Watching Revelation

Interpretation

Don’t Overcomplicate It

Bottom Line: With Christ We Will Overcome the World!

But… There Are A Wide Variety of Interpretations

- Futurist – Everything to be fulfilled in the future
- Continuous Historical – Revelation is the history of the world from Roman times until the second coming
- Idealized History – No actual events, but symbolic of world history
- Preterist – All fulfilled (Rome or Jerusalem)
- Historical Background – Historical context – principles have ongoing relevance

Clues to What Revelation Means

Rev 1:1

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

ESV

Clues to What Revelation Means

Rev 1:3

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.

ESV

Clues to What Revelation Means

- Rev. 1:1
- Rev. 1:3
- Rev. 22:6
- Rev. 22:7
- Rev. 22:10
- Rev. 22:12
- Rev. 22:20

Clues to What Revelation Means

- Dan. 12:4 – Seal the book (400 years)
- Rev. 22:10 – Don’t seal the book

Clues to What Revelation Means

Rev 1:4

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,

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Clues to What Revelation Means

- Rev. 1:9-10
- Rev. 2:9-10
- Rev. 2:13
- Rev. 6:9-11
- Rev. 7:13-17

Early Date or Late Date?

70 AD

95 AD

Later Date?

- Spiritual decline at Ephesus would probably have taken some time to develop
- Existence of a distinct heretical sect known as the Nicolaitans, not mentioned elsewhere
- Absence of any reference to the work of Paul in Asia Minor
- Revelation 3:17 describes the church at Laodicea as “rich” although almost completely destroyed by an earthquake in AD 60-61
- Indications in the book of persecution in provinces outside Rome
- Closure with the beast in Daniel 7

Destruction of Rome?

- Rome conquered in 476 AD
- Byzantium conquered in 1453 AD

Is Revelation About the Destruction of a City?

- Early date or late date
- Jerusalem or Rome or just and end to the persecution
- The applications for us are the same

Bottom Line: With God We Will Overcome the World!

The Message to the Seven Churches of Asia

- Persecution May Get Scary
- Remain Loyal
- No Matter the Cost
- Resist Temptation
- Refuse to Compromise
- Christ Will Be Victorious

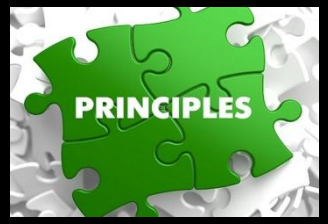
The Message Today

- Persecution May Get Scary
- Remain Loyal
- No Matter the Cost
- Resist Temptation
- Refuse to Compromise
- Christ Will Be Victorious

Three Suggestions for Apocalyptic Literature

1. Picture – read, visualize You can't skip the picture and get the message.

2. Principle – what is the point of the vision?



3. Practice –application for the immediate audience (e.g., the seven churches of Asia), then the abiding application

Let’s Watch Revelation