

DR. SHANE J. WOOD

11 SESSIONS



SIMPLIFYING REVELATION PART 2

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OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Simplifying Revelation Part 2: Interpreting the Book of Revelation

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*Note: For the greatest experience with each video in this series, read the text from Revelation in the session title.

Session 1: First Words Matter – *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Rev. 1:1-6)

I. First Words Matter

- a. Examples
- b. Scripture
 - i. Genesis 1:1
 - ii. John 1:1
 1. John 19:41
 2. John 20:15
- c. Revelation is no different. But we overlook the first words of the book of Revelation. Why?
 - i. **PREDICTION**
 - ii. **TRANSFORMATION**
- d. The First Words of Revelation.
 - i. Revelation begins with these words: The Revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - ii. Why? Because Jesus reveals God to us, and he reveals us to us.

II. Revelation 1:4-6

- a. Jesus reveals God to Us
 - i. God the Father
 - ii. God the Holy Spirit
 - iii. God the Son
 1. “Faithful Witness” = Cross (cf. 2:13)
 2. “Firstborn from the dead” = Resurrection
 3. “The ruler of the kings of the earth” = Ascension (Acts 1:3, 9)
- b. Jesus reveals Us to Us
 - i. Revelation 1:5b-6
 1. “made us” = ποιέω (English word for “poem”—to craft, to form)
 2. “Kingdom and Priests” = Exodus 19:5-6

III. Conclusion:

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Session 2: Thinning the Veil – *The Casualty of Loneliness* (Rev. 1:7-18)

I. Loneliness

- a. Revelation 1:9
- b. Loneliness is consuming John (Rev. 5:4; 19:10; 22:8-9)

II. GOD’S RESPONSE:

- a. The Voice: Revelation 1:10-11
- b. The One Like a Son of Man: Revelation 1:12-13
 - i. Old Testament Parallel
 - 1. Daniel 7:1-8 – Daniel receives a disturbing vision of four beasts
 - 2. Daniel 7:9-10 – The Ancient of Days
 - a. “White as snow”
 - b. “White like wool”
 - c. “Fire”
 - 3. Daniel 7:13-14 – “one like a son of man”
 - ii. The One like a Son of Man & the Ancient of Days: Revelation 1:12-16
- c. Crossing Space and Time: Revelation 1:17-18

III. Conclusion

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Session 3: The Mystery of Intimacy – *Fully Known by Christ* (Rev. 2-3)

I. An Overlooked Detail

- a. Revelation 1:12-13
- b. Revelation 1:19-20
- c. The veil between heaven and earth is not as thick as we assume.

II. Intimacy

- a. Revelation 2-3 = intimacy
 - i. Seven letters to seven churches with similar features:
 1. Angel to the church
 2. Promise to those who overcome
 3. A call for “Whoever has ears let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
 4. A Description of Jesus Christ with imagery from Revelation 1:12-17.
 - ii. INTIMACY—Fully knowing another and being fully known by another

III. Fully Known by Christ

- a. Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)
 - i. City Details
 1. “To capture the acropolis at Sardis” = “to do the impossible”
 2. The city was captured, however, several times:
 - a. 6th century B.C.
 - b. 4th century B.C.
 - c. 3rd century B.C.
 - ii. Jesus knows them intimately: Revelation 3:1-6
- b. Laodicea
 - i. City Details
 1. 60 C.E. – Earthquake decimated the city
 2. Filthy Rich

a. Bank (gold)

b. Clothing (purple dye)

c. Health (eyes)

3. Key Weakness: Drinking Water

a. Hierapolis (North of Laodicea)—Natural Hot Springs

b. Colossae (Southeast)—Natural Cold Springs

ii. Jesus knows them intimately: Revelation 3:14-22

IV. **Conclusion**

- The Revelation of Jesus Christ unveils – He knows you. Intimately.
- The question is: do you know him?

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Session 4: Heaven's Halls – *Identity, Action, and Who God Is* (Rev. 4-5)

I. Completing Intimacy

- a. Intimacy is: Fully knowing another and being fully known by another
- b. Revelation 2-3 = “Fully Known”
- c. Revelation 4-5 = “Fully Knowing”

II. The Throne Room of God

- a. Repositioning Space and Time: Revelation 4:1
- b. God's Identity: Revelation 4:1-11
 - i. Key Question for Revelation 4:1-11 = “Who is God?”
 1. Revelation 4:8
 - a. Holy, Holy, Holy – The set apart one
 - b. Lord, God Almighty – The sovereign one
 - i. Revelation 4:5—Flashes of lightening, rumblings...
 1. Seals = Revelation 8:5
 2. Trumpets = Revelation 11:19
 3. Bowls = Revelation 16:18
 - c. Who was, and is, and is to come – The eternal one
 2. Revelation 4:11
 - a. Creator
 - b. Sustainer
 - c. God's Action: Revelation 5:1-14
 - i. Key Question for Revelation 5:1-14 = “What has God done?”
 1. Action flows from identity
 2. Revelation 5:9-10
 - a. The slain Lamb is the climax of God's work on earth.
 3. Revelation 5:10
 - a. Our identity is shaped by God's actions into God's identity.

b. “made us” = ποιέω (to craft, to form, to create)

III. **Conclusion**

- a. Action flows from identity, and your identity is crafted by who you worship, whoever your master is.
- b. The question is: who is your master?

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Session 5: Worship is War –*The Interplay of Heaven and Earth* (Rev. 6:1-8:5)

I. The End explains the Middle

- a. The Seventh Seal: Revelation 8:1
 - i. Silence in heaven.
 - ii. The first six seals are not silent:
 1. 6:1 – “Come” (1st seal)
 2. 6:3 – “Come” (2nd seal)
 3. 6:5 – “Come” (3rd seal)
 4. 6:6 – “Two pounds of wheat...” (3rd seal)
 5. 6:7 – “Come” (4th seal)
 6. 6:10 – “How long...” (5th seal)
 7. 6:16 – “Fall on us and...” (6th seal)
 - iii. Seventh seal = silence. Why?

II. The First Six Seals

- a. Audience: Seven churches of Asia Minor living in the shadow of the Roman Empire.
- b. The Four Horsemen: Revelation 6:1-8 (Targets Rome)
 - i. The Four Seals
 1. 1st seal (6:1-2) – Bent on conquest
 2. 2nd seal (6:3-4) – Takes away peace
 3. 3rd seal (6:5-6) – Devastates economies
 4. 4th seal (6:7-8) – Death
- c. The 5th seal: Revelation 6:9-11
 - i. KEY QUESTION: What happens to Christians in the middle of this Roman conquest?
 - ii. ANSWER: Christians die—and that’s how we win.
- d. The 6th seal: Revelation 6:12-17
 - i. The end of the world

- ii. Evil is now mourning, lamenting, cowering in the presence of the Lamb
- e. Conclusion for the First Six Seals
 - i. KEY INSIGHT: Each seal is broken by the Lamb in heaven.
 - ii. KEY MESSAGE: What happens in heaven impacts earth.

III. **The Seventh Seal**

- a. KEY QUESTION: Revelation 8:1 – Silence in heaven. Why?
 - i. KEY INSIGHT: Revelation 8:3-4 – “the prayers of God’s people” (2x)
 - ii. KEY MESSAGE: What happens on earth impacts heaven.

IV. **Conclusion**

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Session 6: The Tenderness of God – *Unveiling Evil and the God of Pursuit* (Rev. 8:6-11:19)

I. God Loves Everyone

a. Key Texts:

- i. 2 Peter 3:9
- ii. Matthew 5:43-45a
- iii. Luke 23:34

b. And Revelation is no different – Revelation 9:20-21

II. The Trumpets and the Exodus

a. There are clear parallels between the trumpets and the Exodus:

- i. 1st Trumpet (Rev. 8:7) – The Plague of Hail (Ex. 9:13-35)
- ii. 2nd and 3rd Trumpets (Rev. 8:8-9, 10-11) – The Plague of Bloody Waters (Ex. 7:14-24)
- iii. 4th Trumpet (Rev. 8:12) – The Plague of Darkness (Ex. 10:21-29)
- iv. 5th Trumpet (Rev. 9:1-12) – The Plague of Locusts (Ex. 10:1-20)
- v. 6th Trumpet (Rev. 9:13-19) – The Plague of Death (Ex. 11:1-12:30)

b. Why is this significant?

- i. The purpose of the Exodus:
 1. [1] Expose – to expose the gods loved by evil
 2. [2] Unveil – to unveil God's glory and grace
 3. [3] Repent – to lead God's enemies to repentance

III. The Two Witnesses

- a. Proclaim the Gospel (Revelation 11:3-7a)
- b. Even to the point of Death (Revelation 11:7-10)
- c. Evil Repents (Revelation 11:13)—The only time in the book of Revelation evil repents is after Christians bear witness.

IV. Conclusion

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Session 7: This is Your Enemy – *Disrobing a Deceptive Target* (Rev. 12-14)

I. Who is Your Enemy

- a. It's hard to win the battle if you don't know who the enemy is.
- b. The targets may be mistaken; the weapons may do more harm than damage.

II. Revelation 12 – The Great Dragon

- a. Revelation 12:1-6 – Bethlehem
 - i. Identity of the Woman (12:1-2)
 - 1. Identity of the Child (12:5)
 - ii. Identity of the Enemy (12:3-4)
- b. Revelation 12:7-17 – The Great War
 - i. War in heaven (12:7-9)
 - ii. War back on earth (12:13-17)
 - iii. The Hymn of Heaven (12:10-12)

III. Revelation 13:1-18 – The Two Beasts

- a. The beast from the sea (13:1-8) – Parallels the Ministry of the Son
 - i. Pseudo-Resurrection (13:3) vs. Firstborn from the Dead (1:5)
 - ii. Destroys God's people (13:7) vs. Heals God's People (1:17-18)
- b. The beast from the earth (13:11-18) – Parallels the Ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - i. Guides humanity's worship to the beast (13:12) vs. Guides humanity's worship to the Lamb (5:6)
 - ii. Deceives the inhabitants of the earth (13:14) vs. Reveals the truth to the Holy Ones
 - iii. Breathes life into a false image (13:15) vs. Is the Breath that animates Humanity (Gen. 2:7)

IV. The Ministry of the Unholy Trinity: Three Key Weapons

- a. Deception
- b. Death

- c. Idolatry
- V. **Conclusion**
 - a. So how do we win?
 - i. Revelation 12:11
 - ii. Weapons of the Holy Trinity (Jn. 14:6)
 - 1. Truth (Rev. 14:5)
 - 2. Life (Rev. 14:3)
 - 3. Cross (Rev. 14:4b)
 - b. Who you worship, you become.

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Session 8: The Message of The Interludes – *Security, Witness, and Deeds* (Rev. 15-16)

I. Our Eyes Play Tricks on Us

- a. Where is our hope?
- b. Revelation works to bring clarity to our struggle through three key messages found in the interludes of the seals, trumpets, and bowls.

II. The Interludes

- a. Revelation has three sets of seven:
 - i. The seals (6:1-8:5)
 - ii. The trumpets (8:6-11:19)
 - iii. The bowls (16:1-21)
- b. And in between the sixth and seventh of each set is an interlude:
 - i. The sixth seal ends in 6:17 – The seventh seal begins in 8:1
 1. INTERLUDE = 7:1-17
 - ii. The sixth trumpet ends in 9:21 – The seventh trumpet begins in 11:15
 1. INTERLUDE = 10:1-11:14
 - iii. The sixth bowl ends in 16:14 – The seventh bowl begins in 16:17
 1. INTERLUDE = 16:15

III. The Seals = You are spiritually secure

- a. Revelation 6:17—“Who can stand?”
 - i. Three Groups:
 1. Christians on Earth – Revelation 7:4-8
 2. Christians in Heaven – Revelation 7:9a
 3. Angels – Revelation 7:11
 - ii. Answer: The servants of God can stand because they are spiritually secure.

II. The Trumpets = So go witness Body of Christ!

- a. Revelation 11:3-12—The two witnesses
 - i. Two olive trees and two lampstands—Revelation 11:4; Zechariah 4:14

1. The King
2. The High Priest
- ii. The Plagues of the Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:5-6
 1. Elijah
 - a. Fire devours their enemies (2 Kings 1:10)
 - b. Power to shut up the sky (1 Kings 17-18)
 2. Moses
 - a. Water into Blood (Exod 7:14-24)
 - b. Every type of plague on the earth (Exod 7:14-12:30)
 3. The Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17; 17:1-13, esp. v. 3)
- iii. Ministry—Revelation 11:7-12
 1. Death in Jerusalem—Revelation 11:7-8
 2. Resurrection—Revelation 11:11
 3. Ascension—Revelation 11:12
- b. Who are the two witnesses?
 - i. Body of Christ #1: Jesus.
 - ii. Body of Christ #2: The Church

III. **The Bowls—We witness by what we do!**

- a. Revelation 16:15—Deeds Matter
 - i. Clothing in Revelation: Revelation 2:4; 19:8b
 - ii. Deeds in Revelation
 1. Revelation 2-3 = 5 out of 7 churches “I know your deeds”
 2. Revelation 3:2—Sardis
 3. Revelation 14:13
 4. Revelation 22:12
 - iii. In Revelation, what you do and what you don’t do...MATTER! (cf. Eph. 2:8-9, 10)

IV. **Conclusion**

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Session 9: The Beginning of Evil's End – *Violence, Infighting, and Parasites* (Rev. 17:1-19:10)

I. The Story of Rome's Beginning

- a. Seven Hills
- b. Seven Kings
- c. She-Wolf
- d. Senate

II. Evil's End

- a. Revelation 17 begins the systematic end of evil.
 - i. Revelation 12 – Dragon Introduced
 - 1. Revelation 13 – Two beasts introduced
 - a. Revelation 14 – Babylon Introduced
 - b. Revelation 17-19:10 – Babylon Dismissed
 - 2. Revelation 19:11-21 – Two beasts dismissed
 - ii. Revelation 20:1-10 – Dragon Dismissed
- b. Chiasm—The tip of the arrow is the emphasis

III. The Prostitute and the Unholy Trinity

- a. Revelation 12-13 unveiled the Unholy Trinity as a Parody of the Holy Trinity:
 - i. Dragon vs. God the Father
 - ii. Beast from the Sea vs. God the Son
 - iii. Beast from the Earth vs. God the Holy Spirit
- b. Each Trinity has an expression of their will on earth:
 - i. Rome vs. the Church
 - ii. Babylon vs. the New Jerusalem
 - iii. Prostitute vs. the Bride of Christ

IV. The Fate of the Prostitute

- a. Revelation 17:1 = The Goal of the Vision – To depict the destruction of the Prostitute

- b. Who is the Prostitute? Rome.
 - i. Seven Hills (17:9)
 - ii. Seven Kings (17:10)
 - iii. Lupa = She-Wolf & Prostitute
 - iv. Senate = 10 kings who rule with one mind (17:12-13)
 - c. What is the Fate of the Prostitute?
 - i. Revelation 17:14 – War against the slain Lamb
 - ii. Revelation 17:16 – The Prostitute killed by the beast and the ten kings
- V. **The Nature of Evil vs. The Nature of God**
- a. Evil is:
 - i. Parasitic
 - ii. Violent (Mk. 5 – The Gerasene Demoniac)
 - iii. Selfish (Rev. 18:11, 19b)
 - b. God is:
 - i. Self-sacrificing
 - ii. Tender
 - iii. Selfless
- VI. **Conclusion**

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Session 10: God's Triumphant Procession – *Why Satan Must Be Released* (Rev. 19:11-20:15)

I. Why must Satan be released?

- a. Revelation 20:1-3 – Satan is:
 - i. Bound
 - ii. Thrown into a Prison
 - iii. Sealed
- b. And yet, in 20:3, John writes, “After that, he *must* be set free for a short time?”
- c. Why *must* Satan be released?

II. A Deeper Look at the Narrative of Revelation

- a. The “No Battle” motif
 - i. Revelation 16:14-17
 - ii. Revelation 19:19-21
 - iii. Revelation 20:7-10
- b. Jesus' Robe is Dipped in Blood
 - i. Revelation 19:13—Jesus appears with his robe “dipped in blood.” Whose blood is it?
 1. ENEMY? – Typically, you don't get blood on your garments before the battle.
 2. HIS OWN: Jesus comes to the scene dressed in garments of victory, because the battle was already won on the cross.

III. Roman History

- a. Roman Triumphant Procession
 - i. Key elements:
 1. **Citizens:** Come to the parade route dressed in white robes (symbolizing victory).
 2. **Spoils of War:** Weapons and riches would parade throughout the streets in celebration of the victory.

3. **Enemy Soldiers:** The tallest, most beautiful soldiers were not killed by Rome on the battlefield but preserved to be marched in the Roman triumphal procession.
 4. **Depictions of the Battle:** Elaborate floats punctuated the parade, depicting key moments of the battle, where, at times, the parade would stop and force the enemy soldiers to reenact their defeat.
 5. **Chief Enemy Leader:** The climax of the parade was the chief enemy leader bound in chains just before the triumphant general.
- ii. **Conclusion:** At the end of the triumph, the chief enemy leader was killed as a sacrifice to the gods for delivering the victory.

IV. **Why *must* Satan be released?**

- a. Revelation 20:7-10—Key Details:
 - i. **SATAN RELEASED BUT STILL BOUND (20:7):**
 - ii. **NO BATTLE (20:8-9):**
- b. Why *must* Satan be released?—To march in God’s triumphal procession.

V. **Conclusion**

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Session 11: Last Words Matter – *The God of Pursuit* (Rev. 21:1-22:21)

I. Last Words Matter

- a. Last words matter, because last words are sacred.
 - i. “I just hope, when I close my eyes, I see Jesus’ face, and his eyebrows are raised. Not lowered.”
- b. Last Words Matter—and the Bible is no different.

II. God’s Desire on full display

- a. God is giddy – Revelation 21:1-7
- b. Why? Because he wants to be with us. To restore what was lost.

III. Back in a Garden

- a. Eden Restored – Revelation 22:1-5
- b. No longer any curse.

IV. Worship a place or a person?

- a. The Last Words of Revelation remind us that we cannot ignore the First Words of Revelation – The Revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - i. Jesus loves everyone—enemies included. Even me.
 - ii. The true enemy isn’t Rome; it’s the unholy trinity.
 - iii. Our God is a God of pursuit.
- b. When the veil between heaven and earth becomes thin, the Revelation of Jesus Christ becomes clear:
 - i. Jesus is our everything
 - ii. Revelation 21:22-23

V. Conclusion

- a. So, what do we do with the Revelation of Jesus Christ?
 - i. Revelation 22:17
 - ii. Revelation 22:20b

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