



Series: Revelation—a book of hope

The Hero of the Church

March 8, 2020



ENGAGE

(A key part of healthy group life is to make sure your group gets to know each other and builds good relationships. The purpose of these first questions is to help your group open up. Please don't feel like you have to ask each question. Once you feel like the group is ready, move onto the "Inspire" section.)

There are four major methods of interpretation for Revelation. The method affects one's understanding of chapters four through twenty-two. Our preferred method is to take an idealistic approach. Here is a brief description of each method, along with our reasoning in our choice.

PRETERIST— It is about the conflict between the 1st and 2nd Century church and paganism/Judaism.

Objection: It has no present day value. There's nothing prophetic about the book.

HISTORICIST— It is a symbolic overview of church history from beginning to end, culminating in Jesus' second coming.

Objection: Many past interpretations are falsified with current events. It places too much emphasis on the Roman Catholic Church. It forces proof-texting (forcing the text to fit where we think it should go).

FUTURIST— It is prophetic of events that are still to come, with most of them taking place just prior to the 2nd Coming.

Objection: Like historicist, it forces certain interpretations that turn out to be false. It leaves one trying to guess when the events prior to the 2nd Coming will begin.

IDEALIST (also called Allegorical, Spiritual, or Eclectic Method)— The book figuratively describes the forces underlying the historical events rather than the events themselves.

Support: This method can easily be combined with the Preterist method and when necessary the Historicist and Futurist methods, taking the good elements of all in a harmony of interpretation.

INSPIRE

(Each question has a lot to unpack. Since the group may need time to process each question, don't let silence scare you. Try to avoid filling the space with unnecessary explanation or moving on from the question too quickly.)

1. Revelation 4 gives John's description of the heavenly THRONE (throne is used 14 times in the chapter). Read chapter 4. What are some initial observations?
2. What does this say about God's majesty and power?
3. Revelation 5 gives John's description of WHO is on the throne. Read chapter 5. What are some initial observations?
4. John weeps "because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it" (v.4). Do you think John knows what is in the scroll? Why or why not? How could knowing or not knowing factor in to John's sorrow (weeping)?
5. Christ is described as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (v. 4), but John sees "a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain" (v.6). What is the significance of Christ being described as both a Lion and a Lamb? When do you need Christ to be a Lion in your life? Lamb? Why is it important to see Him as both?
6. As Levi said this morning, the letters to the seven churches give us the diagnosis...the prescription is worship—to give value and worth to Christ. How does worship "cure" us?