**Thursday Night Life Group**

Spring/Summer 2020

*The Book of Revelation*

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*Of all the books in the Bible and especially in the New Testament, the Book of Revelation is entirely distinctive because of its unique genre. It has been the subject of much discussion, interpretation and misunderstanding, from its first century beginnings until modern times. In this class, we will learn about the importance of genre, parallel literature, throne room scenes, Christology, structuring theories and the spiritual importance of endurance and perseverance in the midst of difficulties and persecution as Christians.*

***Class Outline***

May 7 – *Genre, Biblical & External Sources*

Reading: The Book of Revelation & Google or Wikipedia “apocalyptic literature”

Focus Questions: 1) The Book of Revelation is a good example of *apocalyptic literature.* What does

the word, “apocalyptic” mean? What are some typical features of apocalyptic

literature?

2) Where elsewhere can you find the apocalyptic genre in the Bible? Compare &

contrast other Biblical examples or portions with the Book of Revelation.

3) What other apocalyptic literature can be found outside of the Bible? Why is

most of this *pseudepigraphal?*

May 14 –  *Revelation & Interpretative Systems*

Reading: The Book of Revelation & Google or Wikipedia “Book of Revelation”

Focus Questions: 1) How has the Book of Revelation been interpreted or used in the past? Why

has apocalyptic literature been so fascinating to people throughout the ages?

2) How have different “prophecy” teachers and/or authors interpreted the Book of Revelation in modern America? Give examples.

3) How were you taught and/or how have you understood and interpreted the Book

of Revelation? On what basis or what reasons have you done so?

May 21 –  *The Letters/Edicts of Christ*

Reading: Revelation 2-3

Focus Questions: 1) How many “letters does one find in Rev. 2-3 and to whom are they written?

2) What common elements do you find in each letter?

3) Compare the 7 letters of Revelation with other New Testament letters. How are

the letters of Revelation different? Why?

May 28 – *Throne Room Scenes*

Reading: Revelation 4-5

Focus Questions: 1) Revelation 4 introduces the reader to a *throne room scene*. How many throne

room scenes can be found in the book?

2) What common elements do your find in throne room scenes?

3) Frequently in throne room scenes, John appears to struggle to find the right

words to try and convey what he saw and experienced. Why do you suppose that

is? And how does that reinforce some of the characteristics of apocalyptic

literature?

June 4 – *Theocentrism & High Christology*

Reading: The Book of Revelation

Focus Questions: 1) The theology of the Book of Revelation is highly *Theocentric* & *Christocentric.*

Where do you find John discussing God as *Trinity?*

2) What kinds of *epitaphs* (titles) do you find in the Book of Revelation that are

given to Jesus Christ? Compare and contrast these with those found in the

gospels. What do we learn about Jesus Christ while studying His titles?

3) How might the Book of Revelation be a critique/criticism of the Roman Empire

and the Roman Emperor, in light of Christological titles? (Also cf. Rev. 18-19)

June 11 – *The Victory of the Lamb & His Followers*

Reading: The Book of Revelation

Focus Questions: 1) Numbers play an important part in structuring the Book of Revelation. In what

ways (give examples) are *heptads* (the number 7) an important feature or

device?

2) What 3 sets of plagues does one find in the Book of Revelation? How are they similar to one another? How are they different?

3) John clearly knew his Old Testament well. Compare and contrast the plagues of

Rev. 15 with the plagues found in Exodus 7-11.

June 18 – *Persevere!*

Reading: Revelation 19, 21 & 22

Focus Questions: 1) Some Biblical scholars have suggested that the central message of the Book of

Revelation can be found in Revelation 11:1-13. Why do you suppose this has

been suggested in light of our study?

2) Today . . . the Bible is a banned book in some 54 countries (over 25%) of the

world. How would the Book of Revelation encourage persecuted Christians to

persevere in light of their sufferings for Christ?

3) It has been said that the Bible begins in a garden (Gen. 1-2) and ends in a city

(Rev. 21-22) and discusses the new heaven and the new earth. How do you

suppose that this has comforted Christians (and you) throughout the centuries?