

# CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## Lifegroup Study – Revelation an introduction

As we begin this series looking at the book of Revelation it is important to remember that it has been included in the Bible for a reason. So first of all it had to mean something to the church back then. It is my prayer and my hope that as we explore this book together over the next few weeks there will be something of a fresh revelation of God's plan for his church – and most specifically for us. As the inspired word of God it has much to offer us on how we see our world and our place in it.

- **When it comes to the Book of revelation what experiences have you had or what comes to mind about the book?**

The introduction gives us great insight into the type of writing we are reading.

### Read Revelation 1:1-6

- **What stand out in reading the introduction?**
- **Who is it from? Why is it being written? Are good questions to ask of anything we read.**

It is first introduced as an apocalypse i.e. revelation

Apocalypse is a form of writing that anyone who has read the books of Daniel or Ezekiel would have been familiar with. It was known to the Jews and as a result to John's Jewish Christian audience.

It involves the depiction of life as it is through a supernatural lens given by a supernatural being- i.e. an Angel. Because it is dealing with reality that is beyond our ability to see - imagery and sounds are used to help inspire our imagination to grasp heavenly dimension to life. There is something about it that is meant to capture our heart not just our head. The fantastical images of Beasts and dragon Angels and mythical creatures are used to convey a truth about our reality and the world around us.

Just like Jesus teaches us to pray Our Father who art in Heaven Hallowed be your name – Your kingdom come – our minds are focused first of all on heaven. Revelation invites us to engage our imagination to help us to see our world and hopefully our life differently. The aim is to help us re-imagine the world around us to see things from God's perspective as the ultimate creator and ruler of His Creation.

- **Revelation has been described as having a political element or being *resistance literature* – why do you think this is?**

We are told in verse 3 that this is Prophecy and like all biblical prophecy through it God reveals his perspective on the world and his presence and Lordship in the present as we see it unfold according to his plan. True Prophecy helps us to discern the divine purpose in our situation so we can respond in a way appropriate to this purpose<sup>1</sup>.

- **Do you agree with this definition of prophecy? Why/why not?**

God who sits on the throne, God who is Jesus Christ and God who embodies the seven spirits is speaking to his people prophetically so we can understand the time we are in and the world around us so we can respond appropriately.

**Read Revelation 1:7-8, Daniel 7:13, Zech. 12:10**

- **John uses references to the Old Testament extensively in Revelation – do you think this has the same impact on us today as it did to John's first audience?**

**Read Revelation 1:9-11**

- **What do we know about John from this passage?**

**Read Revelation 1:12-20**

As we go through Revelation the symbolic nature of the numbers used and the images will come up often. To his original audience these numbers had significance. The number 7, being the number of completeness or wholeness, is here used in relation to the churches and earlier in relation to the Spirit. This suggests that there is a greater intended audience than just the churches of Asia.

- **Do you think it possible that revelation has as much relevance to us as it did to the church of the first century?**
- **Why do you think the churches are represented lamp stands?**
- **Where do you think Jesus is going with this analogy?**

The most wonderful thing for us is to know that God is still invested and interested in His Church. He watches over us and is present with us keeping to his word to never leave nor forsake us.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Baukham – the Theology of Revelation, 1993