

## **Revival: The Word + Repentance + Worship = Revival**

### **Week 8: Revival Part II**

I. I'd also like to say a huge "thank you," to Pastor Mike for kicking off the two-part culmination of the series we've been in for several weeks on:

[Slide]: Revival!

- A. I've been challenged this week with the image of that empty waterpot and what I need to lay down at Jesus's feet. If you missed it go back and check out the podcast.
- B. We've been seeking God to do a distinct work in us as a church. He's answered our prayer locally and additionally around our country. Praise God for the baptisms that have occurred this morning and for the many lives that have turned to Christ to begin 2023! Revival is truly breaking out around us!
- C. As we've prayed for revival and we've searched the Bible to see what common ingredients are involved when God does a distinct work in His people, we've identified 3 key ingredients, underpinned every step of the way by prayer!

[Slide]: The Word + Repentance + Worship = Revival

- 1. We've been exposing our lives to God's word as we've journeyed through the New Testament together. I hope that as we've exposed our lives to the word, we've also bent our lives to the book! This means that through repenting of our sins, we align our lives to God's word. Repentance leads us to rejoice in the grace of God which outflows into worship! This is the essence of revival!

II. When we think about revival and our hearts burning for the things of God, we must consider the future we have awaiting us and how that should ignite our passion for God today! This week many of us will complete our reading through the New Testament and no reading of the New Testament is complete without reading:

[Slide]: Revelation

A. The sermon today is twofold:

- 1. I want to give us just enough basic tools to read through Revelation effectively. And,
- 2. We're going to camp out in Revelation 19 in what is arguably the high watermark of God's eschatological (end times) timeline. It's a revival at the end of the age when the Lamb returns as a Lion to fully lay claim to His rightful Kingdom! And it will be unlike any other event in the course of human history!

B. Before we land in Revelation 19, let's get a high-level overview of Revelation.

- 1. Revelation was authored through the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the Apostle John in A.D. 95. This is the last book written chronologically of the authoritative Scripture. The Apostle John was the disciple Jesus loved and the only disciple to live to old age. Although the last years of his life were spent exiled on an island known as Patmos. While on Patmos, John is given a revelation or vision of how human history will culminate and he is instructed to write it down and send to seven churches in what is modern day Turkey.
- 2. Revelation should never become a merely intellectual pursuit! That's not the point!

Revelation 1:3 [Slide]: 3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep what is written in it, because the time is near.

- 3. Revelation is instructional, just like the previous 65 books of the Bible!

a. But a few helpful things.

- (1) One, Revelation isn't intended to be a crystal ball. It's more like looking through a tinted window. We see enough to give us a confident hope that Jesus is coming back and He's coming back as the Lion and what does that mean for you and me?

J.R.R. Tolkien said it best: [Slide]: One day all the sad things will be made untrue!

At Christ's return, all the suffering, brokenness, and inexplicable that has occurred will be fully revealed in light of the glory of God and the result will be that we finally see that none of it was for naught! God is good and He's all powerful and He's come to vindicate those who cry out to God for His mercy and grace.

- (2) Two, Revelation is Apocalyptic literature. God is giving the man John a vision of the culmination of history. John is seeing things that he doesn't have words to describe! He peppers this letter with the phrases:

[Slide]: It was like.....

and

[Slide]: Similar to.....

When we're dealing with Apocalyptic literature, we don't force literal meanings on that which is intended to be symbolic.

4. Here's my best attempt at an outline for Revelation up to chapter 19.

But just so you don't feel shorted, chapter 20 is the Millennial or 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth.

Chapter 21 is the creation of the new heaven and new earth.

And chapter 22 is the eternal state.

a. Revelation 1 establishes the Lordship of Christ.

b. Revelation 2-3 are the Letter of Christ.

c. Chapter 4, there's a shift that takes place from earth to heaven. John is brought up into the Throne Room of God! Because of Revelation 4:4, and the 24 elders gathered around the throne, I take this vision of John to include the raptured Church. I believe the Tribulation to be a 7 year period of time that is uniquely focused on purifying Israel and judging the nations.

d. Revelation 4 and 5 mark the beginning of the Tribulation in which Jesus takes the 7 seals scroll and opens it as the only One with authority to do so. The beginning of the Tribulation is marked by worship in heaven and Revelation 6 is a juxtaposition of what's occurring in heaven. God begins pouring out His wrath on earth. Again, all initiated with Jesus being the only One found worthy to open the 7 seals scroll.  
(1) Why the 7 seals? A scroll with 7 seals was a specific type of document in the ancient world:

[Slide]: A Last Will and Testament

e. This is the beginning of the grand finale. Revelation 6,7,8, are the different seals that are opened and each one represents a different judgment that God is bringing about on the earth. Then at the end of Revelation 8, the 7th seal is different from the rest. The 7th seal contains 7 additional trumpets (trumpet blast rather) that are 7 additional judgments that intensify in nature. These 7 trumpets are depicted from Revelation 8 through Revelation 11.

f. God's judgment as instituted throughout the Tribulation has reached its midpoint in Revelation 12. Remember that the 7th scroll revealed 7 trumpets. The 7th trumpet stretches all the way to the 2nd Coming of Christ.

(1) But God's judgement of the earth isn't complete. The 7th trumpet will also reveal 7 bowls of judgement that start in Revelation 16. But the final battle and surrender of Satan will occur within that 7th trumpet blast starting in chapter 12. Satan is defeated even today, but Revelation 12 is the beginning of his total subjugation.

(2) I know this is difficult to grasp, but Satan is permanently shut out of heaven in Revelation 12 and in 13 Satan turns his vengeance to Israel who is still on the earth.

(3) We're probably thinking "where is the mercy of God in all this?" It's found in Revelation 14! God is patient in His judgment and final restraint of Satan, because He desires that people repent! There will be a harvest on the earth of people who turn to God during the Tribulation, although the Tribulation isn't anything we'd ever want to experience!

g. Revelation 15 introduces the 7 bowls and 16 is their pouring out of God's wrath that fit within the larger time span of the 7th trumpet blast. These judgements that started with the 1st seal have continued to intensify and compress in time. The 7th bowl is the final outpouring of God's wrath which signifies the destruction of:

[Slide]: Babylon

(1) I don't take Babylon to be metaphorical, because John doesn't leave any of his typical clues when dealing in metaphor. Babylon will be a literal city built during the time of the Tribulation that will be the seat of power of the Antichrist. This defeat occurs at the Battle of Armageddon as mentioned in Revelation 16:16.

h. The destruction of Babylon continues to be depicted throughout chapters 17 and 18.

i. The completion of God's judgement signals the end of the Tribulation and worship in heaven!

Those in Christ have experienced all the events leading up to this moment from a heavenly perspective! And here's the response:

**Revelation 19:1-2 [Slide]: 1 After this I heard something like the loud voice of a vast multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, 2 because his judgements are true and righteous, because he has judged the notorious prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality; and he has avenged the blood of his servants that was on her hands.**

**C. Revelation 19 is a cry of worship that results a new and unmatched manifestation of God's power on the earth! If we've been following Christ for any time, we know that it is God's power in our lives that align events and relationships in such a way that only God could conduct! But there is always an element of faith! We experience and give God praise for what He's done, as we place our confident hope in our final expectation of God's revealed power and authority over the world and our lives! We worship now and seek revival, as those who are anticipating the return of our Lord! Can you imagine what it will be like the day that we actually see these events unfold?!?! We will!!**

- 1. There are days now when we can only muster a broken hallelujah. Not forever!! Those in Christ will one day be completely vindicated and stand forever, righteous, in the presence of God!**

**Revelation 19:3-5 [Slide]: 3 A second time they said, Hallelujah! Her smoke ascends forever and ever! 4 Then the twenty- four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who is seated on the throne, saying, Amen! Hallelujah! 5 A voice came from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all his servants, and the ones who fear him, both small and great!**

- 2. This is a worship gathering in heaven comprising the Church in response to God's judgement over the wickedness of the earth! One day the wickedness of individuals who reject God, all the way up to the systems of this world that are marred with evil, will be judged. This will be a fair judgement! But God will not let evil run wild forever and that should make us rejoice in anticipation for what's to come. One day we'll rejoice in what God has brought to pass!**

**Revelation 19:6-8 [Slide]: 6 Then I heard something like the voice of a vast multitude, like the sound of cascading waters, and like the rumbling of loud thunder, saying, Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns! 7 Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself. 8 She was given fine linen to wear, bright and pure. For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints.**

- 3. The timeline and exact unfolding of these events are difficult to place, but that doesn't negate the reality that they will happen! God will pour out His wrath on the earth and Jesus will execute judgment!**

**a. There are only two options,**

**(1) one we're judged based off the work of Jesus (death and resurrection). That means that when we physically die, we'll be in the presence of the Lord. Or if the rapture happens when we're alive, we'll be caught up to the presence of the Lord.**

**(2) Option number two, we're judged off our works. When we physically die, we'll stand before God and be judged according to our works, or if the rapture happens we'll then undergo the Tribulation.**

**b. The only thing fair is that God will judge those apart from Christ on the basis of what they deserve (repeat that slowly). Our judgement, if we're in Christ, isn't fair because it's based on the righteousness of Christ. Not our own. That isn't fair but that's called:**

**[Slide]: Grace!**

- 4. Seeing these events unfold lead to a vast multitude in heaven praising God, so loud that it sounds like we're standing under Niagara or Victoria Falls! But the best is still yet to come! The Big C Church is referred throughout the New Testament as:**

**[Slide]: The Bride of Christ**

**a. All believers from the resurrection to the rapture comprise believers in the Church age and there will be a ceremony in heaven in which the Bride of Christ is given as a gift to Jesus. We'll be in an uninhibited relationship with Jesus for all eternity. Free from the shackles of sin and brokenness forever! The only scars in heaven will be on the feet and wrists of Jesus to remind us of the love He endured for us to be there!**

**b. We'll be in relationship with Jesus which I believe will allow us to be in completely pure relationship with others. Fully known and loved as we reciprocate that for others!**

We'll have glorified bodies, but we'll still resemble who we were always fully meant to be. We'll still be able to recognize one another. Somehow John saw people from every tribe, tongue, and nation! Yet, the marriage of the Lamb reminds us that there is a corporate nature to eternity in which we'll also see ourselves in connection with the whole.

Revelation 19:9-10 [Slide]: 9 Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!" He also said to me, "These words of God are true." 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brother and sisters who hold firmly to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, because the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy."

- c. Others will be invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb. That I take to be Old Testament saints and Tribulation believers. Only those who accept Christ in the Church age will be participants as the Body of Christ. That's you and me! What an incredible privilege it is to be able to trust Christ as those born between the resurrection and the rapture!
- d. This news impacted the Apostle John so much he got down and started worshiping the angel that imparted the news. The angel said, "Stop it! The angel was a mere servant as well!"
- e. The spirit of prophesy, as this angel reminds the Apostle John, should never be about the one who delivers the message. It should be about the One in which all prophesy is fulfilled! The unstoppable testimony of Jesus!

D. As I've studied the Scripture, I understand the rapture to be the next event on God's eschatological timeline! We'll have a heavenly perspective as God purifies Israel and judges the nations. God's wrath will be poured out on the earth. Revelation 5 indicates the start of a worship service that we'll participate in will be an incomprehensible paradise for those present. At the completion of God's judgment over the earth, we'll be consummated as the Bride of Christ!

- 1. I hope we don't just have a one-way ticket to heaven! Why? Because the 2nd Coming of Christ is referred to in Revelation 19:11-16. When Jesus returns to earth, He will do so as the Lion:

[Slide]: Victorious!

- a. Jesus returns riding on a white horse, symbolizing the victory that has been achieved!

Do you know who is coming with Jesus?

[Slide]: All those in Christ!

Revelation 19:14-16 [Slide]: 14 The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. 15 A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. 16 And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

III. I pray that we do what we were instructed to do: Read and apply these words given through John! We've fallen so in love with the world around us, we don't talk about heaven or the things to come anymore. But heaven will be the ultimate revival that will spill out into an eternity of praise! It won't be long before we're in the throne room of heaven praising God! It won't even be long before we return with Christ to rule over the earth! This is the destiny for those in Christ! What little kingdom could we possibly be building now that would be worth substituting for all that? You better think long and hard about it.

A. Today is the day of salvation! You can pray something like this, "God I lay my kingdom down for the sake of Yours. I trust Christ as my Savior and Lord. Forgive me of my sins and help me to follow You. In Jesus name I pray, amen."