

People of the Book: Revelation

Revelation 1: 9-11

Prayer Link**Prayers for the Community**

American Troops and their families; all families, tribes and nations to know and experience God's peace.

Additional Requests: _____

SUGAR RIVER'S PRAYER MINISTRY IS SEEKING REQUESTS

Did you know that Sugar River UMC has an active E-Prayer Chain? A group of people have covenanted to pray for special requests they receive periodically via email. If you have a request you would like the E-Prayer Chain to pray for, please send it to: amberw@wisconsinumc.org. Amber will send out the request as soon as possible to activate our circle of prayer.

If you would like to become a "Link" on our E-Prayer Chain, please send your email address to Amber at the address listed above. New "links" are always welcome!

Inspirational Link**Thoughts and Insights from Worship****Introduction: John's Exile to Patmos**

Where John was when he wrote Revelation and why he was there?

I. Worship and Warnings Against Compromise

24 Times John mentions worship, showing the contrast between what?

How and why was Revelation largely a warning against compromise and lethargy?

How do you hear this in the seven letters to the churches?

II. Heavenly Visions and the Seven Judgments

The overarching story of Revelation is of a battle between what two forces?

What did this message mean to John's first hearers (readers)? How would it have affected them in hearing it?

III. The Last Battle and the Empire of God

How did you feel hearing John's description of the Last Battle? Did you feel stirred to greater faithfulness? To hope? Did you find yourself longing to know that your name is written in the Book of Life? This was likely John's hope for his first hearers.

Conclusion

A word to graduates and to the rest of us from Revelation:

Monday, May 19 –Let's begin our overview of Revelation by reading three of the introductory letters John includes for various churches in Asia. With each one, look at the positive things John says about the believers there, and then look at the concerns he has for them. **Read Revelation 2:1-7, 3:1-6, and 3:14-23.** In what ways do John's concern for these churches relate to you or to our church? These letters form the backdrop of the entire Book of Revelation. The rest of the book is encouraging, warning and inspiring the people to whom the book was written to rededicate themselves wholly to serving Christ (to no longer be lukewarm) and to remember that Rome will one day be defeated, and that God's Kingdom is real, and eternal.

Tuesday, May 20 – Today we'll consider John's major theme of worship. 24 times he mentions worship – and this theme is probably front and center because the believers in certain of the cities he wrote to, were being asked to offer incense to the emperor, and because the emperor demanded to be addressed as "Lord and God." He takes us to heaven and shows us the worship that happens in the heavenly realms (our earthly worship is meant to be patterned after this – hence Revelation is a study guide for Christian worship), and then contrasts that with the desire of the "beast" to be worshiped. Let's take a look at a few passages. **Read Revelation 4 and 5:9-14.** Now, to contrast this, look at **Revelation 13:2-8** where the beast (the emperor/empire) and the dragon (Satan) desire to be worshiped. What does it mean to worship? Do we ever give our worship to something other than God without meaning to? How do rulers and nations today demand something akin to worship?

Wednesday, May 21 – Today we'll look at John's vision of Rome – here considered a "whore" and her destruction. Remember, John had survived the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, where Domitian's brother Titus offered a pig to Zeus in the temple to God before destroying it, and where he killed over 1,000,000 Jews (including some Christians). The empire had killed nearly all of his friends. He saw it as the representative of Satan. **Read Revelation 17.** What does John say about Rome? Let's read of Rome's destruction next – **Read Revelation 18.** This is very violent to us – but to John, who had seen the terrible violence of Rome, it was a just punishment and judgment upon evil.

Thursday, May 22 – Let's look at the return of Christ as John visualized it. Keep in mind, all of John's friends are with the Lord in this scene, riding on their horses. **Read Revelation 19.** This chapter ends with the Battle of Armageddon. How would John's hearers have felt reading these verses?

Friday, May 23 – We'll end by looking at John's vision of the Empire of God (the Kingdom of God) when it has finally replaced the empires of this world. This is a profoundly beautiful vision. **Read Revelation 21 and 22.** What verses most speak to you? How has your view of Revelation changed as a result of this week's sermon and study? Think back over this series of sermons. Has your view of the New Testament been enriched? The aim of the series was to encourage you to daily read your New Testament, and to create an excitement about studying the Word. If you are not currently in a Bible study, consider signing up for one – call the church office at 845-5855 for more information.

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I feel led by God to...