

PREFACE

These notes are to serve as a blessing and help to those studying the word with Pastor Neil Spencer. Pastor Neil does not claim to fully agree with all the thoughts, beliefs, writings, or teachings of every named source/person in these notes. The Bible is the ultimate authority & ALL believers are to be Bereans (Acts 17.10-11).

INTRODUCTION:**1. JESUS LOVES CHURCH**

1. I love this theme & focus as we begin our study through the book of Revelation
2. Sunday's msg, "Why the Church?"; foundational for our series through the 1st 6 chapters of Revelation.
3. Why this title, & this theme?
 1. It's true — JESUS loves CHURCH — Eph 5.25 — *"For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her"*
 2. It's the focus of the 1st section of the book for Revelation for our time of study this winter/spring
 3. Rev 1.19 gives us what many would call the **DIVINE OUTLINE** of the book; John is told **19** *"Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen.*
 1. CH 1 — the things you have seen
 2. CH 2-3 — the things that are
 3. CH 4-22 — the things the will happen
 4. And so in chapters 1-6 we'll see Jesus love, toughness/tenderness **revealed** to the CHURCH

2. Revealed — that's an important word that I want you to remember ... why?

1. "Revelation" simply means "unveiling or revealing" ... "to uncover, to reveal, to make manifest."
2. Wiersbe, *"Revelation gives us the privilege of seeing the glorified Christ in heaven & the fulfillment of His sovereign purposes in the world. Revelation is the OPEN BOOK in which God reveals His plans & purposes to us, His church. Revelation is primarily the revelation of Jesus Christ, not the revelation of future events."*

3. One of our key values as a church is to LEARN & LIVE the Word of God

1. It's why we make available our DAILY in the WORD program
2. It's why we teach the BIBLE & often through books of the Bible expositionally.
3. As we LEARN this book... we'll LEARN that:
 1. The book of Revelation is given to **prepare** us, not to **scare** us.
 2. God doesn't seek to **conceal** things from us, but to **reveal** them to us.
 3. Prophecy isn't given to **overstimulate** our brains, but to **motivate** our hearts & hands to worship.
 4. Revelation brings **sense** to the **suffering** we experience; God is not done; more is coming.

4. In Revelation, we are given a fuller/greater revelation of JESUS... that's the primary focus of Revelation!

4. This morning, we'll be reminded of how wonderful/awesome our God is & that Jesus is coming SOON!**5. Let's Jump in verses 1-8 of chapter one.**

1 This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, 2 who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. 3 God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

1. Revelation opens with this understanding that

1. God is unveiling who Jesus is in glory to John
2. God is revealing the events that must soon take place to John w/ a tremendous promise
3. And these 3 verses reinforce us at least two lessons for us this morning:

2. **God Loves ppl, Loves to Save ppl, Loves to Grow ppl, & Loves Lead ppl to Enjoy Fruitful Lives.**

1. God used the Apostle John as a NT author in powerful ways: (**PP**)

1. Gospel of John

1. **Believe**, John 20:31 *"But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name."*

2. Life **Received** — **Salvation** — ... **Jesus** as the **Prophet**

2. Three epistles

1. **Be Sure**, 1 John 5:13 *"I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life."*

2. Life **Revealed** — **Sanctification** — ... **Jesus** as the **Priest**

3. Book of Revelation

1. **Be Ready**, Revelation 22:20 *"He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"*

2. Life **Rewarded** — **Sovereignty** — ... **Jesus** the **King**

2. God uses John in a powerful way... not b/c of who is, but b/c of how he simply followed Jesus

1. John was the brother of James, another of the 12 disciples of Jesus — "sons of thunder,"

2. Both brothers were characterized by zeal, passion and ambition.

3. In his early days John acted rashly, recklessly, impetuously, & aggressively.

1. MK 9, forbids a man to cast out demons in Jesus' name b/c he was not 1 of the 12

2. LK 9, wants to call fire from heaven to destroy those who refused to welcome Jesus.

3. MT 20, brothers wanted to be seated on Jesus' right and left hands in the kingdom

4. As he followed Jesus, he grew... he changed... he bore fruit:

1. Humility — John's is the only gospel that records Jesus washing the disciples' feet.

2. Grew in in love/care — Jesus entrusted the care of His mother to John

3. Church History tells us he became known as the “Apostle of Love” & champion for truth — No one other than Jesus, had more to say about the concept of truth, than John.
4. I love what one author says, *“Like John, if we are to be effective witnesses for Christ, our demeanor should be one that reflects a passion for the truth, compassion for people, and a steadfast desire to serve and represent our Lord by reflecting His humility and grace.”*
3. Here’s the thing to catch from the example of what God did with the Apostle John: **God Loves ppl, Loves to Save ppl, Loves to Grow ppl, & Loves Lead ppl to Enjoy Fruitful Lives.**
 1. God used John in a powerful way
 2. He changed him... grew him... gave him a fruitful life... He wants to do the same w/ you & me..
3. The 2nd thing we see from these verses this morning is that **God’s Word is WORTHWHILE...**
 1. God gave John the book of Revelation (v1) *to show his servants the events that must soon take place.*
 2. The ppl of God were going through a difficult time during the time that this book was written
 1. Written AD 95, during the reign of the Roman emperor Titus Flavius Domitian.
 2. Domitian demanded to be worshipped as “Lord and God,” or suffer severe persecution.
 3. God gives this book of prophecy to **prepare** them, not to **scare** them; to **reveal** not **conceal** things, & to bring **sense** to their **suffering** b/c God is going to do so much in the future to right every wrong.
 4. In a cursory reading, my initial response is to say, *“the events that must SOON take place”*... soon... this was written nearly 2,000 yrs ago... if something takes longer than 20minutes... I’m done with it.
 1. Soon doesn’t necessarily mean soon as in a few seconds
 2. But that when these things begin, it will all happen sequentially quickly...
 3. Like dominos, as soon as the 1st one drops... the others fall quickly, sequentially.
 5. So, God’s Word is WORTHWHILE... What do you mean?
 1. When we see the world falling a part, Revelation shows us a world falling into place.
 2. Revelation reveals more of who Jesus is to us & the plan that is to come...
 3. Revelation gives us the ability by faith to stay self-controlled b/c we know WHO is in control.
 4. But also, Revelation is the only book in all of the Bible that promises a blessing for those who listen to & live it! *3 God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.*
 5. So, we LEARN the Word so we can LIVE, and LIVE well!
4. So, we learn 2 things from these 1st 3 verses of Revelation 1:
 1. **God Loves ppl, Loves to Save ppl, Loves to Grow ppl, & Loves Lead ppl to Enjoy Fruitful Lives.**
 2. **God’s Word is WORTHWHILE**
5. Now, in these next 5 verse we are given a phenomenal description of God & specifically who Jesus is... v4

4 *This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. 6 He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.*

1. John sends greetings to the churches in Asia Minor (these are the 7 churches of chapters 2 & 3) we'll dedicate considerable time to each of them over the next couple of months.
2. Then, it's almost like John gives a **brief**, but **robust** review of who God is as FATHER, SON, & HOLY SPIRIT.
 1. God The Father — *who always was, and who is still to come;*
 1. God is the ETERNAL God
 1. He stands above history
 2. He is not limited by time nor space
 2. When we forget that God is IN THE DRONE (above & beyond... seeing fared beyond) we can slip into living life almost like drones (doing what we know to do, when we know to do it)...
 2. God The Holy Spirit — *the sevenfold Spirit before his throne*
 1. "Seven" is the number of completion and stands for the fullness of the Spirit.
 2. In 4:5, we see that the 7-fold Spirit is symbolized by 7 lamps
 3. In 5:6, by 7 eyes. Christ has the 7-fold Spirit (3:1); the Spirit points to Christ.
 3. God The Son — Jesus is presented in His 3-fold Person as
 1. Prophet — *He is the faithful witness to these thing*
 2. Priest — *the first to rise from the dead, (1st born, the highest of those raised from the dead)*
 3. King — *and the ruler of all the kings of the world.*
3. Then, John praises God for the 3-fold work that Jesus accomplished on the cross:
 1. He Loved us
 2. He Washed us (or freed us) from our sins
 3. He Made us a kingdom of priests.
 1. David Guzik:
 1. *"It would have been enough just to love them and cleanse them. But He goes far beyond, and makes us kings and priests to His God and Father. This is more than Adam ever was. Even in the innocence of Eden we never read of Adam among the kings and priests of God. This is worth praising Jesus about.*
 2. *We are kings, so we are God's royalty – this is privilege, status, and authority. We are priests, so we are God's special servants. We represent God to man and man to God. We offer*

sacrifice unto Him. We have privileged access to God's presence.

3. *In the Old Testament, it was forbidden to combine the offices of king and priest.*

1. *King Uzziah of Judah is an example of a man who tried to combine the two offices, and paid the penalty for it (2 Chronicles 26:16-23).*

2. *Under the New Covenant, we can be like Jesus in the sense that He is both King and High Priest."*

4. Here's what is so powerful about this, GOD is infinitely more POWERFUL & AWESOME than anything/ anyone... and yet He loves us...

1. ILLUS — Rich Mullins ... Ragamuffin Gospel... Yes, Jesus Loves Me.

2. **VIDEO**

So far, this morning we've gleaned from God's Word:

1. **God Loves ppl, Loves to Save ppl, Loves to Grow ppl, & Loves Lead ppl to Enjoy Fruitful Lives.**

2. **God's Word is WORTHWHILE**

3. **God's Love is AWESOME**

7 *Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him— even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen! 8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One."*

1. Verse 7 is the 1st of 7 references in Revelation to the return of Christ (2:25; 3:3, 11; 22:7, 12, 20).

1. This return is public (Dan. 7:13; Acts 1:8ff)

2. And this should not be confused with the rapture of the church, which is secret (1 Thes. 4:13ff).

3. The Gentiles will mourn because of Him, & the Jews will see Him whom they pierced (Zech. 12:10–12).

2. Jesus says he is the Alpha & the Omega, the Beginning & the End.

1. He is everything that can be said about God from start to finish, from A to Z.

2. He is the Creator of all things, and he will be the final judge of all things. He is the Lord of all.

3. In v4, God the Father is the eternally existing God; the God who is, who was, and who is to come.

4. In v8 Jesus calls himself the same thing. He is equal to the almighty God, who has power over all things.

3. Jesus is GOD, and Jesus is coming SOON!

CONCLUSION

1. This morning, we see that God gives this book of prophecy, the book of Revelation to **prepare** His ppl, not to **scare** them; to **reveal** not **conceal** things, & to bring **sense** to our **suffering** b/c God is going to do so much in the future to right every wrong.

2. We're reminded that

1. **God Loves ppl, Loves to Save ppl, Loves to Grow ppl, & Loves Lead ppl to Enjoy Fruitful Lives.**
2. **God's Word is WORTHWHILE**
3. **God's Love is AWESOME**
4. **Jesus is COMING again SOON!**

3. If you don't know Jesus as your Savior & Lord... today could be... should be your day!

1. Recognize — God is good // offers LIFE + FORGIVENESS + HOPE
2. Realize — you (like all of us) need a savior
3. Repent — turn from sin & to God by faith
4. Receive — Jesus as Lord & Savior

EXHORTATION: This Winter/Spring, as we **GATHER** on Sundays & **GROUP** together during the week may we continue to **LEARN & LIVE** this truth that **JESUS LOVES CHURCH!**