

# Revealing Revelation – Beginning With the End in Mind

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God has blessed us. Amen. We thank your choir for letting the Lord use you and reminding us how blessed we are. Amen. Today, I just want to say thank you to those of you who have sent birthday wishes or celebrated birthday yesterday. And the Lord has blessed me with 57 years on this earth. Amen. So we thank God. And tomorrow, the Lord willing will be my wife's and I anniversary. So that will be 35 years with her. Amen. And so I just want to give God all the praise. And you know, the song was right on time because as I was reflecting, I was like, Lord, if you don't do another thing, you've done enough. You allow me to come into a new year. You allow me to come into a new birthday. You allow me to come into another year with my wife. Amen. And if that wasn't enough, around about the 8th or the 9th, we're going to be welcoming in a new grandbaby. Amen. So I'm excited about that. We are blessed. We are blessed. As we begin this year, we will start a new series today, and I'll be preaching through the Book of Revelation. It may take us the whole year to get through it. It's so much. So we're going to go through it verse by verse and line by line. They call that expository preaching, just expounding on the Word of God. And so we're going to do that. We're going to teach on Tuesday night. So if you're not able to make it on Sunday, you're able to get there Tuesday. We're going to be overlapping and expounding and going in even deeper into the word of God. Amen. Tuesday night, 7 P.m. And Lord willing, hopefully you can make it to at least a few of those sessions as we go through the deep teaching of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The message is entitled, the series is, Revealing Revelation, Beginning with the End and Mind. We are beginning, this is the first Sunday of the new year, but we are beginning with the end and mind. When you were, if you were to ask Or if a new believer were to ask, where should they begin to study the Bible? Where should they begin reading the Bible? Most of us will say one of the gospels, maybe Matthew or Mark. Oftentimes I recommend John, and sometimes that's easy to recommend because it's revealing the life of Christ and it's palatable for people who are new in their faith. to begin that journey. But if you were to recommend the Book of Revelation, you wouldn't be wrong. You would be right for telling them to go to the Book of Revelation. You know, when I began my Christian journey, the first book that I read was the Book of Revelation. The first book, that's where I started off at. I said, oh boy, But I want to tell you that there is a blessing in reading Revelation. Like I said, most people will suggest to read the Gospel of John. But as a new believer begins their journey, and even those who have been saved for a while, it helps you to begin with the end in mind. If you're just new to Christ, reading the book of Revelation will help you begin with the end and mind. When I read the book of Revelation, it captivated my mind. It rested my soul. I was intrigued. I was drawn in. It challenged my doubts, and it really changed my life from the beginning. I remember many days thinking on the heaviness of scripture and particularly the rapture and how we're talking about that the Lord is coming back. And I remember saying to myself, I don't want the Lord to leave me down here. I want to go and be with the Lord. Amen. And so the book helped me to grow in my faith and to trust him for the events that are to take place. But Revelation is about so much more than what we would perceive it to be. It's about the symphony of the other 65 books of the Bible from Genesis to Jude. Notice I said

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it's about a symphony of the other 65 books from Genesis to Jude, bringing to a crescendo. I think you'll like that, Brother Newby, a crescendo. Amen. that word to bring to a point a completion of God's perfect plan of His redemptive will to save the souls, with Jesus being the composer of this great symphony of Scripture. The Bible says that he is the alpha and the what? Omega. That means that he's the beginning and the end. He's the composer of the whole program of God. Yes. He is bringing to completion his perfect will and his plan to save souls and to make them ready, to make us fit for heaven, including the church. The Book of Revelation is a singular book and not plural. The Book of Revelation. Oftentimes you hear people say, Revelations. Yeah, I read Revelations. No. It is a singular book because why? It has one central person as its main attraction. It is a singular focus. It is a singular book that is expounding on all and digging in and grabbing all the richness of the other books and bringing to a culmination all that is about Jesus. It has one main character and one central focus, and that is fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. The word revelation in the Greek is apocalypsis. Or you could say apocalypsis. That's where we get the English word apocalypse. And it does not have the negative connotation that many people think about. When we hear the word apocalypse, we think of gloom and doom, don't we? think about destruction and war. Well, what if I told you that was not what it meant? The word revelation actually means to unveil or to uncover or to make someone or something known. We as believers, God says, first of all, I want you to know me and to make me known. So that's what the word means. It means to unveil or to uncover or to make known. Another word that you can say, it is about revealing the revelation of Jesus Christ. You have heard me say that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The Old Testament conceals patterns and types and shadows that point to Jesus, such as the seed of the woman in Genesis 3 and 15. Or it could focus, or we can focus on the ark of Noah as being a pattern or a type of salvation. And so it speaks to us in patterns and types and shadows. so that we have to think about, wait a minute, what does the ark reveal about Jesus? What does the seed of the woman, when typically, when a child is born, they're coming through the seed of the man, but God was saying something in Genesis 3 and 15, through the seed of a woman, speaking in reference to, appointing to the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, and how in Genesis 3, 15, that child, the child that would be born, would go to a cross and he would crush the head of the serpent, Satan, and the works of the devil, but in that he would be wounded on his heel. A shadow and a type and a pattern. In other words, if we were to put Revelation in Pastor Tony's word, it would be, are you picking up what I'm That's what the Lord is saying. And patterns and types and shadows and figures and symbolism. And Revelation has revealed a lot of symbolism. It's written oftentimes in spiritual code to make you think, to make you dig, and to make you search for the nuggets that are in it. will do that for you. Yes. types and shadows. Moses and the entire tabernacle was a type and a shadow, and everything in the temple was a type, or in the tabernacle was a type and a shadow of things to come. Yes? The New Testament through the gospel reveals the first coming of Jesus, and Revelation reveals the second coming of Jesus. Did y'all hear me what I said? I said the gospels, you mentioned the synoptic gospels this morning, right? You say, well, what is it synoptic? What that word? You're talking about a symbiotic relationship. Synoptic, in other words, they were telling a story from a different perspective about the

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same person and they got all the facts right. Synoptic. There is unity in the gospels. The gospels tell the story of Jesus's life from different vantage points, bringing them together to help you to get a panoramic picture of who he is. Yes. There are over 300 references to the Old Testament found in Revelation. That's why I say the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed. And the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. Because when you study the book of Revelation, you have to go back and study all the other books of the Bible. Amen? That's why I say it's going to take us maybe the whole year to get through. Revealing revelation. We are beginning with the end in mind. As we read the Word of God, I want you to understand our first point. What did John want us to know? What does God reveal to us about John? Our first point is this. John revealed a word about himself. In other words, I put it this way, God, the Father, revealed a word about the author who unveiled the word. Look at the scriptures. It says, the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him. The question is, who was the him? We'll go back to that. To show unto his servant things which must shortly come to pass. And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw. That's a key word there. So if you remember in Matthew chapter 20, round about verses 26 to 27, Jesus told John that whosoever will be great among you, he says, let him be your servant. Let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Amen? The book begins by stating that God unveiled to the apostle John the revelation of Jesus Christ. But who was John and what did God reveal to him? This John is none other than the apostle John. So a lot of Johns in the Bible, right? John the beloved. Who has another John? We got John the Baptist, So we have the apostle John writing about John the Baptist in chapter one. This is the apostle John. This John wrote the book of Revelation. Going back to that first verse though, it says the revelation of, first of all, it says it's the revelation of who? Jesus Christ. In other words, it's all about Jesus Christ. Notice who gave the revelation. First of all, I want to tell you that today there is no new revelation. If somebody tell you God has revealed something to them, in other words, God has given them a revelation, that one thing is to have something revealed to you. Basically, you didn't know it, but now you know it. That's just being revealed to you. But if someone came to you and said they have a new revelation from God, God opened up the heavens and gave you a new revelation. First of all, there is no new doctrine. There is no new teaching. God has written everything that he wanted us to know in his word. Hebrews chapter 1 tells us, God, who in his sundry times and in divers manners, spake unto who? the fathers through the prophets. But in these last days, he has spoken through his Son, Jesus Christ, whom he has appointed heir of the heavens and the earth. and all that is within it of all things. Amen. And so first I want to tell you that there's no revelation, but this revelation that we're studying is all about Jesus Christ. But watch this, it says, which God, it says, which God, which is speaking of the Father gave unto him. So when you read this, you can miss it. You would think that God gave the revelation unto John directly. That's not what it's saying. Watch this. He gave the revelation unto his son, Jesus, who then gave the revelation to John by way of an angel. Did y'all pick that up? And so you could miss that if you don't get into the depth of the understanding of scripture. So God, the Father, gave the revelation to Jesus Christ. Not that Jesus Christ didn't know about himself. Not that he didn't know the beginning from the end, but he was, God the Father was working in order. He was setting an order

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of things to come. And he acknowledged the Son. The world today does not want to acknowledge the Son, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even the Father was pointing through him and working through him on our behalf. So that's what it says. And so we have to understand this. John, again, as I said, this is none other than John the Apostle, whom the Holy Spirit used to write the gospel of John. The Gospel of John. This is the same John. So we got the Gospel of John, and then we have the book of what? Revelation. But this John also wrote some other books. So we have First John, Second John, Third John. He didn't write Jew, but he did write Revelation. So y'all picked up what I just put down. So now you know who who has written these particular books. He's written the Gospel of John, 1st and 2nd and 3rd John, and now the Lord is using him to write Revelation, which was written around about 95 or 96 AD after the death of Christ. So what did John bear record of? The scripture says that he was bearing record of something. Well, he bore record of the purpose of his writing, which again, was to reveal Jesus Christ and all that he came to do and to fulfill. And so we look at that and we look at the Gospel of John, we're going to look at the Epistles of John, and then we'll look at Revelation as some of the things that he has revealed. In the Gospel of John, he says, you know what? I want you to get faith. In the Gospel of John, he said, I want you to get faith. John chapter 20 and verse 31 says, but these are written that ye might, what? Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name. The only way that you can have eternal life is through the name of Jesus Christ. There is none other name in the heavens and on the earth whereby man must be saved. Not might be, not could be, but must be saved. In other words, you need Jesus by calling on his name. If you want to go to heaven, I've asked people that time, time and time again, I say, well, hey, how many of y'all want to go to heaven? Everybody want to go to heaven. Most people do. Every now and then you get one person talking about, ah. But if you were to ask most people and you say, how many of y'all want to go to heaven? Maybe just ask y'all, how many of y'all want to go to heaven? Raise your hand. Somebody say, I'm going. I heard that. He's like, move over, Jesus. I already accepted you. But then I asked the next question. I said, if you had to choose between Jesus or Satan or some other religion of God to get you there, how many of you would choose Jesus? Jesus. All right. All right. So that many said, I would choose Jesus. If you had to choose between heaven and hell, you would say, I don't want to go to heaven. If you had to choose between now accepting him or not knowing if you ever get another chance, which would you choose? How many of you said I already did? Put 'em up, put 'em up. Don't be scared. How many of you say I'm thinking about it, I'm thinking about it? How many of you would say no? So the scripture reminds us, it reminds us, watch this, notice what it says. It says, But these things are written, John, who wrote the book of Revelation, is giving us a precursor as to why Revelation was written. He said that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you might have life through His name. So in the Gospel of John, John says, get faith. In other words, by getting faith, if you get faith, you will have life receive, eternal life receive. You will have salvation from sin, death, and hell. You will have believed what the prophets had spoken about him if you receive or get faith. But then he writes the epistles. The epistles of John, he says you need to get knowledge. You need to get knowledge. Notice what it says in 1st John chapter 5 and verse number 13. He says, but these things have I written unto you. that believe on the name of the Son of God. Watch this, that ye may what? Know that ye have eternal life. God

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does not want you walking around doubting whether you're going to heaven or not, because guess what? Time is passing by and you don't need to be guessing whether you're walking in or walking out or going down, you're going up. You need to know that you know that you know I'm redeemed, I'm saved, I'm washed in the blood, I'm forgiven. I'm heaven bound and hell forsaken. Yes, you need to know that. You need to know that. So he says, this is written, that ye may know that you have eternal life, that ye may believe, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. There are many people that say that they believe in God. I believe that there's a God somewhere, but see, God is an exclusive God. He tells you He tells us in the scriptures, the God that you ought to believe in in order to enter into heaven. See, there's only one way into heaven. There's only one door. I know that many people are saying there are many paths to heaven, and your truth is your truth, and just tell your truth, just believe your truth, but the Bible doesn't say that. It says, believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, because there is no other name. No other door that will let you in other than the name of Jesus Christ. What's the password? What's the password? You know, I used to do that with my children. You know, I would play that game with them and we, I raised them that way. So if they didn't know the password, nobody could, they would not answer the door. They wouldn't even tell me, but they wouldn't, they'd just go away from it. I'd say, if they didn't know the password, don't answer the door. And I would play games with them sometime and I would go and act like I'm somebody else and I'd go outside, I'd knock on the door and maybe Jaira Darius will come. and I, you know, changed my voice and I was like, Yes, I'm here to see you, Mr. Harris. Who is it? They just say, Well, what's the password? And I would begin to go off and all these different names. Jiminy Cricket, Rumble Stiltskin. And they wouldn't open the door. But then if I said the password, I said, Nana. That was our password when I was raised. Nana, they would open the door. They would open the door. Why? You got to have the password to get into heaven. You got to know the password, and the password is not Nana, y'all. The password is not a good brother that looked good. The password is not a fine young lady you've been waiting on. The password is not your new car that you got. It's not Chrysler, it's not Ford, it's not Jeep. Can I get a witness? The password is not money. The password is J-E-S-U-N. What's the password? Jesus. Oh, see, y'all know what I'm talking about. Come on, somebody. The door is open. Enter into the joy of the Lord. Enter into the joy of the Lord. So he says, if you understand in John that you need to get faith, and if you got faith, you need to use faith and work that faith out. Amen. But if you have faith, and then you still need to get some knowledge to add to your faith. Amen. So one person, you got some people, they just believe. They just believe. They just believe everything. But we don't have ignorant belief as believers. We have a belief that is rooted in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. For he says unto us, he says, come, let us reason together, saith the Lord. The Lord doesn't want you to have blind faith. He wants you to look at the evidence that he has laid down. Look at the historical evidence that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did come. That was was somebody that was born of a virgin and his name was Emmanuel. His name was Jesus that lived and was born in Bethlehem, who was of the lineage of the house of David. Because why? There was a real David that existed as the king of Israel. And if you go all the way back, there was a real Abraham that pointed to Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of Isaac on the altar. There was a real Moses that led children of Israel out of Egypt and out of \*\*\*\*\*. Why? Pointing to a real Jesus. Look at the evidence. There

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was a real Jesus who was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He was buried in a borrowed tomb. That was a real Jesus. He bled and he died. He was buried in the tomb. And if you go to the place where the bone should be, there is a resurrected Jesus, you got to look at the evidence. The Bible says that the demons believe and tremble. What's the difference between your faith and a demon's faith? What's the difference? We have faith that allows us to trust in Him. We have faith that allows us to serve Him. That's the difference between your faith and the demon's faith. Your faith says, wait a minute. No, the demon says, the demon's faith says, you know what? Yeah, I know that he's my father. I believe, but I also know that he's God. I know that Jesus is real. The demons know. We're trying to figure it out and they already know. The devil, the evil forces already know and believe that he is because they know that he exists. God is trying to convince us. to get knowledge. Amen? So the demon says, I will not serve him. I will not worship him. I will not testify of him. I will not do good. I will do evil. So what's the difference between our faith and the demon's faith? If you really have faith, You're gonna believe in Him unto salvation. And then you're gonna believe in Him unto good works. You're gonna do some good works, amen? You're not gonna produce evil works. You're gonna work the works of righteousness and not the works of wickedness. Why? Because you believe, truly believe by producing works, By worshiping the Lord, the demons won't worship God. They rebelled against God. Matter of fact, Satan actually wanted Jesus to bow down and worship Him. We realize that we are not God. That's the difference. We are the ones who understand that we are created in His image and that He is worthy to be praised. What's the difference between your faith and the demon's faith? You need to get the knowledge to understand. He says, if you get the knowledge, you will have the life of Christ revealed in you. Why? If you get the knowledge, you'll be sanctified and set apart from evil works unto righteous works. The word sanctified means to be set apart. You are a holy people. You are sanctified. You are set apart. You are a royal priesthood of believers. You're not like the world. And so you are to live different. You are to believe differently. You are to think differently and do differently. He says, if you get knowledge, you'll understand the life of Christ that lives in you, then that life of Christ that lives in you will not want to walk with the wicked, amen, but you'll want to live with the righteous, amen? And so then he says, you'll be able to advocate as a priest before the world. As a priest, as a mediator to the kingdom of God so that other people can come into the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ. First he says, get faith, then he says, get knowledge. But then he gets to Revelation. He gets to Revelation. And in Revelation, he says, get ready. He says, get ready. Look what it says here in Revelation chapter 22 and 20. Revelation chapter 22 and 20. He says, he which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Watch what it says. He's testifying that what? He's coming quickly. The Lord is soon to return. You need to get ready. You need to get your house in order. If you're not saved, you need to get saved. Amen. If you're not serving the Lord, you need to get busy. And so listen, you need to get ready by getting busy. You are to get ready by expecting him to come at any moment. It will change the way that you live. If you are to think that Jesus could come at any moment, you're going to make some different choices. Amen. It's going to change the decisions that you make. Well, maybe the Lord will come back in five years from now. I figure five years so I can do as much dirt as I could. And so I'll right wait till the last year that he come and then I'm going to get right. That's how the world is. Yeah, I believe, but I got a sow of my wild

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oats. I got some things. I got time. And that little trick of the enemy will keep people from getting ready for the Lord's return. Thinking that you have time to get right, to do right, to be right. He says if you get ready, He says, I want you to understand that you have a reward waiting for you. God will reward you for the works. And so we need to get busy because God has some works that he is getting ready to give out to you. There are some crowns that he wants to give you, but if you don't get ready as a believer, guess what? You're going to forfeit those crowns. If you don't get busy for the Lord, while you have time, while you have breath in your body, listen, saints, We're only down here for a little while. the Bible tells us that we are like grass being cut down. We're like vapors, like that pumps of smoke. And we're here for a moment, and then we're gone. My Lord. He says, you need to get ready because I have a reward for you. And then you need to get ready and understand that I'm sovereign and I'm in control. John is speaking about this. He's indirectly talking about this in Revelation, that we have a sovereign God who is going to reward us. And this sovereign God is still in control. He was in control in Genesis. He was in control in all of the century, down through all the centuries. God was in control. Just because he's patient don't mean that he's forgotten. Just because he's long-suffering don't mean that God won't judge sin. Just because he's merciful doesn't mean that he won't judge. Just because he's loving don't mean that he won't spank your tail. Come on, somebody. God said, listen, you think, you think that I'm a sovereign God and that I'm not in control? No, I'm in control. As a matter of fact, I'm still God. I still keep the sun in the sky so you can stay warm. I still keep the moon at bay so the ocean doesn't drown over you. I still keep the stars twinkling at night so you can have a a little bit of sunlight, a little bit of light in the heaven, and have a little bit of hope in looking up at the stars. I still am the God who gives you air to breathe, gives you water to drink. I'm still in control of everything. That's nothing outside of my control. The issue is, can my spirit control you? And so he's working. He's working to reveal his perfect and complete plan. And he wants to include you in it. And then he says, you need to get ready because there's a king that's coming. Oh, there's a king that's coming. Jesus being the king of king and Lord of lords. Yes. John says, get faith. He talks about the word in John chapter one. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God. Then we come down to revelation and John is now given the revelation of Jesus Christ. He's given a fuller revelation of the word. and how the word is bringing to completion everything that he said from the beginning to the end. That's why he says I'm Alpha and Omega. Yes. John chapter 15 and verses 4, it says, whatsoever things were written aforetime, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, I'm not going to go through them all, y'all can do that later. Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written, for watch this, are what? Learning. So that means we need to, we need to, that learning, we learn of Jesus. He says, take my yoke upon me and learn. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. He says, for I'm meek and lowly. He says, cast your burdens on me. You don't have to do it all by yourself. He says, I want you to understand that you will find that through the patience and comfort of the scriptures, he says, you might have hope. You might have hope. John was exiled on the island of Patmos by Emperor Titus Domitian. He demanded, Domitian demanded that everyone would worship him as God. He was the emperor. And he began to persecute Christians. You say, Why is he on the island of Patmos? And anyone who did not worship Domitian was either killed or exiled to this island. It was a Greek island, it was under a Roman colony, There were Roman soldiers. Often time when we look at, you can see

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the picture there. That's the island of Patmos there. Often time we think of it, we see it as a desolate place. And we think that John was the only one there. were others who did not bow down and worship Domitian as God, other Christians. And they were exile, but God saw fit. When the world rejected him, God said, John, I have some work for you to do on the island of Patmos. I know you over here, you seem all by yourself, but that's you in the right place, and that's where I want you to be, because I'm going to reveal to you even more than what you thought you knew, John. You thought you knew something when you wrote the Gospel of John. You thought you knew something in the first, second, and the third epistle, but good God Almighty, God says, John, I'm going to give to my son, Jesus. And Jesus is going to give to the angel my word. And he's going to show you things. And I want you to write down what you saw. See, we got to be a witness to Jesus. Sometimes, saints, you got to write down what you saw Jesus do in your life. You got to write it down because we are sometimes easy to forget what the Lord has done. Am I right about it? So sometimes you got to encourage yourself. You got to delight yourself in the Lord and you write down the testimony of God. Lord, when I was sick, you healed me from this disease. Father, my child, Lord, they almost lost their life, but Lord, you redeemed them and you saved their soul. Father, I thank you for that prayer. Father, as a father, I need to take care of my family and take care of my children. And Father, you help me to get into college. You help me to graduate from college and you help me to serve you, Father God. I want to say, thank you, Lord. You put food in my refrigerator, Lord. You put a roof over me. Lord, I can't forget where I was. There was a time when I didn't have a house. But now, Lord, I can come to the house of God. You got to remember what the Lord did for you and write down what you saw. If nobody won't believe you, write down what you saw in yourself. Lord, I remember when I was sinning and I was smoking and coping and doping. I remember when I was going out there clubbing, hipping and a hopping, and I remember I was out there sleeping with all kind of women, all kind of men, having sex this way and having sex that way. And Lord, Lord, you save me. Good God Almighty. You changed my life. You got my eyes straight. You helped me to fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and the finisher of my faith. Good God Almighty Lord, I'm just going to write down what I saw in myself. I know what I used to be, but look what God has done. Lord, you got to say to yourself, Self, you ain't the same no more. And I see what you used to be, self, but it ain't because of you, self, it's because of the God in you, self, it's Jesus in you. You got to preach to yourself, teach to yourself. You need to have faith, not in yourself, but in what Jesus has done in your life. He ought to have faith. You got to get faith. You got to get knowledge. You got to get ready. Yes. And so God says, I want y'all to reveal, I want to reveal some things to you. So John, God sent him to the island of Patmos by his divine sovereignty. Yes. This Domitian. There's a theme that runs throughout the Bible. Domitian demanded worship. And John was exiled because he wouldn't. The book of Revelation is revealing that there's going to come a time where there's going to be a world dictator called the beast. who's going to demand worship. He's going to demand it. He's going to demand that either you accept his worship or lose your life. You're going to have to accept the mark of the beast in your hand or on your forehead. And John is saying there's a theme here. I want you to see, I'm on the island of Patmos, and God says, I'm gonna connect the dots for you so that which is veiled will be unveiled, that which is folded will be unfolded, that which is unrevealed will be revealed and not no longer concealed. So he says, I want you to catch this. I want you to pick

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up what I'm putting down. He says he wanted worship. He wanted worship. Demetian wanted worship. Does that sound familiar to you when you think about the Bible? I think about Nimrod. He was the great grandson of Noah. I mentioned Nimrod maybe a week ago or so, but Nimrod was the great grandson of Noah. And from Nimrod, they began to build this tower of Babel. And he instituted the worship of a false deity. And so, but what he did is he wanted to make a name for himself. Amen. And so he convinced the people to build this tower. that would reach the heaven in rebellion to God. As if he was saying, we will become God and we will sit on our own throne in the heaven. So he had self-worship. He didn't worship the Lord, the God who created the heavens and the earth and the God of Noah. He worshiped himself. Today we see people doing that in the world today. They don't worship any religion or any god. They worship themselves. They worship the job and the money that they have. They worship their power and their prestige and they worship themselves. I'm not talking about any political leaders. But they worship themselves. And we have to be careful that we don't find ourselves doing that as believers, worshiping self. Secular humanistic philosophy is all about self-worship, self-help. It's all about self. It's all about self. Jesus tells us that we are to abandon ourselves to him. We are to deny our what? Ourselves. Not worship ourselves. He says, no, you need to deny yourself. There's a reason because he doesn't want us to be like Nimrod. Next thing you building a tower too and a monument for your legacy. And God says, what about my legacy? What about my legacy? The preaching taught word of God. What about my legacy? The death, burial, and the resurrection that I came to do on behalf of man. What about my legacy to redeem and to save? We got to be careful. We got to be careful. So we think about Nimrod when we think about Domitian. And then we think about We think about, that was one called Neba, there it is, Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar built a statue similar to the heights of the Tower of Babel. And he said that when you hear the sound of the dulcimer and all this music, you are to bow down and do what? Worship. Sounds familiar? Sounds familiar? So remember, John's on the island of Patmos. But then there was Satan. Satan came to Jesus right after he had been baptized. The heavens had opened up and God the Father said, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. He goes out into the wilderness and there the devil tempted him. He says, all the kingdoms of the world would I give unto you if you would bow down and what? Worship. Oh, there's a theme here, y'all see it? And God is using John as a visual object lesson of the fine thread of God redeeming the souls of men from self-worship, from idle God worship, to serve and worship the living God. And then there's in Revelation chapter 13, the Antichrist, the dragon being that of Satan, the beast being the political leader. And if you don't bow down and worship the image and receive the mark, if you don't, Your life will be exiled from the earth, and they will kill you for your faith. John was exiled for his faith. Yes, we got to take the pattern, look at the shadow, and see Jesus. John refused along with many other Christians who were being persecuted and they needed encouragement in the writing of this letter during this period. This is the same John who was the brother of James. Y'all remember James? James and John were brothers. They were also homeboys with two other brothers named Peter and Andrew. Peter and Andrew and James and John were fishermen. Y'all remember that? And Jesus told them, he says, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Peter and Andrew were from Galilee just as James and John. James and John, they were called the sons of Zebedee or the sons of thunder for their fierce and impulsive, here's

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a word, a watch word, I'm going back to what your Sunday school lesson, their fierce and impulsive zeal. They had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Yes, they did. Their mother asked Jesus in Matthew chapter 20 if James and John could rule with them on the right-hand side and one on the left-hand side when Jesus would become king. And so they looked at Jesus as coming to establish his throne during the time in which they lived. And mama was like, hold up. I'm advocating for my sons. I tried to get their daddy to do it, but he wouldn't get up. But I'm coming. I'm going to advocate. Lord, let one of them sit on the right and one of them sit on the left. And Jesus said to them, It's not for me to give that unto you. Then he asked him a question. He says, Are you able, are you able to drink from the cup of suffering and are you able to go through the type of baptism that I'm gonna go through? Speaking of his baptism into death and being buried in the tomb. He asked them the question. That's why I said they had zeal, but it wasn't a court of the knowledge, because guess what the answer was? They said yes. So what they were saying is, we're willing to die and go in the grave, and we're willing to suffer. How many of us are willing to suffer for righteousness? Ooh. We do like this. We might even put the whole finger up. We do like that, we bend it. Lord, I love you, but I don't want no more suffering. If you say so, Lord, we don't ask for that. We don't ask for that, but they did. But they didn't know what they were asking for. Be careful what you asked for. That John was willing to suffer for his faith in Christ. James was in prison, if you remember, with Peter, and he was beheaded. Watch this. God is even using James and John as a witness to him being Alpha and Omega. When Peter and James were in jail, one of them was set free. One of them were beheaded. Guess who was beheaded? Say it. Top of the J. James! James was beheaded. Y'all remember, Peter was in there sleeping. He was sleeping so good, he was about to get killed too. He was about to be beheaded too. But the angel came and delivered Peter because God has some more work for him. But he beheaded James. James, listen, watch this. James was the first apostle to be killed. Now, you say, well, how does that relate to John? John is the last apostle to die. Jesus says, I am alpha, at omega between James and John, I am the beginning and the end, and that is my testimony. Even using the brothers, a little tidbit for you to know. Yes. Ooh. They were willing to suffer. They were willing to suffer. One day, We're going to die too. What do you want to be said about you when the time comes? It is appointed unto man, what? Once to die, and after that, the judgment. You've often heard it said, if you are born twice, that means being born again, You may die once, but if you are only born once, you're going to die twice. You're going to die a physical death. and you're going to die a spiritual death and total separation from God in a place that you do not want to go called hell. And you say, but why would God create a place called hell? Because God is a just God and he's a loving God and he will never allow evil and wickedness and sin to have his way in the world, in the new heaven and the new earth. And God is revealing it through the apostle John. He's saying, guess what? I'm going to bring everything to an end. I'm going to bring everything to a point and there's going to be a final judgment at the great white throne. If you were only born once, you're going to die twice. Well, I'm going to give you time to be born twice so that you may die once. And I say may die once because Jesus can come back at any moment and at any time. And you won't even see death. Right there where you sit, your shoes will be left where they are. Hallelujah. Immediately clothed in his righteousness. caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And the Bible says, and so shall we ever, ever, ever be with the Lord. That's

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what he said. So he says to you, and I'm gonna finish, and we're gonna come back and finish up next week. I gotta go verse by verse, line by line. Y'all ready? If you're not ready, you need to get ready. But in order to get ready, you gotta get faith. And when you get faith, then you need to add to that faith and you need to get some knowledge. And then you need to get ready, but when you get ready, you need to keep getting ready. Because this journey that we own is a daily journey. You might have got ready last year, and God used you to do some things. But God said, no, you still need to get ready because I'm about to do some things in this year. You need to get ready. You need to get ready. You need to strengthen yourself in the Lord. You need to fix your eyes on me because I'm going to complete what I started in you. Philippians 1 says, he that began a good work in you will complete it until the day when Jesus comes back. He's coming back again and you need to get ready. How do I get ready? I get ready in my mind. That's one of my favorite scriptures. I will keep them in perfect peace. Whose mind? Oh, we get ready in our mouth with the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart. heart. We need to get ready in our heart. Be acceptable unto thee. We want to get ready so that we can be acceptable unto God. Not that we need to get saved over and over again. If you accepted Christ, he had enough power to save you the first time you were called on his name. He has enough power to keep you saved. Why? Because we are kept by the what? The power of God. I'm glad it's not kept by my good works. I'm glad it's not kept by the good things I do. I'm glad I'm not kept by the evil stuff that I messed up. He says, I'm kept by the power of God. Yes. We need to get ready. We need to get ready in our hands as we extend the hand of Jesus to our families. It can be in the smallest thing. Cooking a meal for your wife. Massaging her feet when she hadn't even left the house yet. Y'all picking up what I'm putting down? Sometimes we do that when they come home from work. Listen, she ain't even left the house. My wife, I do a lot of foot massaging. Am I right about it, Ms. Harris? You better tell the truth. I forced that witness. I do a lot of small things. And sometimes we do so many small things and nobody notices it. And sometimes we feel alone and sometimes we even get mad about it. Am I right about it? Some people just won't understand what you do and why you do. And they would never even accept the small or the big things you do in their life. You think about children sometimes. All this sacrifice that a parent had gone through, they're not able to really appreciate it. Am I right about it? I think they're not really able to recollect and to think on those things. Think about a little baby, all the pampers you changed, all the snot you wiped out their nose. Am I right about it? And guess what? When the baby get older, they may not even remember all those precious things you did with them, all the places you took them. And sometimes we want that reciprocated back to us, and that's where we say, Lord, Whosoever I do, I do unto you. Luke had reminded them, he says, When you've done the will of God, say that I'm an unprofitable servant. I have done what the Lord required. Amen? John the apostle wanted to become great, but in that first verse, He is identified twice as what? A servant.

I want to share with you next week, but I want to remind you that there is a blessing for just reading the Book of Revelation. So when you get home, throughout this week, I want to challenge you to read the first chapter Revelation they have 20 verses just read the first chapter and then we will journey together as we begin with the end in mind you receive the word of God give the Lord a hand clap of praise today just wanted to give you a little introduction into the book and into John and who he was so much more to learn let's pray father we thank you for your word today. We thank you, Lord, for

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giving us a snapshot of the apostle John and of revelation and of all that you were doing in his life to get him to the point where he is on the island of Patmos. So, Father, we say thank you for the revelation of Jesus Christ to us in our salvation and our sanctification. Thank you, Lord, for not giving up on us. And Lord, thank you, Lord, for one day, Lord, you're gonna welcome us into a new heaven and a new earth, Lord, and we look forward to that. We have that blessed hope of being raised again from the dead. And we say thank you. And if you were to return even now, Father, we have a blessed hope to be caught up to meet you in the air. With the angels in heaven, we'll be able to meet our loved ones who've gone on before, and the weary would be at rest. We say thank you. for the saints of God here today who have come in this first Sunday of the new year. May you bless them in a mighty way. Maybe you hear and you say, Pastor, I want to give my life to Jesus. If that's who you are, I want to pray with you. Is there one who says, I want to make sure I'm saved? Just raise your hand and put it down. I want to pray with you. Just raise your hand and put it down. Amen. Repeat after me, but pray in your heart. Say, Dear Father in heaven, I believe that Jesus is your son and that he came and died on the cross for all the bad things that I've done. I ask you to forgive me and to make me a child of God and a son that will one day go to heaven. I believe that Jesus died, buried, and that he rose again. This is my prayer, and I accept you by faith. In Jesus' name, amen.