



WEEK 1: THE SETTING

Many of us tend to shy away from the book of Revelation – partly because it’s hard to understand, and partly because it can be a bit frightening if one is not sure of his salvation. However, the book of Revelation is filled with bright hope for the future for those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this study we are only going to look at the first five chapters and the last few chapters of this book. My prayer is that these chapters would whet your appetite for the rest of the book and that you will continue to study this important book.

Many are fascinated with this book because of all of its prophecy regarding the end times. This is important, because this is God’s plan and our hope for the future. However, many miss the big picture of the book in the process – the summation of all things in Jesus Christ.

This week we will look at the setting and lay the foundation for what lies ahead in the seven letters. Don’t get discouraged if the passages are hard to understand. Focus on what God wants to teach you through His Word. Together, let’s rekindle the fire in our hearts for Christ as we study these letters to the seven churches.

DAY 1: THE INTRODUCTION

I. Looking to God's Word

Read Revelation 1:1-3

1. The author identifies himself four times in the book of Revelation. Who wrote this book (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8)?
2. List the five personages in verses 1-4 in the “chain of communication” of this revelation; i.e., God the Father to ...
3. What do we know about the author from these passages?

Matthew 4:18-22

Matthew 17:1-2

Mark 10:35-37

Mark 14:32-33

John 19:26-27

4. What was the purpose of this revelation?
5. What should be the readers' (and our) response to this revelation and why (v. 3)?

II. Looking Upward

6. “Blessed is he who reads... hears... heeds” these things (v. 3). What is the difference in reading, hearing, and heeding? Which is most difficult for you and why?
7. The angel told John in 1:3 that “the time is near,” and yet we are still waiting today to see this prophecy in the book of Revelation fulfilled. How do you explain that to someone who is skeptical, and what Scripture would you use to support your answer?
8. If you knew Jesus were to return tomorrow, how would you spend your remaining time on this earth? Are there any relationships to reconcile, wrongs to right, people to share Christ with?

III. Looking Deeper

Revelation 1:3 is the first of seven beatitudes in the book, beginning with the word, “Blessed.” It means much more than happy. The word, “blessed” describes the favorable circumstance God has put a person in.¹

List the other beatitudes.

¹ Ken Barker, *Zondervan NASB Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 1849.

Revelation 14:13

Revelation 16:15

Revelation 19:9

Revelation 20:6

Revelation 22:7

Revelation 22:14

How would you summarize who is blessed and why?

IV. Looking Reflectively

We don't know the exact day Jesus will return, but we know He will. Live every day as if He's coming tomorrow.

Are you ready for His return? If not, what do you need to do to be ready?

DAY 2: THE SALUTATION

I. Looking to God's Word

Read Revelation 1:4-8

1. To whom did John write this letter? List them. (Revelation 1:4, 11)
2. What three titles are ascribed to Jesus Christ in verse 5a and what is the significance of each title? (Also look at John 18:37, Colossians 1:17-18, and Revelation 19:16).
3. What three "things" describe His relationship with us in verses 5b-6?
4. What does it mean that "He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God"? (See also 1 Peter 2:5, 9 and Rev. 5:10.)

II. Looking Upward

5. Verse 7 is considered by many to be the key verse of this book. What is it referring to and why would it be the key verse?
6. Which attributes of God are evident in this passage? Which attribute most encourages you today and why?

III. Looking Deeper

Jesus referred to Himself in verse 8 as "the Alpha and Omega...who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Why are these names and descriptions especially appropriate for the theme of this book?

According to Isaiah 11:2, what is one possibility of whom or what the "seven Spirits" mentioned in Revelation 1:4 refer to? (You may also want to look at a commentary or Study Bible.)

IV. Looking Reflectively

"There are two hundred and fifty-six names given in the Bible for the Lord Jesus Christ, and I suppose this was because He was infinitely beyond all that any one name could express."²

He alone is worthy to be praised.

Take some time to praise Him for who He is and for what He has done, using today's verses to guide you.

² Billy Sunday, in a sermon, "Wonderful," quoted in *The Real Billy Sunday*.

DAY 3: THE PATMOS VISION

I. Looking to God's Word

Read Revelation 1:9-16

1. Where was John when he received this revelation and why was he there?
2. In what three areas was John a fellow-partaker? What does it mean to be a partaker in these things?
3. Describe what John saw and heard when he turned to see the voice that was speaking to him.
4. Which attributes of God does John's description of Christ emphasize?

II. Looking Upward

5. In what ways have you shared in "the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance" of Christ?
6. How would you describe Jesus Christ to a non-believer?

III. Looking Deeper

How does the description of Christ in Revelation 1:12-16 depict Him as both a priest and a judge? (See also Leviticus 16:1-4 and Hebrews 4:12-13.)

IV. Looking Reflectively

It is hard to adequately describe Jesus Christ in all His glory.

Fall on your knees and worship Him in light of these verses.

DAY 4: THE RESPONSE

I. Looking to God's Word

Read Revelation 1:17-20

1. What are some possible reasons why John fell at His feet like a dead man when he saw Him?
2. Which attributes of God does Jesus' description of Himself point to?
3. What does it mean that Jesus has the "keys of death and of Hades" (v. 18)?
4. What do the seven lampstands and the seven stars represent (v. 20)? Who are the angels of the seven churches?

II. Looking Upward

5. What causes you to fear God or to fall before His feet?
6. How does the fact that He is the first and the last, the living One, alive forevermore, holding the keys of death and Hades impact your life personally?

III. Looking Deeper

The number "seven" occurs 54 times in the book of Revelation. In the Bible, it is associated with completion, fulfillment, and perfection.³ How do these verses support that association?

Genesis 2:2

Exodus 20:8-11

Leviticus 14:7

Acts 6:3

IV. Looking Reflectively

*"Help us believe the intensity, the eternity of the love that has found us. Then love will cast out fear; and our troubled hearts will be at peace, trusting not in what we are but in what Thou hast declared Thyself to be."*⁴ – A.W. Tozer

When we realize all that God is, we should respond with a reverential awe and worship Him.

Take some time to reflect on your own view of God and your response to Him. Do you have a reverential awe for God? If not, why?

³ Charles Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 2013.

⁴ A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (San Francisco: Harper, 1961), 104.

DAY 5: THE DOCTRINE

I. Looking to God's Word

Re-read Revelation 1

1. There is quite a bit of doctrine in Revelation 1. What do you see concerning each doctrine in these verses?

- A. Soteriology – the doctrine of salvation (vv. 5-6)
- B. Christology – the doctrine of Christ (vv. 5, 8, 17-18)
- C. Eschatology – the doctrine of end times (vv. 1, 3, 7)
- D. Trinitarianism – the doctrine of the Trinity (vv. 4-5)

II. Looking Upward

2. What are some lessons for life or personal application that you can draw from this chapter?

3. What made the biggest impact on your life from Revelation 1?

III. Looking Deeper

Read: 2 Peter 3:8-15

Describe the coming day of the Lord.

What is Peter's exhortation to his readers concerning the return of the Lord?

What similarities do you see between the messages in this passage and Revelation 1?

IV. Looking Reflectively

It is good to understand and recognize doctrine, but if we don't apply it personally, it is just head knowledge, not heart knowledge.

*"It will be vain to become occupied with 'sevens,' 'hundred-forty-four-thousands,' 'six-sixty-sixes,' the restoration of the Roman Empire, the person of the antichrist, the two wild beasts, the 'millennium,' or even the new Jerusalem; unless, along with God the Father, who has subjected all things unto **Him**, **Christ** is ever before our eyes!"⁵*

That is why we have spent much of this week worshipping Jesus Christ. Is your focus on Him more than anything else?

Next Week: Read Revelation 2:1-7 and join us on Sunday morning as we study this passage.

⁵William R. Newell, *The Book of the Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1935), 31.