

Studying the book of Revelation (2)

@Concord Community Church on 19/01/2025

SEVEN WAYS Revelation is relevant for us today(V3).

Because Revelation includes details about the future, many dismiss its relevance for today. Yet it offers an abundance of wisdom & guidance for us right now. Right at the start, we are encouraged by the promise that we who “keep what is written in it” will be blessed. “To keep” refers to obedience. James 1:22 says to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only”. If we are to obey what is in Revelation, that means the book is practical.

Christ Himself provides many instructions and rebukes in Revelation 2-3. In His letters to the seven churches, are praises and reproofs written to today’s churches as well. Because every believer is part of the church. As such, we should take these letters to heart. The prophetic content of Revelation is relevant to US in these ways:

1. Our confidence in God grows as we realize His ability to keep His promises.
2. Our trust in Scripture is strengthened by fulfilled prophecy.
3. We gain an eternal prospective as we realize the world is temporary and heaven is forever.
4. We are motivated to purity as we recognize God’s hatred for sin.
5. We are compelled to share the Gospel with the lost before time runs out.
6. The worsening of evil in the future helps us see the need to live as Salt and Light now.
7. Our reverent worship of God deepens as we see His power and wisdom on display.

The more we realize that Revelation is practical today, the more excited we will be as we read it. As you & me do so and make a deliberate effort to

“keep what is written in it”, we will find this a worthwhile pursuit, for it comes with the promise of blessing.

THE GOOD NEWS OF REVELATION (V4).

Grace & Peace, these two words in the opening of the book of Revelation rarely get the attention they deserve. They provide much needed perspective for the entire book, reminding us that eternal God— “who is and who was and who is to come”—is a God of grace & peace.

It may seem strange for Revelation to begin with wishes of grace and peace to its readers because the book is famously known for describing the opposite. It is filled with prophecies about wrath & war, punishment & destruction. It portrays a massive outpouring of God’s judgment & fury in a time when people have descended into the darkest depths of evil ever.

God’s original design for those made in His image, was a glorious world in which we would have dwelled Him in grace & peace. For the book of Revelation to open with wishes of grace & peace reminds us that God is the origin and provider of all grace & peace. It is humanity that ushered sin into the world and brought forth the curse that has resulted in decay & death.

Nothing less than a complete eradication of sin & evil will make it possible for God’s creation, to be restored to the state He intended for it. After God’s wrath has run its course and Satan & sin have been banished, we will once again live in God’s presence and experience His perfect grace& peace.

The good news of the Revelation is this: Even in the time of great judgment, His offer of grace & peace will continue to be proclaimed to people everywhere, through vessels He has appointed for that purpose.

His love for the lost is steadfast, and His character unchanging. And after the storm of His wrath is passed, His Grace & Peace will prevail- for all eternity.

JESUS: THE ULTIMATE PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING(V5)

At the beginning of the Revelation, Jesus is introduced as Prophet, Priest and King. In the Bible, those who hold these offices were anointed—they

were specially chosen by God for these responsibilities. Jesus's title MESSIAH means "anointed one". As God in human flesh, He is the ultimate anointed one—the ultimate Prophet and King.

As "**the faithful witness**" Jesus fulfilled the role of Prophet. In Scripture, a prophet is one who speaks for God. Like 1:18 tells us Jesus was anointed to "Proclaim good news". All through his ministry, He carried out the work of a prophet by pointing people back to the Father, revealing the truth, and foretelling the future. In these ways Jesus was the ultimate Prophet.

As "**the first born of the dead**" Jesus fulfilled the role of Priest. Representing us before the Father, He gave Himself as the sacrifice necessary to wash away our sins and restore us spiritually. Because he rose from the dead, we are guaranteed to rise from the dead too. As the ultimate High Priest, He shed His blood for us (Hebrews 7:27) and He prays for us (v25).

As "**the ruler of the kings on earth,**" Jesus will fulfil the role of king. All through the Old Testament, the prophets said the Messiah would one day reign as king (Gen 40:10; 2-Sam 7:16; Psalm 2:6). Daniel 7:13-14 tells us He will have "an everlasting dominion". As the "king of kings and the Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16), Jesus will be the Ultimate King.

When SIN separated us from God, we needed a prophet who would reveal the truth to us, a Priest who could offer a sacrifice that cleansed us, and a king who would guide and care for us.

In the Messiah, the ultimate Anointed One, we have all three. He is our Prophet, our Priest and our King. In Jessu we have everything we need.

REVEALING WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE FOR US (VV5-6).

It is fitting that a book that begins with the words "the revelation of Jesus Christ" would immediately start by revealing what Christ has done for us, as stated in Revelation 1:5-6.

1. **HE LOVED US.** God reached down to show His love for us even "while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8). So great is this love that

He sent His Son, who humbled Himself and died for us. And this love is eternal—**nothing** can separate us from Him (Romans 8:37-39).

2. **HE FREED US.** Christ released us from our sins—forever. We are no longer in bondage, and no one can condemn us. In Him, we are righteous. Our assurance of heaven is guaranteed!
3. **HE MADE US TO BE A KINGDOM.** Christ dwells in us, which makes it possible for us to experience His loving rule in & through us, even while we are still here on earth.
4. **HE MADE US PRIESTS TO HIS GOD AND FATHER.** Because we are forgiven and Christ's righteousness has been granted to us, we can enter God's presence. We can approach His throne of grace in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

Within the first few verses of Revelation, we see the incredible depth of Christ's love, forgiveness and provision for us. He loved us and freed us from sin so we can enter heaven. Through us, He rules and has given us the direct access to the Father!

The eternal benefits we enjoy as believers were prompted by Christ's love for us. Only He could gift us with such wonderful blessings. Considering what Christ has done for us, the appropriate response is: "To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever" (Revelation 1:6). The greatness of Christ's love for us should inspire us to exalt Him in praise.

CHRIST'S COMING IS SURE, CERTAIN AND DEFINITE!

Revelation 1:7 opens with the exclamation "Behold". This is to get our attention. Apostle John does not want us to miss this announcement, as it sets the stage for the entire rest of the book.

The absolute certainty of Christ's return is proclaimed all through the Bible. For every prophecy in Scripture about the first coming of our Lord Jesus, there are eight (8) prophecies about His second coming. We have enormous prophetic evidence that His 2nd advent will take place as promised & prophesied. The God who brought about the 1st coming will

bring about the 2nd too. Jesus will return gloriously “with the clouds” and every eye will see Him”. No one will miss this spectacular event.

Zechariah 12:10 informs us that on this day, God will “Pour out” upon the Jews “a Spirit of grace” and many will genuinely repent. As for the tribes of the earth, they will wail mostly in unrepentant terror.

John ends with two powerful affirmations. “Even so. Amen.” The first is in Greek and is like saying “This will be!” The second is in Hebrews “Amen”, which is also a strong assurance—meaning so be it.

God makes it clear that Christ’s return is a **fixed event** on His calendar. **It will happen!**