



FBC Reading Plan
September 2020

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 28th

Why a Reading Plan: God speaks to people through His Word. It is what He uses to transform our lives by orienting our minds toward His truth and aligning our heart toward what He loves. The aim of this reading plan is not to merely check a box off a list, but to encourage our church body to spend time hearing from God. Reading the Bible is critical to a Christian's growth. But it is especially powerful to read the Bible with others. This reading plan is the basis for all of our D-Groups, and we hope it fosters deeper spiritual conversations in our families and between our members.

How to use this booklet: Each day has a passage of Scripture for you to read. There are also some questions to prompt your reading and reflecting on the passage. We encourage the H.E.A.R. method for reading Scripture, especially if it is a new discipline for you. First, **highlight** a verse or verses that speak to you from the passage. Then, **explain** what those verses mean in relation to the broader context and how they support the big idea the author is trying to communicate. Next, **apply** this verse to your everyday life. For example, how should this change your desires, your behavior, or your relationships? Application should always be done in a spirit of prayer, as you are asking God to reveal to you how it applies. Finally, it is not enough to settle for knowing some truth or how it might apply to your life without a specific response. So finally **respond**. This can be a prayer or a specific action you will take after hearing this verse or passage.

Memory Verse: Because Scripture is God's Word, it is important that a Christian spend regular time memorizing God's Word so that he or she can always find encouragement and guidance from God. This month's memory passage is provided on the next page in the ESV, NIV, and NLT.

Application:

How does John's vision give you courage today to be faithful to Jesus?

Response:

Use vv. 3-4 as a starting point for your prayer today, praising God for his amazing deeds and his glorious name.

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Day 5 **Highlight:** Revelation 15 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:38-39

Explanation:

This chapter sets the stage for the final series of seven, the seven bowls of God's wrath, which are poured out in chapter 16. But before then, John reminds us once again of a theme that has been repeated over and over by this point: God's deeds are "great and amazing," and all his ways are "just and true" (v. 3). He will not let evil go unpunished, and he will most certainly vindicate his people. Although in the world's eyes, God's people are cursed, rejected, and killed, John writes to encourage the churches that they are those who have conquered the beast not through violence but by following the way of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. Based on what we have read in Revelation so far, how are God's deeds "great and amazing" and his ways "just and true"?

September's Memory Verses

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39 (ESV)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39 (NIV)

35 Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? 36 (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") 37 No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

38 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39 (NLT)

Week 1: The Letters of John

Starting Date September 7th

Day 1 Highlight: 1 John 4

Memory Verse: Romans 8:35

Sunday's Message: Romans 8:31-39

Explanation:

Describe the Holy Spirit. How do we know him, and what does he do in Christians?

Why is love central to the Christian faith?

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 28th

Application:

Christians are those who “follow the Lamb wherever he goes,” which will inevitably include endurance and keeping God’s commands and their faith in Jesus in the midst of difficulty (v. 12) and perhaps even in the threat of death. Are you following the Lamb wherever he goes? Why or why not?

Response:

Pray that more people would come to “fear God and give him glory” through you and through our church (v. 7).

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 28th

Day 4 **Highlight:** Revelation 14 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:38-39

Explanation:

This passage warns of God's coming judgment and wrath to all who refuse to obey Jesus (v. 7, 19). But it begins with a powerful reminder that those who follow the Lamb will enter glory (v. 4). That is the good news (v. 6ff): God will vindicate himself and his people, especially those who have suffered persecution, by defeating all the powers of evil ("Babylon" v. 8). What is the "gospel," the good news, in this passage?

Week 1: The Letters of John

Starting Date September 7th

Application:

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another" (v. 11). How is God's love for you motivating your love of others?

Response:

Are you abiding in God today, and is he abiding in you?

Week 1: The Letters of John
Starting Date September 7th

Day 2 **Highlight:** 1 John 5 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:35

Explanation:

How do we show that we love God and are his children?

How can a person know that he or she has eternal life?

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 28th

Application:

Despite the victory of Christ on the cross, satan and his beasts still ravage humanity. How does John's graphic portrayal of these spiritual realities help you see what it means to live as a Christian?

Response:

Pray for endurance and faithfulness for you and the saints that you know (v. 10).

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 28th

Day 3 **Highlight:** Revelation 13 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:38-39

Explanation:

The fundamental problem with humanity is false worship (v. 4, 8, 14). By showing that we worship such grotesque and vile monsters, what does John teach us about our false gods and idols? What does John teach us about the human heart?

Week 1: The Letters of John
Starting Date September 7th

Application:

Which of God's commandments feel burdensome to you today (cf. v. 3)? How does trusting in his fatherly love for you lighten them and even make them a delight?

Response:

After describing the gospel of Jesus Christ so beautifully, John ends with a warning: Keep yourself from idols. Are you doing that?

Week 1: The Letters of John
Starting Date September 7th

Day 3 Highlight: 2 John

Memory Verse: Romans 8:35

Explanation:

Based on this short letter, what is the “teaching of Christ” (v. 9)?

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 28th

Application:

The dragon has been conquered and yet he continues to make war against Jesus’s followers. How does that apply to your life today?

Response:

How is satan (which literally means “the accuser,” cf. v. 10) accusing you today? Based on this passage, how do you fight back?

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 28th

Day 2 **Highlight:** Revelation 12 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:38-39

Explanation:

The woman who gives birth to the Messiah (v. 5) most likely refers to Israel. The dragon is Satan, the accuser, who is opposed to God, his Messiah, and God's people. This chapter briefly but graphically retells the cosmic story of redemption, or at least Satan's ongoing attempts to thwart God's work. Describe what the dragon does and how he is defeated.

Week 1: The Letters of John

Starting Date September 7th

Application:

What does it mean to "watch yourselves"? Why should you do that? How do you do that?

Response:

Spend a few minutes "watching" yourself. Ask God to give you clear insight into whether you are loving those around you and faithfully maintaining your commitment to Jesus.

Week 1: The Letters of John
Starting Date September 7th

Day 4 **Highlight:** 3 John

Memory Verse: Romans 8:35

Explanation:

What does it mean to “walk in the truth” (v. 4)? Why does John have no greater joy than knowing those that he has discipled are walking in the truth?

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 28th

Application:

Why is God’s judgment and wrath cause for thanksgiving? How should this celebration of God’s judgment influence how Christians approach issues of injustice today?

Response:

Pray for the strength to be a faithful witness to Jesus, no matter what sort of opposition may come.

Week 4: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 28th

Day 1 **Highlight:** Revelation 11 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:38-39

Sunday's Message: Romans 9:30-10:4

Explanation:

This chapter is very difficult to interpret; some commentators even argue this is the most difficult passage in Revelation (at least vv. 1-14). Generally, vv. 1-14 seem to be a description of the church's prophetic witness against the forces of evil. Like Elijah and Moses (v. 6; cf 1 Kings 17:1; Exodus 7:20; 8:12), the church boldly proclaims God's "testimony" to the world (v. 7). However, like its Lord, the church will be persecuted and killed, and this will be celebrated in the world (vv. 7-10). However, God will vindicate his people. Many will glorify God after seeing this (v. 13). Why does God permit his people to go through such great suffering?

Resuming the series of trumpets from 9:13, the seventh trumpet is blown and signals the arrival of God's kingdom on earth. For what is God praised in these verses?

Week 1: The Letters of John

Starting Date September 7th

Application:

Have you experienced the joy that John describes in v. 4? If this was the apostle's source of joy, shouldn't we as Christians seek to find joy in the same way, by discipling others to walk in the truth?

Response:

How can you help others to walk in truth? If you're not doing that, pray that God would reveal people that you can disciple. If you are, pray for those people today.

Week 1: The Letters of John
Starting Date September 7th

Day 5 Highlight: Jude

Memory Verse: Romans 8:35

Explanation:

What is “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints”? Why must Christians be ready to “contend” for it (v. 3)?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 21st

Application:

God’s Word is often both sweet and bitter. How does that affect the way you approach God’s Word?

Response:

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Pray that God would be at work to fulfill his redemptive promises without delay.

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 21st

Day 5 Highlight: Revelation 10 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:37

Explanation:

As with the seals, there is an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet (10:1-11:15). John sees a mighty angel come down from heaven with a little scroll that promises there will be “no more delay” in the fulfilling of God’s purposes for his creation (v. 6). It is difficult to determine what exactly the little scroll is, but it must be something that John must prophesy about further (v. 11). Most importantly, it is both sweet and bitter. Based on what we’ve read in Revelation so far, why might this “little scroll,” this message that John is to share, be both sweet and bitter?

Week 1: The Letters of John

Starting Date September 7th

Application:

Today we often think of “false teachers” as prominent people with a platform and large following. But according to Jude, a person does not have to be famous to be a false teacher. More often they are ordinary, everyday people who belong to a church but lead people away from the truth. Describe how you would identify a ‘false teacher’ today.

Response:

It is clear knowledge of “the faith” that protects every Christian from being led astray (v. 3, 20). How are you seeking to grow in your knowledge of the Christian faith?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Day 1 **Highlight:** Revelation 1 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:36

Sunday's Message: Romans 9:1-13

Explanation:

There are at least three things at the beginning of this book that helps us interpret it as a whole. First, it is the *revelation* of Jesus Christ (v. 1). This term refers to a well-known literary genre of the ancient world called “apocalyptic” literature. Such literature used highly descriptive imagery to help people see the world from the divine perspective. In John’s case, he seeks to help Christians living in the Roman Empire see their world from God’s perspective. Second, it is a *prophecy* (v. 3). John draws heavily from the Old Testament, but he speaks the very words of God. Third, it is a *letter* (v. 4). This means at the very least we should first seek to understand what John would have wanted first century churches to learn about their situation before we try to apply it to our own circumstances today.

Who is Jesus and what has he done?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 21st

Application:

After seeing such terrible judgment, the rest of mankind does not repent of their wickedness. Why is that? What does this reveal about the human heart?

Response:

How is your heart responding to this vision of God’s judgment?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 21st

Day 4 **Highlight:** Revelation 9 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:37

Explanation:

John portrays a terrifying picture of hellish beasts unleashed upon the world. With all of the trumpets in mind (8:6-9:19), what is the purpose of this destruction on the earth (see vv. 20-21)?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Application:

Imagine being a Christian, a member of a small, seemingly strange, new religion within the vast, powerful, pagan Roman Empire. How would this opening chapter give you courage? How does it encourage you today?

Response:

She who reads, hears, and keeps what is written in this book will be blessed. Ask God to give you insight into this book and to cause you to obey what it teaches.

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 14th

Day 2 **Highlight:** Revelation 2 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:36

Explanation:

Jesus “knows” things about each church; this refers to things for which he commends them. But he also has something against most of them, too. Describe some ways in which these churches had been both faithful and unfaithful.

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 21st

Application:

How does this passage affect your understanding of God and his purposes in the world?

Response:

How is your heart responding to this vision of God’s judgment?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 21st

Day 3 **Highlight:** Revelation 8 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:37

Explanation:

With the seventh seal, another set of seven is introduced: the angels' seven trumpets. What happens as a result of these trumpets?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Application:

In what ways have you been faithful and unfaithful to he who is “the first and the last” (v. 8)?

Response:

Jesus both commends and rebukes his churches. How can you give thanks for the Spirit's work in your life? What do you need to confess to Jesus today?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 14th

Day 3 **Highlight:** Revelation 3 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:36

Explanation:

This chapter clearly continues in a similar way as chapter 2. What does Jesus “know” about these churches? In what way does he commend them (if at all) and for what does he rebuke them?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 21st

Application:

How would this vision encourage Christians who had been ostracized or even persecuted? How does this vision encourage you today?

Response:

Reflect on this hope that we have in Christ, and may it strengthen you in your faithfulness today.

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 21st

Day 2 **Highlight:** Revelation 7 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:37

Explanation:

John hears about the sealing of the people of the sons of Israel, but what he sees is people from every nation standing before the throne of God. The multiplication of the number 12 in vv. 4-8 most likely symbolizes completeness. That John hears of the sealing of the complete people of God according to Israelite tribes but sees a great multitude from every people group seems to be John's way of saying that God's people are no longer restricted to ethnic Israel but rather are defined by their allegiance to the Lamb. What stands out to you in John's description of his heavenly vision?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 14th

Application:

Repentance is a way that we show our zeal for Jesus since he reproves and disciplines those he loves. Have you been zealous for Jesus? Why or why not?

Response:

"Wake up...Hold fast what you have...Be zealous and repent" (v. 2, 11, 19).

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Day 4

Highlight: Revelation 4

Memory Verse: Romans 8:36

Explanation:

John is invited to witness heaven as it is in the present. What was the point of God revealing this to John and what was the point of John sharing this with the seven churches of Asia?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 21st

Application:

The opening of the seals leads to war (vv. 3-4), famine (vv. 5-6), and death (vv. 7-8) and climaxes in a scene of cosmic judgment. How do these realities fit into God's plan for his world?

Response:

John is unmistakably clear about the reality of God's wrath and judgment. How are you responding in your heart today to that reality?

Week 3: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 21st

Day 1 **Highlight:** Revelation 6 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:37

Sunday's Message: Romans 9:14-29

Explanation:

The breaking of the seals causes calamity in the world. Why was a “worthy” person needed to unleash this destruction upon the earth? How can Jesus be the one who causes this to happen?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ
Starting Date September 14th

Application:

How would your life be different if you constantly had in mind this heavenly reality?

Response:

Envision what this scene would look like, and praise our God who is holy and everlasting!

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Day 5 **Highlight:** Revelation 5 *Memory Verse:* Romans 8:36

Explanation:

This chapter introduces the scroll with seven seals that will be opened in chapter 6. Jesus alone is worthy to break the seals. Jesus is called the Lion of Judah, and yet what John sees is a lamb standing as though slain. How did Jesus conquer? How does the title of lion but the seeing of a lamb describe how Jesus conquered?

Week 2: The Revelation of Jesus Christ

Starting Date September 14th

Application:

Jesus alone is worthy to execute God's plans for his creation. Do you worship Jesus and depend on him as the only means by which all the problems and evils of creation can be undone?

Response:

Jesus was slain not only to ransom you but a whole people from every ethnicity. Are you rejoicing in this today?