

# Mission Sunday - April 10,2016

## What is God's Mission in the World?

To gather a great people to worship Him and enjoy Him forever and ever!

<sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." <sup>11</sup> Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup> saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5)

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." (Revelation 7)

## But What is Our Current Experience?

<sup>7</sup> [The Beast] was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, <sup>8</sup> and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. <sup>9</sup> If anyone has an ear, let him hear.... (Revelation 13)

<sup>8</sup> The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, [and follow him] ....because it was and is not and is to come. (Revelation 17)

## The Book of Revelation!

<sup>1</sup>The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, (Revelation 1)

- ☞ A summary of all of Scripture!
- ☞ A summary of all of God's purposes and plans in the created order
- ☞ The clearest picture of Christ and his place in the eternal purposes of God

## How Should We read and Interpret the Book?

1. It is an "apocalypse" or revelation (1:1). Therefore, we should expect:

- ☞ It is intended to reveal not hide or obscure!
- ☞ What we have are descriptions of things which John sees. These are pictures about true realities, but not the realities themselves.
  - This genre is a type of *word art* or *picture*, not a scientific analysis.
  - Pictures are symbols: Does a Vermeer still-life tell more truth than a Monet?
- ☞ The readers are intended to recognize some of the figures, to be surprised at some of the figures and to finally work some of them out.
  - Scripture is *Clear*

- Scripture is *Language* - we don't need to understand everything to be able to understand at least some things. We can't understand everything, but we can understand sufficiently.
- Scripture is *Self-interpreting* - the first place we look to understand is in Scripture itself.
- ☞ The book proceeds from Jesus Himself, validated by the Father: it has the highest authority.
- ☞ It is intended for John's audience, and widespread distribution among believers (1:3; 2:11, 17, 29 (etc.) "he who has an ear..." ; 22:6 "show his servants")

## 2. *It is prophecy (1:3; 22:6,7). Therefore, we should expect:*

- ☞ The origin of its message arose in a manner like OT prophecy.
- ☞ Much of the *imagery* will be borrowed from previous Scripture.
- ☞ Not every image in this NT prophecy will match the images of the OT prophecies. There are many similarities, but there will be many differences, as well. Many of the referents will be the same, but they may be reworked in new or altered images (e.g., cpr 3:7 and Isa. 22:22).
- ☞ The meaning of the prophecy probably includes things in the prophet's own day, but has greater implications for other, future things. The book deals with events prior to, current with John's day and those which will take place after John's day.

## 3. *The blessings of the book are pronounced on those who "hear and keep" the words of the book (1:3).*

- ☞ This means "what the book requires is not that we know in advance what is coming, but that we know how to meet it when it comes." (J.M. Michaels)
- ☞ This is exactly what we see in the structure of the book - the letters, with their ethical demands, *precede* the prophecies. The emphasis is not on secret knowledge but the character of the Church.

## 4. *It is also a letter! (See 1:4-6; 22:8,21). Therefore we should expect that John has taken what he has seen, organized as he chose, and packaged it up as a letter to send to the real historical churches of Asia Minor.*

- ☞ A Circular Letter to the Seven Churches:



## Where Are We Going in the Series?

April 17<sup>th</sup> - The King's Reign over Everything

April 24<sup>th</sup> - God's Purposes in Creating Us

May 8<sup>th</sup> - The King Returns to Set the World to Rights

May 15<sup>th</sup> (Pentecost) - The Eternal Glory of the Holy Spirit Kingdom

## What is the Content of the Letter?

### The History & Future of Everything!

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>The Origin and Hermeneutic of What Follows</b>
1:1-3	Origin, Authenticity & Authority of What Follows
1:4 - 22:21	A Letter to the Churches:
<b>2-3</b>	<b>The Ethical Mandate of the History of Everything</b>
<b>4-5</b>	<b>God's Reign Over the History of Everything</b>
<b>6-11</b>	<b>Characterization of the (Current) History of Everything</b>
6	Six Seals: #1-4 The Horsemen #5 Martyrdom #6 Earthquake
7	First Interlude - Comfort for the Church a. The 144,000 Chosen out of the Jews b. The Multitude Chosen out of the Nations  Seventh Seal (---> Seven Trumpets)
8-9	Six Trumpets: #1-4 Natural Disasters #5 Demonic Forces from the Abyss ( <i>First Woe</i> ) #6 2,000,000 Calvarymen ( <i>Second Woe</i> )
10-11	Second Interlude - Comfort for the Church from Christ Himself The Angel & the Little Scroll: a. Measuring the (True) Temple b. The Two Witnesses  Seventh Trumpet (---> Seven (Last) Bowls of Wrath) ( <i>Third Woe</i> )
<b>12-14</b>	<b>The Explanation for the History of Everything</b>
12	Satanic Opposition to the Eternal Plan of God
13	The Origin of the Mock Trinity
14:1-5	The Pure Redeemed Saints
14:6-15:4	The Certainty of Final Judgment
<b>15-21</b>	<b>The Future of the History of Everything</b>
15-16	Seven (Last) Bowls: #1-4 Epidemiological and Natural Disasters #5 The Dark Kingdom Cursed #6 Deception leading to Destruction #7 Total Destruction (---> leading to judgment, Final Events)
17-21	The Final Events: a. Judgment of the Great Harlot/Babylon b. Destruction of the Anti-Christ and his Allies c. The Serpent Bound d. The 1000 Year Reign e. The Final Judgment f. The New Heaven and the New Earth
<b>22</b>	<b>Promises Concerning the History of Everything</b>

# The Strange Structure of the Revelation:

## STRUCTURE OF THE REVELATION TO JOHN

