

The Apocalypse of St. John

Weekly Discussion Group

Discussion Questions Week 3

- 1) John describes Jesus in a very unique way with intense imagery (like “eyes like flames of fire” and “feet like polished bronze”). What do these images make you think about Jesus’ character?
- 2) In the text, the “Kingdom of God” is both something present and something we anticipate. How does this duality change the way you think about being a part of God’s Kingdom?
- 3) Revelation’s imagery was meant to counter the powerful visuals of Roman culture. What images or influences in today’s culture might make it hard to see things from God’s perspective?
- 4) John describes feeling a sense of fellowship in suffering. Why do you think shared struggles often bring people closer together?
- 5) The text shows that Jesus is central to all reality, as “the First and the Last.” How might thinking about Jesus in this way impact how we approach our everyday lives and challenges?
- 6) Jesus touches John and reassures him with the words, “Don’t be afraid!” In what ways might this reassurance help us face our own fears today?

Sunday’s Text

Revelation 1:9–20 (NLT)

⁹I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God’s Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus.

¹⁰It was the Lord’s Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. ¹¹It said, “Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

¹²When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. ¹³And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. ¹⁴His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire. ¹⁵His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. ¹⁶He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, “Don’t be afraid! I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.

¹⁹“Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen. ²⁰This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Sunday's Message Summary

In the first chapter of Revelation, John describes how he received a prophetic vision from God while exiled on Patmos, a small, barren island where he had been sent for his faith. This book of Revelation is a piece of apocalyptic literature that uses vivid imagery to reveal spiritual truths. Through these images, Revelation sets present realities in the context of both the future and unseen spiritual truths, challenging readers to perceive the world as God sees it. John received his vision on "the Lord's Day" while in worship, and he was commanded by a powerful, trumpet-like voice to record his vision for seven churches in Asia.

John's vision of Jesus is awe-inspiring and symbolic. Jesus appears among seven lampstands, representing the churches, indicating his presence and care for them. He is described with features like white hair, eyes of fire, feet of bronze, and a voice like rushing waters, each symbolizing aspects of his divine authority, purity, and strength. Holding seven stars, Jesus demonstrates control over the universe, and his words, like a sharp sword, pierce through deception and reveal truth. His face shines like the sun, radiating divine glory.

Overwhelmed, John falls at Jesus's feet, but Jesus reassures him with a comforting touch, declaring his eternal life and authority over death. Jesus tells John to write what he has seen, emphasizing that he holds the keys to life and death, overcoming fear. This chapter centers on Jesus as the foundation of faith, encouraging believers to focus on him amidst tribulation. Jesus, the central figure of history, reassures his followers with his sovereignty and presence, empowering them to face challenges with courage and hope.

