**The Revelation Series Week 1**

Welcome to The Revelation Series.

Video: Revelation Series Promo. Get it on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfyrfBsFb-4

Here is a preview of the next 8 weeks:

Prologue: 7 Weeks (Revelation 1:1-20)

Act I: 7 Letters (Revelation 2:1-3:22)

Act II: 7 Seals (Revelation 4:1-8:1)

Act III: 7 Trumpets (Revelation 8:2-11:18)

Act IV: 7 Signs (Revelation 11:19-15:4)

Act V: 7 Bowls (Revelation 15:5-16:21)

Act VI: 7 Spectacles (Revelation 17:1-20:3)

Act VII: 7 Sights (Revelation 20:4-22:5)

This is going to be an amazing series!!!

Today we are going to set the scene for the next 7 weeks as we take a look at the Prologue – the first chapter of the book of Revelation.

**Face THE End.** Have you even though about how the world will end?

Sharing: What images come to mind when you hear the word: “Apocalypse”?

Here are some of my favourite “Apocalypse” images that I found this week!

An apocalypse image.

How about Paris…

Here is London facing the apocalypse

**Survive THE Zombies.** The big question is whether you will be able to Survive THE Zombies

How long will you survive in the zombie apocalypse? I took an online test this week and my results indicated that I would survive a few months.

Will you flee or will you fight?

There is even a movie out called the Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse

Basically - all zombies must die!

There are games about the Apocalypse like DayZ.

Or The Last of Us

And Fallout.

And of course, there is the TV series - The Walking Dead - totally gross - I can barely look at the images online let alone consider watching an episode!

And tons of movies about the end of the world like:

I Am Legend

And This is the End

Video: An very edited version of the trailer for This Is The End. Get it on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yma-g4gTwlE

And the movie Mad Max is also an apocalyptic tale.

To be honest the idea of Apocalypse is hectic and scary!!!

The word Apocalypse is actually used in the first chapter of the book of Revelation. In fact, it is the actual word translated as Revelation - and it means to reveal, disciple, uncover.

It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ - Jesus reveals what is to come in the last book of the Bible. Evil will eventually be judged. God is working out His cosmic plan. God is the ultimate authority over all.

**Get THE Book.** Before we jump into reading the first chapter let’s look at some guidelines to understanding the book of Revelation.

**1. Revelation is the answer to a prayer.** The Lord's Prayer, to be exact. 'Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.' Revelation describes what life looks like when these prayers are answered.

**2. Revelation is an invitation to worship.** Even a quick reading of Revelation can't miss the way it breaks out into song, again and again. One of the great studies is to go through this book and ask, 'what is worth singing about?’ It may be midnight but dawn is on the way and so there is reason to sing and worship.

**3. Revelation is about two spaces - down here and up there.** Any teaching from this letter engages the present situation which the readers face ('down here') with its injustice and idolatry - but it also lifts people to focus on how things look from another transcendent perspective - God's perspective ('up there'). The message of Revelation is that God's perspective is the real one, the one that matters.

**4. Revelation is about two times - now and then.** The Bible may be read forwards, but it is to be lived backwards. It is the certainties of the end ('then') - the Christian hope - which can transform things for us 'now'. Fear and despair may be real, but hope can really triumph. We are to live a 'now showing' life in light of the 'coming soon' reality.

**5. Revelation is about two people - 'our Lord and his Christ' (11.15).** Every single sermon comes back to two truths: God is in control and Jesus wins. We must not shy away from the judgement of God. It may be bad news for some, but it is also good news for so many. Their hope is in the judgement of God, that he is in control and able to deal with evil finally and fully.

**Read THE Text.** Let’s read the first chapter of the book of Revelation:

1 This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, 2 who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

3 God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

4 This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit[d] before his throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. 6 He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

7 Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,”[e] says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.”

9 I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God’s Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus. 10 It was the Lord’s Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. 11 It said, “Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

12 When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. 13 And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire. 15 His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. 16 He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, “Don’t be afraid! I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.

19 “Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen. 20 This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

**Read THE Comic.** We have placed copies of a Graphic Novel on the walls around the youth room - you have a few minutes to find one of the stations and read it through.

**Describe THE King.** We have a graffiti wall where you are going to go and write down what chapter 1 of Revelation says about Jesus.

\* Wearing a long robe and with a gold sash wrapped around His chest – The Priest: Atonement and Intercession

\* His head and hair were white as snow – Ancient of Days, Wise, He is God

\* His eyes are like a fiery flame – Penetrating insight, intelligence wisdom

\* His feet are like fine bronze, fired in a furnace - He is strong, solid and stable

\* His voice is like the sound of cascading waters – He is powerful and authoritative

\* His right hand is protecting the seven churches/pastors – He is a shepherd protecting his people

\* From His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword – He is a perfect judge using the Word of God.

\* His face shining like the sun at midday –Brilliance, holy, majesty, awesome.

\* He is before all and He is after all – Alpha and Omega – First and Last – Sovereign – controls all things

\* Jesus holds the keys of Hades and Death – he controls death and life – Satan is not in control!

**Live THE Truth.** I want you to take something away with you this morning - this is your chance to reflect on something we have explored this morning. You can go to the graffiti wall or to the comic walls or to the readings and see what you can live out this coming week. What is the Lord saying to you?

**Let US Pray**

Next week we will look at Act I: 7 Letters (Revelation 2:1-3:22).