

Practical lessons from Revelation

Brian Jones, 2019 NYR

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

Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this (Rev. 1:19).
Revelation is a book about the past, present, but mostly the future. What in each of the themes from Revelation listed below could affect my attitudes or actions **today**?

1. The supremacy of Christ	
Rev. 1:5 Rev. 1:12-18 Rev. 5:5 Rev. 19:11-16 Other: Col. 1: 15 - 18	Christ is the first and the last. Only in Revelation do we see Him fully glorified. Only He is worthy to unfold the final judgment of God by breaking the seal of the scroll. He is master of the past, present, and future. To be united to Christ through faith is to partake of the greatest power imaginable.
2. God's sovereignty and certain victory	
Rev. 19:19-20 Rev. 17:17 Cf. Isaiah 46:9b-10 Rev. 20:9 Rev. 21:6a 1 Pet. 4:19 1 Thess. 5:24	Nowhere in Revelation do we see God fight battles. His victories are instant. He is always in control. Why does He not annihilate Satan now? Because God uses both evil spirits and wicked men for His purposes, as he brings believers to salvation. There is no circumstance in our lives where He is not directing our paths with love and care. He is both a faithful Creator and Savior.
3. God's holiness and hatred of sin	
Rev. 21:8 Rev. 22:14-15 Rev. 16:1	Man wants to develop his own system of right and wrong independent of God. In these lists are acts that society no longer regards as sin. But God does. When we understand that we can never meet His standard of holiness, we acknowledge the wrath we deserve and bless our Savior for rescuing us from it by His blood.
4. The Lord's tenderness and love toward His people	
Rev. 21:3-4	There is no more tender moment for a parent than when they comfort a child after they are hurt. The sobs subside and the mom or dad gently wipes away the tears. God knows the grief and hurts we endure and He knows the reason for them even when we don't. He longs for the day he can wipe away our tears for good.
5. The character of the church	
Rev. 19:6-8 Cf. Eph. 5:25-27 Rev. 1:5-6 Rev. 21:1-2, 9 - 11	Nothing is more precious to the Lord than His bride, the church. He Himself cleanses her to present her to Himself, but He also desires that she clothe herself in righteous words and deeds. It is wrong to say that as long as you are saved it doesn't matter what church you attend. The Lord has laid out His order for the church and calls you to follow it.
6. The scope of the church	
Rev. 5:9-10 Cf. 1 Pet. 2:9 Eph. 5:23	We are a kingdom of priests, serving the Lord today and reigning with Him later. We should never forget our brothers and sisters of other nations and languages around the world. We should avoid linking ourselves to national interests which divide us from them but seek to grow into the head, which is Christ, the supreme head of the church, the one place we can all meet.
7. The Lord's interest in and care for His church	
Rev. 2:2-3 Rev. 2:9 Rev. 2:13 Rev. 2:19 Rev. 3:1b Rev. 3:8 Rev. 3:15 Rev. 3:20	Christ knows our condition better than we do. Through the Spirit we must humbly seek correction when needed. We are under His loving eye. In these chapters and verses, He is giving instructions to His Church, His Bride for the purpose of keeping our eyes focused singularly on Him. These verses are given to show us how easily and quickly we can lose our focus. It might be when we get distracted, or it might be when we look away long enough and listen to lies of the enemy. We have Christ's appeal to us to come back: "behold I stand at the door and knock..." We see the false church and its destiny in Rev 17 and 18.

8. Deceptiveness of world systems/false religions

Rev. 17:1-4 Cf. Jude 1:16-25	<p>The prostitute is a travesty of the bride. She has both a religious aspect (Chapter 17) and a commercial aspect (Chapter 18). We must realize that the attractions of the world are very real but God can reveal to us its disgusting side, as He does here. This system of false religion and apostasy is linked with the world, represented by the beast in Rev. 17:3.</p> <p>We need to be able to distinguish between God's truth in Christ and the deception that is in the world and is being promoted by Satan. We have a number of references to that. One good example is given by Jude who describes those that will come into the Church and attempt to deceive, but he provides instructions and the antidote in vs 20 - 25.</p>
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9. Our desire and preparations for the Lord's return

Rev. 22:20	"Come, Lord Jesus." This is the last prayer of Scripture and the only addressed to Jesus. Can we pray it with sincerity? Where will He find us when He comes? Doing what? With whom?
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10. God's victory over Satan

Rev. 12:9 Rev. 20:2 Cf. 2 Cor. 10: 3-6 Eph 6:10-20	<p>God does not struggle with Satan. He throws him down and binds him. We are to be mindful of Satan and his schemes but not afraid.</p> <p>We must realize that while we are here on earth, we are given spiritual weapons to counter Satan's deception and onslaught.</p>
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11. The nature of antichrists

Rev. 13:5 Rev. 13:14 Dan. 7:8 2 Thess. 2:4,9-12 Matt. 24:24	<p>An antichrist is one who opposes Christ, represents the opposite of Christ, or takes the place of Christ. Revelation tells of "the" future Antichrist, but 1 John warns of antichrists in the world now. Their characteristics are pride, boastfulness, persuasive deceitfulness, and self exaltation, placing themselves above God.</p> <p>Satan produces lies to attempt to deceive us in each of the aspects of God's creation. In this case, He is even creating a false savior who opposes Christ, His work and His authority. Satan stops at no boundary in his attempt to discredit God and His authority over His creation.</p>
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12. Man's obstinacy toward the gospel

Rev. 16:8-11 Rev. 22:10	In Revelation, the mass of mankind on the earth has become hardened to the point they can no longer heed the gospel even when delivered by angels. ScriptuYuhure warns many places that repeated rejection of God will lead Him to harden a person's heart. The gospel must be delivered earnestly.
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13. Urgency and consequences of our witness to the world

Rev. 11:7-10 Rev. 20:4 Cf. John 16:33 2 Cor. 12:10	Persecution for the sake of Christ is to be expected, Christ told us it would come. Persecution and tribulation are not intended to destroy us but instead to build us up as we take our eyes off the trial and look to Christ.
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14. God's monopoly on vengeance

Rev. 6:10 Rev. 19:19-21	We are not to react against those who oppose us but leave it to the Lord to avenge in His time and His way. We are to pray for our enemies.
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