

**REVELATION (GOD'S MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH)
PROGRAM 1 (#911236)
WEEK 1 (911348)
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SERIES: Revelation (God's Message To The Church)

TITLE: Program 1 – Don't Be Confused

MONDAY

OPEN

Do you know what I love to do more than anything else? I love to teach people the Word of God. But I love to teach them how to observe the text so that they can see for themselves what God is saying. Because God intends for each one of us, to know truth for ourselves. And what's so exciting is when I open the Word of God and I teach people how to observe the text and how to discover what it's saying, then I realize that I am dealing with absolute, pure, unadulterated truth.

PART ONE

We're looking at one of the most exciting books in the Bible because it lets us know what is going to come to pass. So we're going to look at Revelation, chapter 1 and I'm going to read verses 1 and 2. And as I read it, I don't want you to do any marking in your study guide yet, but I just want you to read along with me. And if you don't have a study guide then you just

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open your Bible and read Revelation, chapter 1, verses 1 to 2. Now you may be reading in a different translation than mine. I'm using the New American Standard. I use the NISB, the New Inductive Study Bible, that's the New American Standard translation. And I use it because I believe it's the best word for word translation from the original language. All right now, let's read it and see what God is saying. He's introducing the book. He's telling us what this book is about. And it says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bondservants, the things that must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bondservant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw." Now as we look at the text, what I want you to do is I want you to mark the references to Jesus Christ, okay. So this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him. Him, whom? Gave Jesus. It's a Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him, gave Jesus to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place. Let's just stop there and let's analyze the text. Let's see; let's slow down and observe it. To observe the text is to see exactly what God is saying. Now one of the things that helps you to observe the text is to mark key words or to make sure that when you look at a word, when you look at a pronoun, like he or him, you know who that he or him is. All right, so if this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, what we're going to do is we're going to mark the reference to Jesus Christ. Now when I mark the text and I mark the reference, either to God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit, I have a method for marking that I use throughout my Bible. Now I don't usually mark the references to God because He's used so many times and I don't usually mark the references to Jesus Christ because there's so many references to Him and I don't want my Bible marked up too much. But in this instance I have to because I have to understand what is this book all about. Is it just the Revelation of Jesus Christ? Is this book of Revelation just something that is going to reveal to me Jesus Christ? Well let's see what

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the text says. So when I mark God the Father, I use a triangle. All right and I use that to represent what I call and other theologians call the Trinity. The word Trinity is not in the Word of God. But what you see is you see that there is God the Father. There is God the Son and there is God the Holy Spirit. Now maybe you don't believe that, but if you'll just let the Bible speak for itself you'll see that and you're going to see that right in this first chapter of Revelation. So I mark God with a triangle. I just draw a purple triangle freehand then I color the inside of that yellow. When I mark Jesus Christ I choose one side of the triangle. I underline the word for Jesus Christ in purple and then I go up as the triangle goes up from that corner and then I put a cross through there. And so I can look at it and say, hey, that's a reference to Jesus Christ, because sometimes I'm marking a pronoun and I wanna know who the pronoun refers to. All right if I'm marking the Holy Spirit I mark the other side of the triangle. I underline Holy Spirit and then I come up towards the peak of the triangle and then I put a cloud and connect those two lines. All right so, "This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ ...," so you would mark Jesus Christ. "... which God gave to Him." Which God gave to whom? To Jesus Christ. So you would mark the Him the same way. All right so this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Jesus. So what you see immediately is that this is not a revelation of Jesus Christ, but this is a revelation of Jesus Christ, that God gave to Jesus to show His bondservants the things which must shortly take place. So if you look at this carefully, this is a revelation that was given to Jesus by God to show to His bondservants what's going to take place, the things that are going to take place shortly. And it says, "... and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bondservant John." All right now, the question you want to ask is, who sent and, and communicated it to His angel to give in turn to His bondservant John? Well, if you go back you will see that that modifies the last pronoun, which is a reference to Jesus Christ. I know that this seems a little laborious, but hangeth thou in there O baby. And I want you to hang in

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there and the reason I want you to is because this is so crucial that you understand these first verses of Revelation so that you understand what is God going to tell us in this book. All right, so this is a revelation of Jesus Christ. It was a revelation that was given to Jesus by God and Jesus then in turn sent and communicated it to His bondservant John through an angel. So it comes this way; you start with a triangle. You can just imagine my hands above my head as a triangle representing God. Then imagine me standing there with my arms out representing a cross, representing Jesus Christ. So God gave this revelation to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in turn gave it to His angel and so I just flap my arms and gave it to His angel and His angel then gave it to His bond-servant John. Now what I'm telling you are things that I do when I'm on the Isle of Patmos and when I'm teaching the groups that we take over there on our Greece tour when we go and we teach Philippians in Philippi and Thessalonians in Thessalonica and we teach in Berea and we teach Acts in Athens and we teach ah Corinthians in Corinth. And then we get on a cruise ship and we teach Revelation on the Isle of Patmos as we sail that Aegean Sea. And so when I stand there with a group I have them do this body language. Now listen, body language helps you remember something. So if you're sitting at home, just listening to this message, then you might do this. Put your hands in the shape of a triangle, above your head. That's God. Then spread your arms out. That's Jesus. So God took this revelation, this unveiling of the things that are shortly going to take place. He gave it to Jesus. Put your arms out like a cross. Jesus then gave it to His angels. Flap your wings. Flap your arms. He gave it to His angel and then His angel, and then just bend over and act like you're an old man. He gave it to His bondservant John. Now this is the apostle John. This is John that wrote the gospel of John. This is John that wrote the three letters, the three epistles of John, first and second and third John. This is John now, an old man, exiled on the Isle of Patmos receiving this revelation of the things that must shortly take place, that God gave to Jesus and Jesus in turn gave to His angel. And

His angel in turn gave it to His bond-servant, John. But it didn't stop there. It didn't stop there. It says, who, "John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw...." All right, so you want to mark Jesus Christ again. So it says, "He sent ...," God sent, Jesus sent, "... this revelation of the things that must shortly take place, gave them to His angel. His angel gave them to John and John is the one who bore witness to this word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to this revelation, even to all that he saw." Now listen, when John was on that Isle of Patmos, and that Isle of Patmos is not anything like it is now. Now it's a beautiful, gorgeous resort. But then it was just an island that was stuck off the coast of Asia Minor that was just like a barren rock. It was a place where you would exile someone that you wanted to get rid of. And tradition tells us that what they did was they took the apostle John and they dipped him, they immersed him, they baptized him into a caldron of boiling oil and then they put him on a ship and took him to the Isle of Patmos and left him there. And it looks like all is lost for John. And then God, God gives this revelation of the things that are shortly going to take place to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in turn, gives it to His angel. His angel gives it to His bondservant John. And what is John going to do? John's going to give it to the church. And we have an awesome, awesome promise that follows these first two verses. Maybe someone has told you hey, you can't study the book of Revelation. You don't study those things until you get to be old. You're liable to get confused. Oh no, Revelation clears up a lot of things. We'll talk about it when I come back after the break.

PART TWO

Welcome back from the break my friend. There are several more things I want you to see. I want you to see that this is a Revelation of the things that are shortly going to take place because God wants you, His bondservants, to understand these things that are going to happen in the future. So now watch

what it says again. Let me review. “This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Jesus to give to His bondservants.” Now how is He going to give this to His bondservants? Well, God is going to give the Revelation to Jesus. Jesus in turn is going to give it to His angel, the angel in turn is going to give it to His bondservant, John and John in turn is responsible to get it to God’s bondservants and God’s bondservants are those that make up the church of Jesus Christ. All right now, why is He doing this? Well let’s go back to Amos, an Old Testament book. And this is what I would suggest that you do: Take your study guide and right next to verse 2, write Amos, chapter 3, verse 7. This is what you’re doing. You’re comparing scripture with scripture. You’re letting Scripture interpret scripture. And, this is one of the skills of interpretation. The best interpreter of scripture is Scripture. All right, so when we go to Amos, chapter 3 and I want to start in verse 6, it says, “If a trumpet is blown in the city, will not the people tremble?” Now the way that they communicated with the people, because they didn’t have cell phones, they didn’t have telephones. They didn’t have any kind of a communication to reach a mass of people except a trumpet, so that they would blow a trumpet. The way the trumpet was blown would show the people whether they were to be gathered together or whether they were being warned of a calamity. And so what Amos is saying is this: “If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people tremble? Yes. If a calamity occurs in a city...,” now listen carefully, “... has not the Lord done it?” In other words, as we see in Isaiah 45, “God creates good and God creates adversity. He is the Lord that does all these things.” Now this ought to bring you comfort. It not ought to shock you, but it ought to bring you comfort to let you know, hey, if adversity comes, God has allowed it. If adversity comes God has a purpose in it. All right now, it goes on to say in verse 7 and this is the verse I want you to see. “Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants, the prophets.” All right, now what offices did Jesus serve, or fulfill? He served the office of

priest and prophet and king. We haven't seen Him yet as King, but He came as our great high priest. We have seen Him as the prophet, the one who is speaking for God, the mouthpiece for God, so what he's going to show us is in fulfillment of this scripture. God's not going to do anything but what He's going let His bondservants, His prophets know ahead of time, so that we are not caught unaware. God doesn't want you confused Beloved. God wants you to know what's going on. God wants you to understand the times. He wants you to be like the men of Issachar, who understood the times and who knew what to do. All right, so now let's go back to Revelation, chapter 1 and I want to show you one other thing. It says, "This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him, Jesus, to show to His bondservants, the things which must shortly take place." Now that word, "shortly take place," is en tachei and I would write it down. Its e-n- and then it's another word, t-a-c-h-e-i, e-n- and then another word, t-a-c-h-e-i. And en tachei means that once it's going to happen, it's kind of like an avalanche. Once it starts, I mean, it is so rapid that if you're on that mountain and an avalanche starts you can't ski to safety. You can't run to safety because it happens so quickly. And so what He wants His bondservants to know is He wants you and me to know what's going take place shortly, what's going to happen in the future and how rapidly it's going to come. So Revelation and the word for Revelation is apocalypses and it means the unveiling. It is the unveiling of the things that are shortly going to take place and it's a Revelation that God the Father gave to God the Son and God the Son in turn gave it to His angel. His angel in turn gave it to the apostle John and the apostle John, in turn is going to write this to His bond-servants to the church. And we're going to see that in just a minute. But before we look at that I want you to see that if somebody tells you O, you shouldn't read Revelation, O, you shouldn't study Revelation, that's because they don't understand this book. It's because they think that no; you're not to know about the coming of Jesus Christ. It's too complicated. Well, when we go to Greece and we study Thessalonians, we

see that he taught them about the coming of Jesus Christ. In fact we see that every church that he visited he let them know that Jesus Christ was coming again. And he let them know in Thessalonici so that they not only understood that Jesus Christ was coming again, but they understood the day of the Lord. So now in verse 3 he gives you this promise, this promise that you can hold on to while we study Revelation, chapter 1, 2, and 3, Jesus' message to the churches. It says, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy..." This revelation is a prophecy. It's a prophecy of the things, which much shortly take place. So, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and heed the things, which are written in it; for the time is near." The time is near. Now when he says, "heeds the words," the word literally is keeps these words. In other words when you study prophecy it is not simply an intellectual pursuit, but understanding prophecy causes you to order your life in a very specific way. It causes you to see hey, there is an end to this all and the end to this all is like Revelation 22:12, which I've quoted to you so many times: "Behold, Jesus says I am coming quickly and My reward is with Me to give to everyone according to their deeds." So understanding prophecy is not just an intellectual pursuit. It's not just a craving of knowledge, but it is understanding that and then ordering your life accordingly. And so what does He promise? He promises a blessing to the one who reads this book and then a blessing to those who hear the book. Now why, the reading and the hearing? Because remember in those days very few people had access to the Word of God. It was written on scrolls, on long scrolls. It was read in the synagogues. And, so the common man didn't have it. So the one that unfolds that scroll and begins to read it is blessed just by reading these words. "The ones that are listening to the one that is reading is blessed also if he heeds these words, if he keeps these words, if he orders his life accordingly." God has a blessing for you, Beloved. It's a blessing in store that you do not want to miss.