

## Sermon Discussion Questions Revelation 1 – 20

### Main Point

The Book of Revelation was written to give unshakable hope, encourage unwavering holiness, refute deception, and fuel mission among the nations.

### Introduction

1. Why do you think so many people are fascinated with the Book of Revelation?
2. Why do you think other people might avoid studying it?
3. If you could understand just one thing in this study of Revelation, what would you want it to be? Why?

Revelation is a letter, a vision, and a revealing (apocalypse... but don't let that scare you, it just means unveiling). Many people avoid the book of revelation because "it's all about end times," but that's not true. If we see revelation as a letter for the future, we will miss its significance for the present time. If we miss that this letter is primarily about Jesus, we will miss **everything** about revelation. How we tend to approach this letter is analogous to the letter itself. We tend to zoom in on the difficult parts, and miss that most of the letter is about God and worship. It's not called the book of hiding, it's the book of revealing! Don't miss the blessing of reading, hearing, and doing, because some people have confused you with a small portion of the letter, or you think there's hidden meaning throughout or that it's too difficult to know. Nancy Guthrie says, "the difficult part of revelation isn't understanding it's meaning, but living it out."

### Understanding

#### Ask a volunteer to read Revelation 1:1-9.

4. How does John describe God the Father in these verses? How does he describe Jesus? How does he describe believers?
5. What three things does Christ do for us (vv. 5-6)? How has your life been changed by each of these actions?

Christian believers everywhere faced strong persecution, and John wrote to encourage them with the assurance they still remained in God's presence. He greeted them with the typical greeting of "grace and peace." However, John said the source of these qualities was "One who is, who was, and who is coming." The three tenses identified to the first-century readers that this Person was God. In threatening times Christians can take heart that God is always with them. No matter how desperate the times appeared, John knew that God transcended time and stood ready to reassure those who follow Him. John described believers as Jesus' "servants" (v. 1), and also as "priests" (v. 6). John also identified Jesus in three ways: (1) the faithful witness, a reference to Jesus' ministry as a prophet; (2) the firstborn from the dead, a phrase referring to his death and resurrection; and (3) the ruler of the kings of the earth. With these descriptions, John encourages us to imitate Jesus' faithfulness, have hope in eternity, and remember that God's eternal kingdom is bigger than anything we face in this world.

6. 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?

John wanted the churches in Asia to know that though Christ had died for their sins, He lived and would one day return to set things right in their troubled world. He also reminded them of God's eternal nature and His great power, a power no one can ultimately resist. John's assurance that everything would work out in the end was rooted in faith in the One who loves us and has set us free from our sins. With verse 9, John began relating his vision of the risen Christ.

#### Ask a volunteer to read Revelation 1:9-16.

7. The seven lampstands in verse 12 represent Christian churches. What does it mean for a church to be a light? How do we do this?

8. Jesus is portrayed majestically among the churches (vv. 12-16). What does this mean? How does it apply to our present-day churches and our personal lives?

The lampstands represent Christian churches (v. 20), giving spiritual light to a dark world just as lampstands bring physical light to the darkness. John's first vision of Jesus was His presence, not in heaven, but among the lampstands. Jesus was with His people, assuring them of His presence. Christians throughout the centuries have found comfort in this vision because it gives them assurance of Christ's presence with them as well.

**Ask a volunteer to read Revelation 1:17-20.**

The appearance of the Lord to John was so startling that he fell as a dead man at Jesus' feet. Worship is always the right response in God's presence. Jesus comforted John by reminding him that He is the "First and the Last." The living Christ is the Master over all time—past, present, and future.

9. What are some circumstances or events that have happened in your past that caused you to be as overwhelmed by God as John was?
10. Jesus said that He is victorious over death and Hades (v. 18). What are the implications of this truth for your current circumstances?

**Application**

11. Of the truths in this passage, which most motivates you to live a life of urgency and preparation, both in your own spiritual growth and your commitment to sharing the gospel with others? Explain your thoughts.
12. What are appropriate responses to the revelation of Christ's glory? What is one step you can take to make sure you acknowledge His glory every day.