

- ii. A Future Vision: *Every eye will see Him, even those who pierced him, all all peoples (lit. tribes) on earth will mourn because of Him.*
 - a) Zechariah 12:10 Future restoration of Jerusalem.
 - b) John captures that to describe the ultimate response of the Gentile nations to Christ.

iii. To this vision there is but One response: *“Yes! Amen!”*

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What has been your attitude or approach to Revelation?
- Have you seen some of the false claims many have made from this book? Have you seen how this has damaged the cause of the Gospel?
- Why is it always important to read Scripture through the lens of the particular genre or style of writing which contains it?
- Why might a study of Revelation be good? What purposes could it serve?
- What is the beatitude with which this book begins? Since beatitudes intend motivate the recipient, how should it motivate us?
- How should we understand the uses of the number seven in our opening text (1:1-8)? (Seven churches; seven spirits.)
- From whom is the blessing of benediction?
- How might Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 41:4 inform our understanding of the description of the Father in 1:4?
- How do each of the descriptions of Jesus Christ correspond to how this book is calling disciples to live?
- To what does the description of Christ lead? How does it teach us to worship?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Worship and Witness in a Winner-Takes-All World (1)

Jerry Cisar — September 11, 2022

Text: Revelation 1:1-8

Introduction

“Though John the Evangelist saw many strange monsters in his vision, he saw no creature so wild as one of his own commentators.” (G.K. Chesterton)

Michael Gorman: “Revelation is not about the antichrist, but about the living Christ. It is not about a rapture out of this world but about faithful discipleship in this world. That is, like every other New Testament book, Revelation is about Jesus Christ— ‘A revelation of Jesus Christ’ (Rev 1:1)—and about following him in obedience and love. ‘If anyone asks, “Why read the Apocalypse?”, the unhesitating answer must be, “To know Christ better.”’” (*Reading Revelation Responsibly*)

“Apocalyptic literature has always been an effort to respond to very basic human questions that transcend time and place: How do we live in a world rife with evil? Does God care about our predicament? Will justice finally be found on earth? What happens when we die? These and other questions live in the heart of humanity. The book of Revelation offers powerful, poetic answers to them.” (Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther. *Unveiling Empire*)

I. A Beatitude (1:1-3)

A. Beatitudes motivate behavior.

i. The *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-6)

ii. What genre (type of writing) is this?

Michael Gorman: “Revelation is simultaneously an apocalypse, a prophecy, and a letter, ‘an apocalyptic prophecy in the form of a circular letter.’”

Eugene Peterson: Revelation reveals that “the gospel of Jesus Christ is more political than anyone imagines, but *in a way that no one guesses.*”

B. The Revelation of Jesus Christ

C. To Show His Slaves

II. A Benediction (1:4-5c)

A. John

B. To the seven churches in the province of Asia.

C. Grace and peace to you.

D. From whom is this blessing? The Trinity!

i. The Father: *from the one who is and the one who was and the One coming....*

a) Exo 3:14

b) Isa 41:4b

ii. The Holy Spirit: *from the seven spirits before his throne.*

iii. From the Son: *from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

a) *Who is the faithful witness.* We are being called to be faithful witnesses in this book, so we need to know who our example is.

b) *Who is the firstborn from the dead,* or to hear it like they may have heard it: *the firstborn from among the corpses.* This is important since we are being called to be faithful witnesses even to the point of death.

c) *The ruler of the kings of the earth.* Since we are being called in this book to reject emperor worship to turn to the One who died... we need to see beyond what appears out the train window (Emperors and their military rule!) to the fact that *He is the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

III. An Exuberant Worship (1:5d-8)

A. This worship begins with our redemption.

i. *He loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood.*

ii. That redemption had a purpose: to be a “kingdom, priests to his God and Father” (lit.).

iii. “To Him be the glory and the power into the age of ages, Amen.” (lit.)

B. Now this worship calls the participant to do something: Look!

i. A Present Reality: *Look, He comes with the clouds.*

a) Daniel 7:13 “*Look, in the clouds of the sky, one like a son of man has come.*” (Translation of LXX)

b) Daniel 7:13b-14) Exuberant worship!