

Sermon Guide - Sunday, August 16, 2026

Current Series: The Revelation

The Antichrist. Armageddon. The Beast. 666. For centuries, the book of Revelation has fascinated, frightened, and confused Christians, but what if we've been so focused on decoding its mysteries that we've missed its main message? *The Revelation* is a 3-month journey through the Bible's final book, exploring its controversial prophecies, warnings to the Church, and breathtaking vision of the future. Along the way, we'll separate Scripture from speculation and discover that Revelation wasn't written just to make us afraid of what's coming. It was written to reveal **Jesus Christ** - the King who reigns over all other powers, the Lamb who conquers evil, and the Savior who promises that pain, death, and darkness won't have the last word. **The future belongs to Jesus, and that should change how we live right now.**

Today's Message: Part 1 - Revelation 1

What immediately comes to mind when most people think about the book of Revelation?

What is this book primarily about?

REVELATION is the UNVEILING of _____

Revelation 1:1-2 - The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw - that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word translated as "revelation" is *apokalypsis*. What is the literal meaning of that word?

Three Things Jesus Unveiled about Himself in Revelation 1

1. JESUS IS THE ONE _____

What do we know about Revelation's author, John, and his relationship to Jesus? (see Matt. 4:21-22, Matt. 17:1, John 19:25-27)

John, after so many years of following Jesus, was still looking for him. What might that mean for us today?

A Simple Prayer for When You're Stuck in a Rut: "*Jesus, let me see you.*"

Revelation 1:4-8, 12-13 - Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the *seven spirits* before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father - to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen. "Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all peoples on earth will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." ...I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.

A Note about the "Seven Spirits Before His Throne"

This is a good example of why Revelation can be so confusing for people. John's language and writing style is so different from anything else we find in the New Testament. In Bible times, seven was the number of completion and perfection, and it was often used to communicate the perfect holiness of a person or an idea. For example, when John referred to "the seven spirits" (or, in some Bible translations "the seven-fold spirit") he was referencing Old Testament prophecies like Isaiah 11:1-2: *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord...*

Such prophecies didn't point to seven *distinct* spirits, but to seven attributes of God's Holy Spirit - the same Spirit who John envisioned before the throne of God.

Three Things Jesus Unveiled about Himself in Revelation 1

2. JESUS IS THE ONE _____

What sets Jesus apart from other great religious leaders?

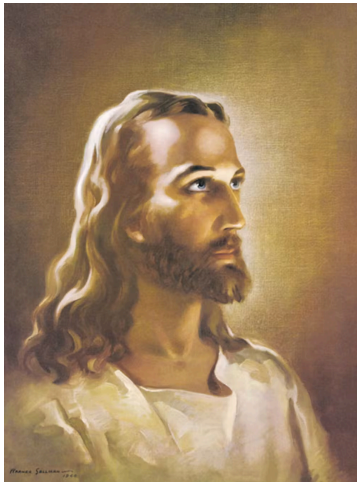
John referred to Jesus as “the faithful witness,” “the firstborn of the dead,” and “the ruler of the kings of the earth.” What was the significance of these titles in reference to Jesus?

The last title that John bestowed upon Jesus is the most important: “*one like a son of man.*” What was John saying about Jesus here?

Daniel 7:13-14 - In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Revelation 1:14-19 - The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades. Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”

How did John’s vision of Jesus differ from the way most people imagine him today?



Three Things Jesus Unveiled about Himself in Revelation 1

3. JESUS IS BOTH _____ and _____

Why are Jesus’ first words to John - *Do not be afraid* - borderline absurd and hilarious? Why was John’s immediate reaction - *to fall down as though dead* - valid and appropriate under the circumstances?

Why do you think most Christians prefer to think of a more docile, domesticated version of Jesus instead of the version John saw? Why is it important for Christians to understand that Jesus is ultimately fearsome to behold? What would change about our relationship with Jesus if we envisioned him the way that John did in Revelation 1?

Even though Jesus was fully capable of crushing John, how did he respond to John’s fear and humility? What does that tell us about him - and how he responds to us when we approach him humbly?

This vision was possible because John “turned around” to see Jesus for who he really is. What distractions, fixations, and temptations do you need to turn away from in order to turn around and see Jesus?