

Revelation Chapter 1:3-20
Session 3 Teaching Notes – From Live Session 1/23/2022

*** Review - Revelation Chapter 1**

Verse 1 – “Revelation OF Jesus Christ/Messiah” and/or “Revelation FROM Jesus Christ/Messiah”

1 – Christologically focused – what will be revealed/unveiled/uncovered ABOUT Jesus – this translation targets the WHO – who is going to be revealed

2 – Message/Text focused – what will be revealed/unveiled/uncovered FROM Jesus – this translation targets the WHAT – what is going to be revealed

“Revelation is given to us as a gift but also as a true disclosure of who Jesus is – Jesus is the content and agent of the book” – Eugene Peterson, Reversed Thunder

Revelation isn’t just about a WHAT, it is about a WHO!

Comment - In many respects, I don’t worry about the details of this book...they are sometimes mind-numbing and confusing, but if Revelation is about HOPE and the Victory of Jesus, the restoration of God’s original design – and that restored design is illuminated and given life by the presence of Jesus, as long as Jesus is there, not matter what future is, I’m in!

1. Chapter One - setting the stage

- A. Verses 1-3 - Urgency of the message of Revelation. When people are under fire in their lives, they are desperate for hope; a message, a word of hope, or someone who is a “living hope.” Urgency gets and heightens our attention and amplifies our response.

Around every bend in the story of Revelation, people are challenged to make a decision: “Are we going to shape our lives around these truths, this Revelation of who Jesus is and what God is doing in world/kingdom?” “Are you on the side of Jesus or the beast?” There is a decisional character of the prophetic/apocalyptic literature of the Bible, especially the New Testament – Luke 1:1-4, John 20:30-31

Question - Do you have a sense of urgency in the mission that we share with Jesus? We have been called and gifted by God to be difference makers to His glory – there is a good balance in this section with the proclamation of the Lordship, Hope and Victory of Jesus (our call to trust and “rest” in the Lord) as well as a call to mission/discipleship.

1:3 – “*Blessed is he – who reads*” (action), “*those who hear*” (action), “*the words of the prophecy*” (prophetic material in the Bible is blatantly urgent and decisional), and “*heed the things which are written in it*” (action).

Robin’s comments – what are YOU urgent for?

- When people’s lives are desperate – when they are under fire...who or what do they fall back on? That is a key issue in our journey in the Lord.

- Do we attempt to pick ourselves up by our bootstraps, blame others, or trust in God?
- Around every decision you and I make – whose side are you on?
- Do we have a sense of urgency in who we are, what we are called to be and do as Jesus followers?
- Here's some information on me – the reason I “push” this or any faith community or any Jesus follower, for that matter, is not just about staying “on mission” or for the sake of change or to remain or move toward faithfulness – I take Jesus following, being a part of HIS Body and His call to mission seriously.
- When I was a full-time pastor, it wasn't a job for me – or even a calling - this is life/death – ultimate meaning and purpose in life for people and a world that needs Jesus!
- It is time to stop playing “church” – it is time to realize that we have to stop pretending that being “religious” is what Jesus following is all about.
- Here's the disruptive truth – “the emperor has no clothes” – the reality is that the institutional Christianity is waning in the 21st century – we have to be very serious and even “urgent” about asking ourselves whether we are being faithful to Jesus' calling and commission for us to make disciples (as individuals and as a congregation)
- In other words, how are we acting on the authority that Jesus gave us (Matthew 28:18-20)?
- Are we more like Jesus than a year ago?
- Are we using the resources that God has given us for Jesus' purposes? Our church is a center for equipping and releasing disciples in our community.

1:3 – “*blessed*” – same word that Jesus uses in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5. There are 7 “blessed” in the book of Revelation (1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14)

Question for Discussion – what does it mean to be “blessed?”

Remember, being “blessed” is not about happiness. If you have a translation that says in Matthew 5:3, “*Happy are the poor in spirit*” (GNB) that's a bit off). “Blessedness” is rather “shalom” – we are in God's shalom despite the circumstances of our lives – each “blessed” in Revelation (7 of them) is meant to motivate the hearers to align themselves with Jesus. This is John's message – you want to be blessed? Listen and respond.

1:3 – “*Aloud*” – remember, John's audience is not a literary audience – book of Revelation was meant to be read ALOUD

1:3 – “*Time in near*” – in other words, something is coming – this is about a decision and the imminence of Jesus' judgement and coming justice.

B. Verses 4-8 - The centrality of Jesus is all of life

Discussion – why is it important to have Jesus as CENTRAL in your life?

- Jesus as Savior AND Lord – a lot of people need and want Jesus as Lord. Who wouldn't want their sins forgiven, given promise of grace and new life. FOLLOWING Jesus, obeying Jesus, trusting Jesus as Lord is a different story! We need both! Thank Jesus for salvation and trust Him to lead us as Lord.

1:4 – This section starts like so many of the letters of the New Testament but it underscores the diverse literary genre of the book of Revelation – as we've already mentioned, Revelation is Apocalyptic (1:1) and Prophetic literature (1:3) as well as a Letter (1:3-4).

1:4 – “*Grace and Peace to you.*” Grace – what does that mean? Peace – what does that mean? To whom? “*to you*” – why is that important?

1:4-8 – Do you see the Trinitarian “formula” in this section? Even before the Trinity was an articulated doctrine of the Church, people who followed and loved God knew that God was “beyond” description. Our tendency to put God in a “box.” The Trinity reminds us that we can't define God...if we could, God would cease to be God because we'd be in control. Trinitarian theology is a cornerstone of Christian and scriptural teaching on the character and nature of God.

1:4 – “*Who is, was, and is to come*” – note the ORDER. Logic says, “who was, who is and who is to come” or liturgy “as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.” - that makes sense! Then WHY does John say, “who is, who was and is to come?” Difference between “Kairos and Kronos” time – God's timing is alluded to in this verse. “Time-line” teaching of Revelation is not faithful to the text itself in how God views time. Also, the importance of the presence of Jesus NOW in our lives! Praise God for what Jesus did in the past...praise God for what God has promised for our future...but THANK GOD that Jesus is near...present in these moments with us!