

How Would You Play If You Knew You Couldn't Lose? (Revelation 1)

09/14/2025 - Andy Deane

When you hear the word Revelation, do you feel excitement or fear? Many find it overwhelming, filled with strange images of beasts, symbols, and judgments, so they either avoid it or get lost in charts and timelines. But John didn't write Revelation to terrify the church; he wrote it to encourage, strengthen, and bless believers under pressure. In chapter 1, we step not into a nightmare but into a vision of victory, where Jesus is revealed in glory, His people are reminded of who He is, and we are strengthened to endure with confidence in the One who holds the future.

Why the Book of Revelation Matters for Believers (1-3)

Revelation 1:1-3, The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

1. Revelation is from Jesus, and that means it's for our good.
2. Revelation pulls back the curtain on reality so we see truth.
3. Revelation carries a triple blessing for those who receive it.

How to read the Book of Revelation as Believers

1. The original audience was encouraged & unified, not afraid & divided.
2. There are four different views held by real Christians, so be humble!
3. Revelation answers the question: who is returning & why is that significant?

“Revelation’s concern is more with who & why, and less with how, when, & where.” — Jen Wilkin

4. When you see weird symbols, pause and search the Old Testament.

“...a good place to begin is to be courteous to St. John himself by honoring the fundamental concerns that we discern in his life and that come to expression in the Revelation: that his subject is God (not cryptographic esoterica), and that his context is pastoral (not alarmist entertainment).” — Eugene Peterson

What the Book of Revelation Means for Believers (4-20)

1. Revelation reminds us who our God really is (4-8).

Revelation 1:4-8, John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

- God is gracious & triune. He is reliable, risen, ruler, relational, redeeming & returning soon.
- Our response can be to serve Him now or one day regret our unbelief (Zechariah 12:10).

2. Revelation shows us we're not alone in the struggle (9-11).

Revelation 1:9-11, I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia & Laodicea."

- Faith unites us: *John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance...*
- Obedience costs us: *was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus...*
- Worship sustains us: *On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit...*
- Truth strengthens us: *Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches...*

3. Revelation reveals the glory of Christ with us (12-16).

Revelation 1:12-16, I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

- Jesus is with us: *among the lampstands was someone like a son of man...*
- Jesus is our high priest & king: *dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash...*
- Jesus is pure & wise: *The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow...*
- Jesus is all seeing: *his eyes were like blazing fire...*
- Jesus is unshakable in his power: *His feet like bronze glowing in a furnace...*
- Jesus has a commanding voice we can't ignore: *like the sound of rushing waters...*
- Jesus is our protector: *In his right hand he held seven stars...*
- Jesus judge and delivers by His word: *coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword...*
- Jesus is full of glory and majestic: *His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance...*

"Low thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ are exceedingly mischievous to believers. If you sink your estimate of Him, you shift everything else in the same proportion. He who thinks lightly of the Savior thinks so much the less of the evil of sin; ... The man who thinks lightly of Christ also has but poor comfort as to his own security. With a little Savior I am still in danger; but if He be the mighty God, able to save unto the uttermost, then am I safe in His protecting hand." — C.H. Spurgeon

4. Revelation assures us of Christ's triumph over evil (17-20).

Revelation 1:17-20, When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades. Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

- Our posture & power: *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead...*
- His posture: *he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid..."*
- His power: *I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive...*

BE BLESSED HIS WEEK: Read aloud, or listen to via the Bible app, all of Revelation. It takes just 1.5 hours or less. Try to do this in one sitting, but breaking it up over 7 days (4 chapters / day, approximately 13 minutes / day).