



# Hope in Troubled Times

“A Study in the Book of Revelation”

## Transformed by a Vision

Intro:

- What is the meaning of that dashboard sign?
- Revelation misunderstood as a terrifying book rather than a book of hope and comfort
- Two typical ways we deal with the book of Revelation:
  - Avoid or Obsess
- Want to approach the book as the early church and hear the Word of God speak clearly the message of hope, comfort, and encouragement.
- The power of a vision-you never look at things the same way again.
- 4 Typical views of Understanding the Book of Revelation:
  - Futurist (future)
  - Preterist (past)
  - Historicist (span of history)
  - Spiritualist (divine drama with eternal truths)

### I. KEYS TO HELP US UNDERSTAND

- Not a book of hidden codes, but a Revelation (Apocalypse) from God to us
  - Comparing Revelation to a Parable (not a code to break but a truth to behold)
- Discover the Message to the Original Readers (Rev 1:4)
  - Letter to Christians in 7 Churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey)
  - Rome was the dominant and very popular Human Kingdom.
  - The Role of the Emperor Cult
  - The Tyranny of Emperor Domitian
    - “Our Lord and God”
  - Letter to Christians living in a culture that was uninfluenced by Christianity and whose values, virtues, and culture didn’t match that of the church.
    - Persecution (2 Tim 3:12)
    - Compromise and Temptation
- The Purposes of the Book of Revelation
  - Addresses the question: “Who is Lord?”
  - See the events of the world from a Heavenly perspective
  - Know who the true enemy is. (Eph 6:13)
    - Cosmic battle and the earthly battle

- Follow the Lamb and suffer now but rewarded in the Heavenly Kingdom, or Follow Babylon (Human Kingdom) and be rewarded now but suffer with her defeat.
- God Wins!
- Take it Seriously but not necessarily Literally (hybrid of letter, apocalyptic literature, prophesy)
  - Apocalyptic Literature characteristics
    - Evocative imagery to elicit response (more than just know, you feel)
    - Use of symbols that denote spiritual realities and historical events
    - Rich in Old Testament imagery
- Focus on the Forest, Not the Trees (Rev 1:3)
  - Meant to be read aloud in its entirety
  - Meant to be experienced and not dissected
- Jesus is at the Center of Everything
  - His Revelation (Rev 1:1)
  - His Image of Glory and Victory (Rev 1:12-18)
    - Based off Daniel 10
  - His Example
    - Victory is won by Trusting God, Suffering for the Truth, and through Sacrifice
    - Dominant image of Jesus in book is “Lamb that was slain”
- Listen for the Primary Call to “Patiently Endure”
  - Hypermone- “To Abide Under”
  - 3 Shared Callings (Rev 1:9)
    - Members of the Kingdom
    - Brothers in Suffering (John was on Patmos)
    - The Call to Patiently Endure
  - Why? Its worth it!

### II. Lessons to Take With Us

- Crystal ball Christians, Divination, worry, and knowing the future
  - Do we trust God with Tomorrow?
- Life will involve struggle, times of trials, and times of temptation
  - Pop Christianity vs Biblical Christianity
- A changed reality because of what we know
  - How is your life changed because of the eternal truths you know? /MC
- The choice we all have to make: Babylon or the Kingdom of the Lamb
  - Culture vs Christ
- God’s Faithful Promise to us (Rev 1:13)

