



Revelation 1

P James • June 25, 2017

- I. Stay within God's Story and the Six "Cs."
 - A. It isn't hard to get the big idea for the first five C-words (Creation, Catastrophe, Covenant, Christ, and Community).
 - B. It seems more difficult to dial in on the meaning of our sixth C-word: Consummation. We keep fudging and using Celebration and "coming again."
 - C. Our study in Revelation this summer will help us understand consummation. Let's take a journey together!
 - II. Jesus tried to help his disciples expand their expectations of the Messiah (Luke 21:5-9).
 - A. Many people expected the Messiah to come as a military conqueror and defeat the Romans (see Acts 1:6).
 - B. Much of this was based on texts like Psalm 2.
 - C. Jesus had to remind his disciples many times that he was going to suffer, die, and rise again in Jerusalem (Luke 9:21-22, 43-45; 18:31-34).
 - D. He gave a series of unbreakable promises about coming again with great power (Luke 21:27-33).
 - E. We will consider some of these as we allow Revelation to address us this summer!
 - III. How Do We Read Revelation?
 - A. Carefully! This is the most complicated book in the Bible and our understanding of it will depend on how much we understand the Old Testament.
 - B. Read this book aloud (Rev 1:3). Revelation is meant to be heard and it is meant to play across our imagination with gripping pictures of salvation and justice.
 - C. Revelation must be heard in the company of other Christians. It was written for seven different congregations in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) about the year 90 AD. At the time it was written, we think many of the images and symbols were easily recognized. This is much more difficult for us 20 centuries later!
 - D. Revelation is meant to give us both hope and warning. Both rise from God's promises recorded in the Old Testament—especially in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.
 - E. Revelation is meant to be taken seriously, but not always literally. As we read and reread Revelation in context with the rest of the Bible, we can learn how many of the images are meant to be taken: literally, symbolically, poetically, etc.
- IV. Here are three big ideas for living with Revelation 1:
 - A. This is the Revelation from and about Jesus the Messiah (Rev 1:1). He will bring justice to this earth and he will make all things new (Rev 21:5).
 - B. As those who trust and hope in our Messiah, we are greatly loved and promised a very good future (Rev 1:5-6, 5:10, and 22:5).
 - C. The word of God will judge the earth. Jesus promised this in his earthly ministry (John 3:16-21, 12:47-48). This is powerfully portrayed in John's vision of Jesus (Rev 1:16). What can God's double-edged sword do?

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)
 - D. What does God find in your heart this morning? Anxiety? Fear? Trust? Hope?
 - E. Return to Rev 1:5: God loves us and has freed us from our sins! Let us serve him with glad and joyful hearts!