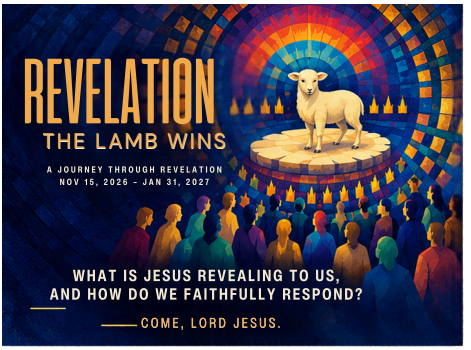




"Blessed is the one who reads about the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it."

REVELATION 1:3



"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

REVELATION 14:13



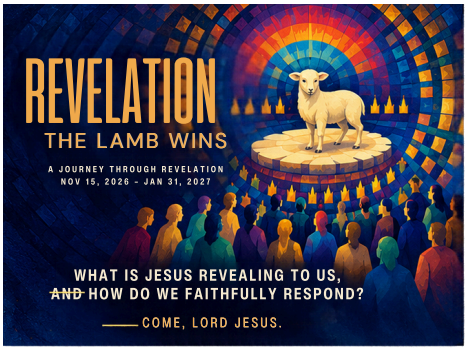
"Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains ready..."

REVELATION 16:15



"Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb"

REVELATION 19:9





“Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection…”

REVELATION 20:6



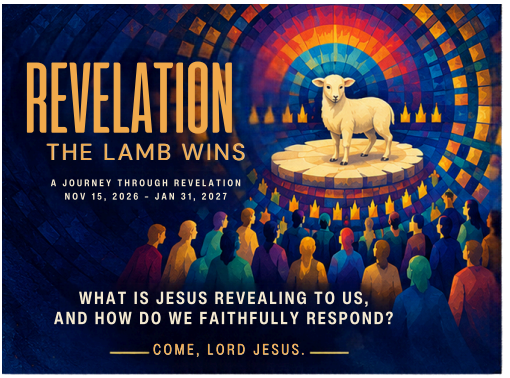
“Blessed are those who keep the words of this prophecy…”

REVELATION 22:7



“Blessed are those who wear their robes so that they will have the right to the tree of life…”

REVELATION 22:14



THE LAMB WINS A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION ▪ HOW TO READ IT RESPONSIBLY

Revelation is an unveiling of Jesus Christ. It reveals the world as it truly is, exposes the beastly power of empire, and forms a faithful people who worship, witness, and follow the slain and risen Lamb toward God's renewed creation. It is not simply a puzzle to solve or a secret code for predicting the future. It is a prophetic message meant to shape how the church lives in the present.

Start with the First Hearers

Revelation was first sent to seven real churches facing pressure, compromise, fear, idolatry, and economic seduction under Roman imperial power. Its visions comfort suffering believers, confront unfaithfulness, call for repentance, and encourage endurance. **Ask what the message would have meant to those churches before asking how it speaks to us.**

Recognize the Kind of Book It Is

Revelation is **apocalypse, prophecy, and pastoral letter**. "Apocalypse" means an unveiling: the book pulls back the curtain to show God's perspective. It communicates through visions, symbols, numbers, dramatic contrasts, and worship. Much of its imagery comes from the
Hebrew Bible, so read backward into Scripture rather than beginning with today's headlines.

Read with Humility

Christians have interpreted Revelation in several ways. Preterist readings emphasize its meaning for the first-century churches; futurist readings focus on events associated with the end of history; historicist readings see a panorama of church and world history; and idealist or symbolic readings emphasize recurring spiritual realities and the conflict between God's kingdom and rebellious powers. These approaches remind us not to confuse our interpretation with the only possible reading.

> Read Revelation to follow Jesus—not merely to figure out what happens next.

FIVE ANCHORS FOR READING REVELATION

Keep these practices in view as you read each vision.

1. **Read backward before reading forward.** Look for echoes of Exodus, the Psalms, Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and other Hebrew Bible texts. Scripture's earlier images help us understand Revelation's symbolic language.
2. **Look for patterns rather than assuming a timeline.** The seals, trumpets, and bowls may revisit the conflict between God's kingdom and rebellious powers from different perspectives. Do not automatically treat every vision as the next event in a strict sequence.
3. **Let the Lamb interpret every image.** John hears of a conquering Lion but sees a slain Lamb. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection redefine victory, power, and conquest. Revelation's battle imagery must be read through the self-giving way of Jesus.

4. **Remember the seven churches.** The book speaks to real communities about fear, compromise, idolatry, endurance, repentance, worship, and witness. Ask how each passage forms the church to resist evil without becoming like the powers it opposes.
5. **Read for formation, not information alone.** Revelation seeks to shape a worshiping, discerning, hopeful, and faithful people. Its goal is not speculation but faithful discipleship.

A Helpful Lens

Theo-political: Notice rival powers, loyalties, economies, empires, and claims to worship.
Theo-poetic: Let symbols, visions, songs, and dramatic reversals reshape your imagination.
Pastoral-prophetic: Hear God's word to the church—comfort for the suffering, correction for compromise, and a call to repentance, endurance, worship, and witness.

Questions to Carry into Each Reading

• What does this vision reveal about God and the Lamb?
• What powers or false promises are exposed?
• What biblical images or stories help explain the passage?
• What is the church called to resist, repent of, endure, or practice?
•How can this reading shape faithful living today?



Revelation is not meant to make us afraid of the future. It is meant to form faithful people in the present.

Revelation: Meet the Cast

A guide to the characters in John's apocalyptic drama

The Character & What the image reveals

The Lamb - Jesus, the crucified and risen King
The Dragon - Satan, the deceiver and adversary
The Beast - Political domination and deceptive religious power
Babylon - Seductive, exploitative human civilization in rebellion against God
The Faithful Witnesses - God's people called to worship and follow the Lamb
New Jerusalem - God's redeemed people and renewed dwelling with humanity

