

Seven Words for the Church Today

Revelation 1:1-6

Ice Breaker: What's the strangest "end-times prediction" you've ever heard or seen?

Big Idea: Biblical prophecy isn't just about *fore*-telling the future. It's also about *forth*-telling God's Word. True prophecy (even in Revelation) isn't so much about appeasing our curiosity about the end – as it is about calling us to listen to God's Word and respond wholeheartedly.

Digging Deeper:

- 1) Read Matthew 24:36-51. What does Jesus say about our knowledge of the day of His second coming? What instructions does Jesus give us while we await His return? How should these words inform the way we think about the "end-times?"
- 2) Why do you think there have been so many so called "end-times experts" who have written books and made claims about the date of Jesus' return? Why do you think so many Christians keep buying these books?
- 3) Read Revelation 1:1-3. What does it mean to "take something to heart?" Why do you think it's significant that John opened the book of Revelation with a blessing to those who "take to heart" the words of this prophecy?
- 4) Read Revelation 1:4-5a. What are the titles of Jesus in these verses? Given what Pastor Joshua shared about the persecution the believers in the first century were facing, why do you think these titles (for Jesus) would have been so meaningful to them?
- 5) Read Revelation 1:5b-6. Even though the Book of Revelation is complex and (in places) confusing, there are three truths in this paragraph that are very simple. What are they? Why is it so important that we understand (and believe) these truths before we begin reading Christ's letters to the seven churches?
- 6) Out of these three truths: Jesus loves us, Jesus died for our sins, and Jesus has a purpose for our lives (beyond just killing time until we die and go to Heaven) – what is the one that you've struggled with (or struggle with) the most? Why?
- 7) Spend some time praying for each other (and our church) to be ready to "take to heart" everything Jesus wants to say to us in these seven letters.