



REVELATION

Understanding the Apocalypse

Radical Word Bible Study

Episode 13

September 25, 2025



Rick Lancaster

REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse

Revelation 2025

Opening Comments

- **Check Hard Drive capacity.**
- **Switch to PowerPoint**
- **RECORD**
- Welcome to episode 13 of the Radical Word Bible Study.
- I am Rick Lancaster, and we are coming to you live from our podcasting studio in Murrieta, California at Calvary Chapel French Valley.
- We have a service every Sunday @ 9:30 am.
- Come check us out, we think you will like it.
- We are streaming this Bible Study live on Rumble, Facebook, and YouTube.
- And, if you would like to help us get these teaching out, please like, share, and subscribe.
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- It is listed under Radical Word Bible Study with Rick Lancaster.
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- And if you are listening to this as a podcast, please rate and comment, it helps with the algorithms.
- If you are listening to the podcast and would like to tune in to the live stream, you can go to radicalword.com and click on one of the links at the top of the page.
- If you are interested in staying up to date with what is happening at The Radical Word, here is a link that you can use to get connected.
- This link will also be in the description for this video.
- Also, I publish a daily devotional that I send out by email.
- I will include a link to that as well.
- Today is Thursday, September 25, 2025.
- Today's Hebrew date is 3rd of Tishrei, 5785
- -
- [coffee mug] Lake Tahoe
- Has the distinction of being in two states.

- Comment in the chat if you know which two states.
- -
- Today is National Quesadilla Day. A tortilla filled with cheese and cooked on a griddle until the cheese melts and the tortilla is crispy. Sounds amazing right now.
- -
- [Look up this day in history]
- September 25th, 1513 – On this day (or two days later) in 1513, Spanish conquistador and explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa, standing “silent, upon a peak in Darién,” on the Isthmus of Panama, became the first European to sight the Pacific Ocean.
- -
- **On this day, Friday, 25 September 1835**, Bishop William White, George Washington Doane, and several other bishops consecrated Jackson Kemper as a missionary bishop to work on the American frontier. He started ministries in several states including California.
- -
- Turn to **Revelation**, the last book of the Bible.
- We continue a series: **REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse.**
- Let’s pray now and then get into our text for tonight.
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse**
- Let’s begin
- -
- Last time we left off on verse three.
- Let’s reread the first three verses just to remind ourselves.
- **Revelation 1:1-3**
- The book of Revelation is about God’s plan to fix the world.
- It is hopelessly corrupted by sin and devoted to rebellion against God.
- God sent Jesus to make a way for mankind, God’s highest creation, made in His image, to be saved from the necessary judgment that must come to this world.

- Jesus is coming back to set up His earthly kingdom and assume His rightly place of King of kings.
- For thousands of years people have rejected His rule and authority.
- God has been exceedingly patient for not dealing with rebellious mankind before now.
- Verse one tells us that what this book describes ‘must take place’ and when it does it will be sudden and mostly unexpected by the inhabitants of the earth.
- God, in His amazing grace, decided to give everyone one last opportunity to experience His mercy before all that begins by sending this revelation to John to send to us.
- If someone repents and believes before these things begin to happen, then they will escape God’s necessary cleansing of the world before Jesus comes again.
- John, the human instrument God chose to communicate the revelation to us, had proven himself faithful to “bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.”
- That reminds us about something important in our relationship with God.
- We were created in God’s image.
- In many ways we resemble God and His character, flawed by a flesh nature that seeks self rather than God.
- One of the characteristics of God is that He is always working. **John 5:17-18**

¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

- As an aside, this is one of the places where Jesus claimed to be equal with God, because He is God.
- We were created in God’s image and are called to follow the example of Christ.
- We should be busy doing the work of the kingdom.
- John is an example of what happens when you devote yourself to doing the works of God.

- In the parable of the minas, Jesus laid out the principle that guides our working for God. **Luke 19:16-17**

¹⁶ Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' ¹⁷ And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

- God rewards those who have been faithful with a little amount of responsibility with greater responsibility.
 - How long should you be faithful before you are rewarded?
 - Until you are rewarded – however long that is.
 - John had been serving God for about sixty years.
 - Because of his faithfulness, he was rewarded with receiving the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - Love, worship, and serve God with your whole being, and someday, God may reward you with a great work.
 - Trust Him to know when and what that work should be.
 - Last time we discussed the blessing in verse three.
 - If you missed it, go back to last week's teaching.
 - We also talked about the sense of urgency Revelation is meant to stir up in us.
 - Verse three ends with the phrase, "the time is near."
 - We live in the dual reality that Jesus could come back at any moment and that He might not come back in our lifetime.
 - We should always be spiritually ready for Christ's coming back to get us.
 - And we should also be busy building up the kingdom for Christ while we wait to leave a legacy after we are gone that helps others find Christ.
 - One of the things I will be trying to do is create a timeline so we better understand the flow of things in Revelation.
 - The one thing we will not do is try to establish a date for Christ's return to get the church.
 - We are not allowed to know that date. **Matthew 24:36**
- ³⁶ But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**
- That text goes on to say the world will be going on as normal right before He comes.

- Focus on the work God gives you and don't concern yourself about when Jesus is coming back.
- We should just stay busy until He interrupts us with the Rapture.
- This world is pretty messed up – Revelation tells us that God has a plan to fix it and make it perfect like it once was.
- As heaven-bound Christians, we don't study Revelation to get ready for the Tribulation.
- We study it to stir up a sense of anticipation – excitement that our Savior is coming for us.
- And in 2 Peter 3 we are told that we ought to be growing in godliness, holiness, and righteousness because of knowing what the future of the world is.
- As we study Revelation, we get a clear picture of how God feels about sin.
- Revelation should also give us a sense of urgency; we don't have time to fool around with our faith.
- Not only that but that urgency needs to motivate us to reach out to those who cannot look forward to Christ's soon coming.
- Only true Christ-followers can look forward to the Second Coming.
- For everyone else, it will be a time of terrifying judgment.
- It is my prayer that this book changes us, starting with me to give more of my heart to Jesus, and to be more willing to respond to the Holy Spirit as He moves in and around me.
- Next, Paul tells us who were the first people to receive this book.
- **Revelation 1:4**
- John identifies himself as the writer of this letter.
- One of the objections people have to the Bible is that it was written by men.
- Well, of course it was!
- Who else would God use to give His creation the things He wants them to know. **Hebrews 1:1**
- ¹ **God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets...**
- And Paul tells us that it wasn't so much like a verbal conversation, though there were incidents of that. **2 Timothy 3:16-17.**

¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- The very first step of good Bible interpretation is to believe that every word was breathed by God into the men He chose to write it.
- I have often tried to think of other ways God could have communicated His Word to the world.
- I have a hard time believing that if He had chosen another way that the same people who object to how God used men would accept any other method either.
- The words, in the original languages, are the very words of God. Believe it!
- Then John identifies who Revelation was written to, ‘the seven churches which are in Asia’.
- ‘Asia’ refers to a region of the Roman Empire in what is modern-day Turkey - An area known as Asia Minor.
- Jesus names the seven cities these churches in verse 11.
- One of the questions that comes up is, ‘Why these seven churches?’
- They were not the only churches in Asia Minor at this time.
- Colossae and Hierapolis were close to Laodicea.
- The answer may be found in the use of the number seven.
- Numbers will be important in the book of Revelation, and ‘seven’ will be prominent – it is the most commonly used number.
- Numbers are often used symbolically or figuratively.
- The number seven has the sense of fullness, completeness, or totality.
- Once we get to verse 11, we will see that these are 7 real churches.
- Chapters 2 and 3 contain letters to those seven churches.
- The seven churches of Asia were representative of all churches, both then and now.
- Once we get to chapters two and three, we will look at each of these letters to the churches and see other correlations for us today.
- We will see that there are churches just like those described in chapters two and three in the world today.
- Every church, including the one I serve at, would receive one of the seven letters.

- We will also look at how we can see ourselves in one of those seven letters and we can overcome in whatever circumstance we find ourselves in.
- I am looking forward to that part.
- After John tells who the first readers of Revelation were, he uses the familiar greeting ‘Grace and peace.’
- Always used in that order – without the grace of God, no peace from or with God.
- The peace that John is referring to is not the external peace when everything is good around us.
- It is internal peace that is a byproduct of our faith.
- When our faith is strong and we are trusting God for everything, the external things don’t move us the way they do the rest of the world.
- We should go through this life with the same peace in the good times and the bad times.
- If we are struggling to find our peace, it is because we may not be experiencing God’s grace the way we should.
- The only reason that would be true is if our faith needs work in some area or we are not obeying God as we know we should.
- When we are not at peace it is time to press in with God and humble yourself before Him and ask His Holy Spirit to help you to grow your faith.
- This is one of those things that you might not be able to do on your own.
- If you are struggling to be at peace, ask for help.
- That is one of the reasons the church exists.
- Next, we are told where the grace and peace come from – “Him.”
- We need to always pause and ask who the Him is.
- In this instance it is fairly clear from the context.
- He is seated on the throne in heaven and in verse five we are told that Jesus Christ is also involved in giving us grace and peace.
- The Him in verse 4 is God the Father, Almighty God.
- An interesting thing is revealed in the next phrase, “who is and who was and who is to come.”
- The phrase itself is referring to the eternal nature of God.

- God has always existed and will always exist.
- This is a concept that is difficult for the human mind to comprehend fully.
- We can believe it, but it is hard to understand.
- We view the created order as having a beginning, middle, and end.
- If you ask the question, ‘What existed before God?’ the only answer that fits the eternal nature of God is ‘God!’
- We have a sense of eternity but don’t really understand it.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

¹¹ **He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.**

- The phrase, “who is and who was and who is to come” appears two other times in Revelation. **Revelation 11:16-17**

¹⁶ **And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,** ¹⁷ **saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned.”**

- That is another reference to God the Father seated on His throne in heaven.
- A little later in chapter one we see the third time it appears.

Revelation 1:8

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

- If you are reading a red-letter Bible, that verse is in red.
- Also based on the context of verses five to seven, this is Christ Jesus.
- We will talk about this more when we get to verse eight, but it is saying that Jesus is also eternal.
- Many of the titles or descriptions of God are also used to describe the Messiah in the Old Testament.

- Christ Jesus is just as eternal as God the Father. **John 1:1-2**

¹ **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** ² **He was in the beginning with God.**

- As good Bible students we should do our best to determine who the personal pronouns are referring to.
- But when it comes to God, we don’t have to be certain which person of the Godhead is being referred because they are God.
- If you are uncertain, just say it is God – you would be correct.

- In verses four and five we have all three persons referred to, but the Holy Spirit is described in an unfamiliar way, as ‘the seven Spirits.’
- The most common interpretation of this is that this is the Holy Spirit.
- And the number seven points to the fullness of His ministry and power before God for the church.
- The same term is used three other times in chapters 3, 4, & 5.
- Once the Tribulation period begins the activity of the Holy Spirit changes in the world – that is for a later message.
- Grace and peace from Father and Spirit.
- It has been said of the Holy Spirit.

“The Spirit of God is one in His essence but numerous in His gracious influences.”

- Attention then turns to Jesus – Grace and peace from all three.
- **Revelation 1:5a**
- Verse 5 we see three phases of Jesus’ ministry.
- ‘faithful witness’ is referring to the past – What Jesus did when He came down from heaven and walked with His creation.
- Sometimes the Bible summarizes things so profound that we could spend many hours describing them with a simple phrase like ‘faithful witness’.
- Jesus, God the Son, stepped down out of eternity with God the Father in heaven, took on human flesh and dwelt among sinful and broken people.
- He lived a perfect human life.
- He boldly proclaimed the truth of God and pointed people to His kingdom.
- He ministered to every person who needed Him, including countless miracles of God’s grace and mercy.
- He fearlessly confronted the self-righteous and hypocrites about leading others astray.
- Jesus allowed those same people to falsely accuse Him, arrest Him, mock, abuse, beat, and ridicule Him before they handed Him over to the Romans.
- Jesus, King of kings allowed the Romans to condemn Him, scourge Him, and crucify Him.
- All that, and much more is summarized with ‘faithful witness’.

- Don't just read the Bible.
- Know what it is saying.
- When you read, Jesus was a faithful witness, ask yourself when and how He did that.
- And then ask yourself, how can I be a faithful witness in the world God brought me into?
- Not only was Jesus a faithful witness, He is the firstborn from the dead.
- The idea of the firstborn has to do with preeminence and authority.
- In ancient times, the firstborn son was given a double portion of the inheritance of his father and given authority to lead the family after his father was gone.
- Jesus is the firstborn from the dead.
- One of the foundational tenets of Christianity is that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was raised to life on the third day.
- Being firstborn implies there will be more also raised to life. **Romans 8:11**

¹¹ **But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

- Jesus died for our sins, and because we believe that our sins are forgiven.
- Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted His sacrifice on our behalf.
- We now have the hope of resurrection from the dead for ourselves.
- Once Christ's work was done on the earth He ascended back to heaven where He continues His ministry for us.
- The writer to the Hebrews speaks of Christ's heavenly ministry.

Hebrews 7:23-25

²³ **Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.** ²⁴ **But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.** ²⁵ **Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.**

- This is a radical picture.
- Christ is in heaven talking to God about us.
- He is asking God to act on our behalf.
- I would very much like to witness that conversation.

- Jesus was a faithful witness in the past, and He is currently in heaven interceding on our behalf before the Father.
- In the future, Jesus will be ‘ruler over the kings of the earth.’
- Jesus has always been king.
- When the wise men came from the East, they asked: **Matthew 2:1-2**
¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”
- Pilate asked Jesus if He was a king and He did not deny it.
- His disciples expected Jesus to establish His kingdom right away.
- His kingdom is still future.
- At the Second Coming Jesus will begin setting up His kingdom on the earth, by first dealing with the enemies of God. **Revelation 19:15-16**
¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS
- Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- Jesus has authority over every ruler, leader, and president on earth.
- Jesus has authority over everyone who has authority over others.
- We don’t see Jesus exercising that authority today.
- But when He comes in the Second Coming, He will rule with a rod of iron.
- The rod is a shepherd’s tool used to protect and discipline the flock.
- It was a wooden rod about the size of a baseball bat.
- It was used to protect the flock from wild animals.
- It was also used to discipline the flock if they wandered from the flock or bullied the other sheep.
- The shepherd would give them a whack to teach them to stay in the flock and not cause trouble.
- The rod of iron speaks of unbreakable authority and severe discipline.
- The phrase ‘rod of iron’ appears three times in Revelation, one of them being a quotation of... **Psalm 2:7-9**
⁷ “I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ ”

- The ‘nations’ usually refers to the unbelieving world.
- Jesus will assume His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords at the Second Coming.
- John then shifts into a doxology halfway through verse 5.

• **Revelation 1:5b-6**

- Three things John points out that cause him to praise God.
- Each of these things we ought to praise God for also.
- First, **Jesus Loved Us – John 13:1.**

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

- Even though Jesus knows everything about me, He loves me, He has always loved me.
- That by itself is enough to cause me to praise Him.
- Second, **Jesus Washed Us – 1 Peter 1:17-19.**

If you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

- The Bible teaches us that unless blood is shed, there can be no forgiveness of sins.
- When Jesus shed His blood, it is capable of washing clean anyone who comes to Him, no matter how dirty they are – that is worth praising Him about.

• Third, **Jesus Made us Kings and Priests – 1 Peter 2:9-10.**

You *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

- There are no unimportant or insignificant people in the kingdom of God.
- Every believer in Christ is special to God.
- We are made in His image to carry the light of His glory out into the world.
- We are His children, adopted into the family of God. **Romans 8:14-17**
¹⁴ **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** ¹⁵ **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”** ¹⁶ **The Spirit Himself bears witness**

with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

- The book of Revelation opens with a doxology – a declaration of praise to God directed at Jesus.
- Revelation is a book about Jesus and His kingdom.
- He deserves all our praise and will deserve it forever.
- Next John calls us to change our perspective.
- **Revelation 1:7**
- ‘Behold’ = Look!
- Verse seven jumps ahead to Chapter 19 – the Second Coming.
- ‘every eye will see Him’.
- When Jesus comes back, it is going to be instantly obvious to everyone in the world.
- Everyone will instantaneously know that Jesus has stepped down on the Mount of Olives.
- How is that possible.
- Some suggest it is because of social media and the internet.
- It will be streamed live just like this Bible Study.
- Or it will go out on blast on everyone’s phones.
- One of the things we must resist the temptation to do is give everything in Revelation a natural explanation.
- I have studied Revelation enough to know that things will not be normal, not as they are right now.
- God certainly could use human means to let the world know that Jesus is back.
- But God is not limited to any means to accomplish His will.
- He has completely sovereignty over the natural and supernatural realms.
- Jesus comes back at the end of the seven-year Tribulation Period, after the seven seal judgments, seven trumpet judgments, and seven bowl judgments.
- The world has been thrashed by the God’s hand of judgment.
- In one of the judgments, what might be satellites falling out of the sky.
- The chance that there is satellite or phone or internet widely on the earth is unlikely.

- And then factor in the reality that half the world will be in darkness when Jesus comes back, a supernatural communication is more likely.
- God will implant the image of it into the minds of all humanity.
- Everyone will know.
- They won't know how they know, but they will know beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus has come back.
- This will include the Jews **Zechariah 12:10**.

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

- Part of the plan to judge this Christ-rejecting world is God's plan to restore the Jews back into fellowship with their God.
- 'All the tribes of the earth will mourn'.
- In addition to seeing the Return of Christ supernaturally, will be the universal awareness of the meaning.
- They will all instantly know that it is too late, that they are lost.
- And they will mourn.
- When Jesus comes back, the age of grace ends.
- There will be no more chances to repent.
- The moment Jesus comes in the Second Coming, all hope for the lost ends.
- The Jews will mourn also, but for a different reason.
- God has a plan to save all the Jews who remain at the Second Coming.

Romans 11:25-27

²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "*The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;* ²⁷ *for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.*"

- We are not told exactly how God is going to spiritually save the Jews.
- They will some of the people who go into the Millennium after Christ sets up His earthly kingdom.
- Jesus might do it like He did with Saul/Paul on the road to Damascus.
- He appeared to Saul in a vision that was so vivid that it blinded him for three days.

- Again, God could do it the same way He did it in the past or He could do something brand new.
- God is infinitely creative and is unlimited in His power.
- We don't have to understand the how, we just trust that God will do what he said.
- The lost will mourn because they know they are eternally lost.
- The Jews will mourn because they will realize the Messiah came two thousand years ago and they rejected Him.
- They will mourn because they have been living in a state of partial judgment since Christ's first coming.
- We just read in Romans 11:25 that a partial blindness was inflicted upon the Jews.
- Because they rejected Christ, they became blind to Him.
- It says partial because for two thousand years some Jews have been seeing the truth of God in Christ Jesus and trusting in Him to save them.
- John acknowledges this is a tough thing to say.
- John was a Jew.
- The idea that most of His people were blind to the truth of Christ is a hard thing to say.
- It means most of them would be lost forever.
- 'Even so, Amen' – Literally, it is truth.
- When you say amen to a prayer or to something someone has said, you are saying you agree and you believe it is true.
- Then Jesus speaks
- **Revelation 1:8**
- 'Alpha' is the first letter of the Greek alphabet - 'Omega' is the last.
- If you are watching this, that is what the letters on the shelf are.
- Jesus is the 'A to Z' of God.
- The language of God is Jesus.
- If you want to talk to God, it is by and through Jesus. **John 14:6**
- **⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."**
- 'Beginning and End' – nothing comes before Jesus and nothing comes after Him.

- Everything we need to know about God can be seen in the person of Jesus Christ.
- The next verses in John 14 tell us that. **John 14:7-11**
⁷“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” ⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.
- And because we don’t have the privilege the disciples did of seeing, talking with, and walking with Jesus, we turn to God’s Word.
- As we have already looked, the next phrase speaks to Christ’s eternal nature.
- ‘is, was, and is to come’ = same as God the Father – Jesus is God.
- Jesus did not begin when He was conceived or when He was born.
- He has existed from before there was time.
- We have already read John 1:1-2 telling us that Jesus was with God at the beginning.
- Before the beginning, God existed with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
- What was before the beginning? God!
- ‘Almighty’ – used 9 times in NT – 8 in Revelation.
- Here it is applied to Christ Jesus.
- It is usually applied to God the Father throughout the Old Testament.
- It is another example of the Word of God clearly stating that Jesus is God.
- John is setting the stage for a powerful description of Jesus.
- Our text today opened with John praying for grace and peace for his readers.
- Grace and peace are infinitely important to us. **John Walvoord**
These two words capture the richness of the Christian faith. Grace is God’s attitude toward believers, coupled with His loving gifts – which will never change. Peace refers to our relationship with God – which includes both the peace made with God at salvation and our ongoing relationship with Him, which we can enjoy, or fail to enjoy, as we walk or fail to walk in obedience to God.
- The degree to which you will obey God is the degree to which you will experience God’s grace and peace.

- God is never stingy with His grace and peace.
- It is through obedience to God and His word that we position ourselves under the full flow of God's grace and peace.
- It is important to notice something about Revelation.
- Though the book consists of many terrible judgments, it opens with grace and peace.
- Grace and peace are what God wants for His creation, and He offers it to all. **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- The judgments laid out in the book of Revelation are the result of people rejecting God's grace and offer of peace.
- If you are a believer watching this or listening to it, my encouragement would be that you remove any obstacles in your life to full experience of God's grace and peace.
- If there are sins that need to be repented of, do it now.
- If God has called you to serve Him in some way, don't wait.
- Jesus could come back at any moment – we should be busy serving Him when He comes.
- And if you are hearing or watching this and haven't put your trust in Jesus to save you, don't wait.
- God loves you, and He wants you to escape the judgment that is coming, and He wants you be in heaven with Him forever.
- After the introduction and benediction, John introduces himself and tells of his circumstances.

- **Revelation 1:9**

- It is almost universally agreed that this is John the Apostle, the brother of James, one of the Twelve.
- First, he says he is with them in their difficulties 'brother and companion'.
- John was well known to the seven churches named later in this chapter.
- He had visited them all and ministered to them often.
- Paul said something similar... **Acts 14:21-22**

²¹ **And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,** ²² **strengthening the souls of the**

disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

- This was shortly after Paul had been stoned, possibly to death.
- Paul was well acquainted with persecution and so was John.
- When John received the Revelation, ‘was on the island called Patmos.’
- Picture of **Patmos**.
- This is in the year 95 AD, over sixty years after Christ had ascended back to heaven.
- John had been sent to Patmos ‘for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.’
- Seems John wouldn’t stopped preaching God’s word and about who and what Jesus did.
- Only way Domitian could shut him up was to exile him.
- Legend says that at some point they tried to boil him in oil, but it didn’t kill him.
- This reminds us about our life in Christ.
- Your life is not over until God says it is over.
- Man has no authority to take our life unless God deems our work on this earth is complete.
- This should move us to boldness and fearlessness in our service to God.
- Go where God sends you and say what God tells you and He will keep you.
- John was released after Domitian died in 96AD.
- John died some time after that.
- According to tradition, he was the only disciple who died from old age.
- The others were martyred for their faith in Christ.
- John is laying out the things they had in common.
- First, **Tribulation**
- It is not unusual to question why they are going through hard things.
Tribulation: trouble, distress, oppression – ‘An oppressive state of physical, mental, social, or economic adversity.’
- I have found that God rarely answers the ‘why’ questions of life.
- Frequently, I sense Him simply telling me to trust Him.

- Jesus told us that we should not be surprised by difficult things in like.

John 16:33

³³ **These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."**

- Paul also told us not to be surprised by it, especially at the hands of other people. **2 Timothy 3:12**

¹² **Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**

- In the midst of those dark times, we must remind ourselves of the second things John mentions.
 - Second, **Kingdom**
 - John says we are brothers/sisters and companions in the Kingdom.
 - If you have placed your faith in Christ, you are a part of the kingdom of God.
 - It is a present reality waiting for future fulfillment. **Ephesians 2:4-7**
- ⁴ **But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**
⁵ **even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),** ⁶ **and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,** ⁷ **that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**
- It is so certain that Paul describes it as completed even as we wait for the fulfillment.
 - And it is the waiting part that needs the third thing we have in common with John.
 - Third, **Patience**
 - In the midst of tribulation, even with the promise of heaven, we must allow the Holy Spirit to teach us to be patient.
- Patience: steadfast endurance n. — the power to withstand hardship or stress; especially the inward fortitude necessary.**
- Patience is a gift from God that is tied to our faith.
 - As our faith grows, so does our ability to endure the difficult things in life.
 - Patience doesn't make those things easier, they just don't disrupt our hope, peace, and trust in God.
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Closing Comments

- For those of you watching the live stream, thank you for your participation.
- If anyone has any questions, please connect with me.
- You can email me at rick@radicalword.com.
- You can also connect with me on social media.
- Let's close with a word of prayer.
- God bless you all. Until next time, go be radical with Jesus.