revelation 2:1-7 NIV)

Jesus talks about the simplest yet most important thing of all: **Our love for God.** If that’s not right, then nothing else is right.

“Every Christian would agree that a man’s spiritual health is exactly proportional to his love for God.” – C.S. Lewis

Their love for God had grown cold.

From “The Great *I Am*” to “The Great *To Do*.”

We get so busy *for* Him that we can forget to just be *with* Him.

Matthew 24:9-14 (NIV)

9 “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Have we lost the vibrancy of our first love for Jesus? Has our focus shifted from “The Great *I Am*” to “The Great *To Do*?”