

REVELATION

ALL • THINGS • NEW

UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Week 1 – January 8-14 – *Revelation 1:1-20*

LEADER NOTES

Be sure to sign up for the essential group leader training in January by clicking this [link](#).

January 2024! The new year is here. You can almost feel everyone's resolve in the air as the new year brings with it a renewed commitment to the things that matter most. No doubt some of these red hot commitments will soon begin to fade. Gym attendance will shrink after a few months. Healthy eating habits will last until the summer months. It happens every year. However, there is one commitment that is essential that we capitalize on at the start of the new year. WE NEED TO EMPHASIZE OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY. Over the next few weeks remind your group that this is one of the most important commitments in their life.

It's time to go DEEPER and we can only do that if we are committed to community!



FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE
UPSTATE CHURCH

COMMUNITY

Open the group by caring for one another and allowing a moment for everyone to have a place to belong.

Start the group by taking prayer requests, finding out about people's week, and praying for one another.

Opening Questions:

- *What are your New Year's Resolutions for 2024?*
- *We are starting the New Year in the book of Revelation ... What's one question you have about the book of Revelation as we start this study?*

SCRIPTURE

Take this time to study the Bible together. Remember, the goal is not just to convey information, but to help people in your group learn to read the Bible for themselves.

THE POINT

God wants to give us hope by helping us see reality as it actually is.

Revelation 1:1-20

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants[a] the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. 3 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.

Greeting to the Seven Churches

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood 6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail[b] on account of him. Even so. Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Vision of the Son of Man

9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. 19 Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Revelation 1:1-20.

STUDY NOTES

Things are not just as they seem. There is reality, and then there is ultimate reality. Revelation is written to show us ultimate reality. Revelation was written by an apostle who was experiencing intense persecution and delivered to a people who were experiencing immense suffering. In that suffering, Jesus comes to encourage His believers. This encouragement comes when Christ shows His people the ultimate reality of who He is and how He reigns, both now and forever more.

Revelation literally means “apocalypse” or “unveiling.” In other words, this is a book about the unveiling of Jesus Christ. Christians get a peek behind the curtain to see what actually is. It’s important to understand this as we begin the study in Revelation because if not you may find yourself frustrated by the book. Revelation is written to show us more of Jesus. Revelation is not written to answer all of our questions about when Jesus is coming back! If we can wrap our minds around that, then we can read Revelation and be blessed. (Revelation 1:3)

As you lead your group in discussion be sure everyone recognizes this:

1. Jesus Christ reigns in GLORY.

The vision of Christ in Revelation 1 is spectacular. Christ is glorious. Eyes like fire. Hair as white as snow. A sword coming from his mouth. Jesus reigns in glory! The glory of Christ sometimes goes unnoticed in the gospel accounts of Christ’s earthly ministry. It will go unnoticed no more. See the glory of Christ Jesus.

2. Jesus Christ reigns in VICTORY.

Christ was dead, but now He is alive forevermore. Christ has the keys to death and hell. In other words, Jesus has won! The cross might seem like Jesus was defeated or didn’t do what He said he would. However, the cross was the path to conquering death and giving life because Jesus reigns in eternal victory!

Revelation is written to show us Jesus as He actually is in this current moment. Church, see your Savior.

For more resources on this passage click the resources link [here](#).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Why is it more important to see Jesus than to understand all the details of when Jesus is going to return?
- Christ is described in very symbolic and glorified language. What feature most catches your eye and what do you think it means?
- How does a proper vision of Christ help us endure suffering in a hostile world?
- Does Revelation 1 remind you of any Old Testament visions of God? What does this teach us about Jesus?
- What is the most encouraging thing to you about Revelation 1?
- What does it mean that Jesus is standing in the midst of the lampstands?

COMMISSION

As you wrap up your group, it is imperative that everyone knows we go into the world on mission for Jesus. Use this time to focus everyone to live on mission as you leave.

- Seeing Jesus changes everything about our life. How can this vision of Jesus change how you are going to live as you leave here?
- Who in your life needs to know Jesus?