

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Week 2 – Small Group Study

Meet the Messiah

RECAP part 1. Chapter 1: 1 – 8: Introduction and Greetings

What information are you given in the first 3 verses? Who is it written by and who is it written to? What is the purpose of the writing?

What phrase is used to introduce God? Consider the meaning of the number 7 when you read the seven churches and the seven spirits. How do the two connect with each other? (In Revelation, the number 7 is used symbolically to speak of wholeness or completeness).

What are the phrases used to introduce Jesus? What/who is Jesus? Are there any Old Testament passages being referred to here? What is the significance of these? Reiterate the summary of the Good News as presented here. Why would this be good news to those who first received the letter?

READ: Verses 9 – 20 – Jesus the ‘One in the Middle’.

How does John refer to himself in this passage? What might be the meaning of the words: tribulation, kingdom, and patient endurance? What does this say about the life of discipleship? John then hears “a voice like a trumpet.” In the Old Testament, a trumpet is sounded as a call to battle and/or as a call to worship. In what way does this vision call us to both of these things simultaneously? How are they related?

What follows is a description of the character of Jesus as Messiah and Lord, not a physical description of his actual appearance. Go through the description given of this one “like a son of man.” The main OT reference here is Daniel 7, why is this significant? How does Revelation clarify or ‘fill out’ what Daniel saw in his vision of God and his Messiah, during the Babylonian exile?

Notice that Jesus is standing among the lampstands. Where is a golden lampstand found in the Old Covenant? Why is this significant? Jesus stands in the midst of his churches. They are not alone – he is always with them. What is the meaning of the seven stars? In the Roman world, the seven (known) stars were believed to guide human fate. How does this vision challenge this Roman belief?

Who is this Jesus? Note He is dressed in the robe of a priest. What is the function of a priest? In what way is Jesus a priest for us now? He has a golden sash around his chest, signifying he is also royalty. John is also drawing here from Daniel 10:4-9.

What does hair, as white as wool/snow tell us about Jesus? His blazing eyes? His pure bronze feet? His voice of rushing waters? Why is a sword coming from his mouth? What does the sword represent? His shining face?

What phrase is repeated from verse 4? Who did it describe then, and who now?

Now, how would you define the character and qualities of the Messiah? John does not want his readers to have any doubt as to who has given him the following message and the authority behind it. What does it mean that Jesus holds the keys to death and Hades (i.e. the grave, in the Greco-Roman world Hades referred to 'the realm of the dead')?

Who is the message for and why is God revealing it? Again, the number 7 may not only mean those seven churches (although it means that too), but there were other churches in that region at the time of John's writing (~95 A.D.). The 7 stars are the angels or messengers that are present in the midst of the church. Again, 7 is symbolic of completeness, wholeness. The idea of God's angelic host working in the midst of the church is something of a mystery to us, but do you think it might mean? What does it suggest about the intimate connection between 'heaven' and 'earth'?

How do you think we should respond to this vision? What do you think it mean for us today?