

Spring 2010
Study Questions for Revelation Series

Reversals, Revelation 3:7-13

Preaching Date: March 14, 2010

Key Sentence: In your weakness he can keep his promises of reversal.

Outline:

- I. His authority (Revelation 3:7-8)
- II. Promised Reversals (Revelation 3:9-13)

NOTE: There are several different small groups doing different kinds of studies of Revelation that follow Bob's preaching scheme. This study guide includes:

- I. A list of basic inductive study questions, for those who study the text on their own.
- II. A section of questions pursuing specifics of this text.
- III. A section of questions pursuing personal reflection and application.

The first section will remain the same each week, while the last two sections will be tailored to the specific text.

I. Inductive Study

Pray: seek God's direction and wisdom. Make the study a conversation with God.

Read: Read the passage several times in different versions.

Write down what stood out to you from this initial reading.

Observation:

What is the context? What came before? What follows?

Who is mentioned in the passage? Who is the audience?

Mark the key words and phrases; study them using dictionaries or computer tools.

Mark statements that teach using comparison/contrast, metaphor, or cause/effect.

Break the section into logical pieces and write the main thought of each piece.

Interpretation:

Look for promises that are made, commands that are given, examples that should or should not be followed.

Pursue cross references on specific words and Biblical concepts. Carefully record what you learn from other Scriptures about these key words or ideas.

Summarize the section in one good sentence.

Where does this section fit in the big idea of Scripture: God's redemption plan.

Application:

Are there any commands that you need to obey; sins that you need to avoid; promises that you need to claim; examples that you need to follow.

Write a specific response to this passage, applying the teaching to your own circumstances and relationship with God.

II. Study Questions

Brief Background: Philadelphia was one of the smaller cities addressed by Jesus in Revelation, partially because a series of earthquakes, especially one in 17 AD, had caused much of the population to flee. By the way, the city seems to have been named ‘brotherly love’ because of the great affection the Greek founder had for his brother.

1. What does Christ say of himself as the letter begins (verse 7)? Is this phrase related to any part of the description of Christ in chapter 1? What does it add? What does Isaiah 22:20-24 contribute to your understanding of this verse?

2. How does verse 8 reflect the characterization of Christ in verse 7? How is the church at Philadelphia described in this verse?

3. One of the themes of this letter is that Christ strengthens when we are weak. What do you learn about this theme from the following verses: Psalm 12; Psalm 72:11-14, Isaiah 40:28-31, Ezekiel 34:11-16, 1 Corinthians 1:20-30, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

4. In C. S. Lewis’ *The Screwtape Letters* Screwtape (a senior level tempter) gets in trouble for the following comment to Wormwood:

For we must never forget what is the most repellent and inexplicable trait in our Enemy; He really loves the hairless bipeds He has created and always gives back to them with His right hand what He has taken away with His left.

Compare this to verse 9. Where else in Scripture do you see this truth portrayed?

5. Does verse 10 refer to the final tribulation and second coming of Christ? If so, how would they have applied to the church at Philadelphia? If not what do the words refer to? Compare this teaching to that of Matthew 24 (especially 15-31).

6. What are the implications of being a pillar in the house of God and having the three names written ‘on him’? What do you learn about these things by looking at: (pillars) Exodus 24:3-5, 1 Kings 7:15-22, Galatians 2:9, 1 Timothy 3:15, (names) Hebrews 12:22-24, 1 Peter 4:12-16, Rev. 14:1, Rev. 19:12-16, Rev. 21:12-14; Rev. 22:4.

III. Application Questions

1. What difference do the characteristics of Jesus that are described in verse 7 make in your life as a believer?

2. What are the characteristics of the church at Philadelphia? Where do you see the same characteristics in your own life?

3. Verses 9 to 13 express a number of reversals that Jesus will accomplish for this church that has little strength. What would a similar reversal mean in your life?

“the synagogue of Satan” will “acknowledge that I have loved you.”

those who “kept [his] command do endure patiently” will “be kept from the hour of trial”

those who were kicked out of the synagogue will find a permanent place in the new Jerusalem

those who have not denied his name will have the names of God, the city, and of Jesus himself permanently written on them.