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Leader's Guide

GOD WINS

A Look at the Mysteries of Revelation

Acknowledgements

Faith Alive Christian Resources thanks Rev. Lew Vander Meer for his presentations in the video sessions that accompany this course. He is a veteran high school Bible teacher and senior pastor of the New Community Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We also thank retired Faith Alive staff member Bob Rozema, who wrote this leader's guide and the session guide. Rev. Leonard Vander Zee, editor-in-chief of Faith Alive Christian Resources, wrote the session backgrounds in this leader's guide.

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Finally, we thank the Calvin College Video Department for producing the video sessions that accompany this course.

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CONTENTS

	How to Use This Course.	5
SESSION 1	Introduction to Revelation.	9
SESSION 2	Jesus and the Seven Churches (Revelation 1-3)	19
SESSION 3	A Look into Heaven (Revelation 4-7)	27
SESSION 4	Seven Trumpets of Judgment (Revelation 8-11)	33
SESSION 5	Unique Personalities (Revelation 12-14)	41
SESSION 6	Seven Angels and Seven Bowls (Revelation 15-19).	49
SESSION 7	And He Shall Reign for a Thousand Years (Revelation 20)	57
SESSION 8	The New Jerusalem (Revelation 21-22).	65

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

You are reading the leader's guide to an eight-session video course on the book of Revelation. *God Wins!* is intended for use with adults in small groups that meet in homes or in adult education classes at church.

In addition to this leader's guide, you'll need a set of printed session guides, one for each person in your group. And, of course, you'll need the DVD that accompanies this course.

Each session features a video presentation of approximately 25-30 minutes by Rev. Lew Vander Meer, a veteran high school Bible teacher and senior pastor of a congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan (yes, he's a full-time Christian school teacher *and* pastor). You and your group will appreciate Lew's clear and compelling explanation of the book of Revelation. It removes much of the burden of researching and presenting from your shoulders.

After each video presentation, group members use a session guide to discuss issues raised by the video, probe into details not included on the video, and apply the teachings of Revelation to their lives. This discussion is obviously a crucial part of the course. Please give yourself at least thirty minutes time for discussion, and be prepared to select those questions and activities that fit your time frame and the interests of your group. Don't try to do everything!

Goals

This course should help adults to

- read the book of Revelation with fresh appreciation and understanding.
- interpret the symbolism in Revelation from a Reformed historical perspective.
- describe what Revelation unveils to us about Jesus Christ, including his winning the battle against Satan and his working on our behalf today.
- experience the joy of knowing that Jesus will never forsake his church and that God wins the ultimate victory.
- eagerly anticipate the second coming of our Lord and the wonderful new creation that he will bring with him.

Theme

In contrast to the popular premillennial ("Left Behind") approach that views Revelation primarily as a book unveiling end-time events, Pastor Lew takes a Reformed historical approach that looks back in time to events that have already happened to the church and that are continuing into the present and

the future. The theme of this approach is “God wins!” This course celebrates the unveiling of Jesus Christ, who gives his church hope and joy and victory in the midst of the world’s suffering and turmoil.

Components

This course includes a **DVD with eight videos**, each about 25-30 minutes long, featuring Pastor Lew Vander Meer’s comments on each chapter of the book of Revelation. The videos are viewed at the beginning of the session, followed by group discussion. While most selections from Revelation are shown onscreen as Pastor Lew explains them, some participants may prefer to view the videos with their Bibles open.

Printed **session guides** offer a place for participants to take notes on the video and include a discussion guide with questions and other activities, definitions of key terms, and brief quotes that fit the topic. An optional section, “For Further Study,” offers additional readings and other material for participants who want to learn more about the session topic. It’s meant to be read at home after the session. As leader, however, you may want to occasionally refer to this section during class for additional insights and information.

Since the session guides do not include Scripture passages, you’ll also need a supply of Bibles (Pastor Lew uses the New International Version throughout). If possible, include at least one NIV Study Bible for group reference during the sessions.

The **leader’s guide**, in CD format, includes complete plans for eight sessions to accompany the videos. Each session offers

- a list of materials needed to lead the session (you’ll need newsprint or other large sheets of paper and markers for some of the sessions).
- a summary of the video.
- goals of the session.
- session backgrounds with additional biblical and theological insights by Rev. Leonard Vander Zee, editor-in-chief of Faith Alive Christian Resources.
- detailed suggestions for discussing the video, including a warm-up activity that precedes viewing the video; discussion questions and answers; ideas for small group work, if desired; alternate strategies for some parts of the session; and ideas for closing your time together.

We recommend having group members read Revelation at home as assigned from week to week (see “For Next Time” in the session guides).

Resources

If you’re looking for additional information on Revelation, check “For Further Study” at the end of each session in the session guide. In addition, check out one or more of the following sources, all of which proved useful in preparing this leader’s guide:

Beyond Doubt: Faith-Building Devotions on Questions Christians Ask by Cornelius Plantinga Jr. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

See the last section in this devotional book: “Questions about the Last Things,” especially Question 27, “What about the Consummation?”

Discipleship on the Edge: An Expository Journey Through the Book of Revelation by Darrell W. Johnson. Regent College Publishing, 2004.

A highly acclaimed, easy-to-read book that treats Revelation like a discipleship manual rather than a crystal ball.

New Testament Commentary: Revelation by Simon Kistemaker. Baker Books, 2001.

An excellent, verse-by-verse commentary for those who want to take a comprehensive look at Revelation.

Revelation: Making Sense of John's Visions by Edwin Walkout. Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2000.

This two-part Bible study, complete with leader's and session guides, takes readers through Revelation in thirteen sessions. Great for background information and additional questions to talk about with your group.

The Day of Christ's Return: What the Bible Teaches, What You Need to Know by Andrew Kuyvenhoven, Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1999.

This excellent book offers a Reformed perspective on issues surrounding the end times. See especially chapters 5 ("The Rapture"), 7 ("The Thousand Years"), and 13 ("The New Earth and Final Judgment").

Evaluation

We welcome your comments on this course. Call us at 1-800-333-8300 or e-mail us at editors@faithaliveresources.org.

SESSION 1

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

❖ SCRIPTURE

Revelation 1:1-3, 9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (optional)

❖ MATERIALS

- Session guides, one per participant
- *God Wins!* DVD, session 1; DVD player
- Bibles for participants
- Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- *NIV Study Bible* for leader, optional

❖ VIDEO SUMMARY

Today's video introduces the book of Revelation. Pastor Lew begins with an explanation of the book's name, author, and date. He then outlines two different approaches to interpreting the book of Revelation.

The "Left Behind" or premillennial view holds that we are living in the time prior to a thousand-year reign of Christ (*premillennial*). This view points toward events in the future or end times. It includes a rapture of believers into heaven just before a seven-year period of terrible suffering on earth for those "Left Behind" (the tribulation). After the tribulation, Christ will return for a second, final time and begin a thousand-year reign in Jerusalem marked by worldwide prosperity and bliss. Near the end of this time, God will briefly allow Satan to be unleashed, but Christ will destroy him. Then God will judge all people. The theme of this view is "Get ready!"

In contrast, the amillennial or Reformed historical view holds simply to one final return of Christ followed by judgment. Believers are not "raptured" out of a time of trouble and tribulation, and there is no thousand-year reign of Christ (millennium) from Jerusalem. This view primarily looks backward, arguing that from John's perspective, the events described in Revelation were indeed "what must soon take place" (Rev. 1:1). So the book is primarily about the history of the church—the persecution of the early centuries after Christ and subsequent events (though some of the book also deals with the end times). The theme of this approach is "God wins," or the victorious church.

Pastor Lew concludes by explaining the difference between literal and symbolic language. The Reformed historical view says that Revelation is primarily a book of symbols and pictures and as such is not meant to be taken literally.

❖ GOALS OF THE SESSION

Participants should have a better understanding of two contrasting ways to interpret Revelation and end time events. They should be able to contrast the premillennial and amillennial views of Revelation, including their approach to literal and figurative language. Finally, they should be able to state the “themes” of Revelation that result from the two approaches.

❖ SESSION BACKGROUND

G. K. Chesterton, an English writer of the early twentieth century still widely read today, once remarked, “Though St. John . . . saw many monsters in his vision, he saw no creature so wild as one of his own commentators.”

Revelation, the last book of the Bible, is also one of the most important. It’s the climax of God’s inspired Scripture. Unfortunately, many of us give up on it because we’re confused by its mysterious symbols, strange numbers, and frightening images. Add to that the bewildering array of interpretations and approaches to the book, and we’re tempted to leave it unopened and unexplored.

With Pastor Lew’s expert help, we will have the joy of rediscovering the power, scope, comfort, and, above all, the contemporary relevance of the Bible’s last word.

We learn from the beginning that as Reformed Christians we approach Revelation in a radically different way from that popularized in the sensational “Left Behind” books and movies of recent years.

The method of interpretation called the “Left Behind” approach in this video series (after the best-selling series of books) is widespread among evangelical Christians. But where does it come from? It’s based on an interpretive framework for the whole Bible called *dispensationalism*. This complex system of interpreting the Bible emerged fairly recently, in the mid-1800s, and was later popularized in the still widely used Scofield Reference Bible. It’s a view that’s shared by many evangelical Christians today.

The main feature of dispensationalism today is its sharp division between Israel and the church. Rather than one people of God—Israel and the church as the new Israel growing out of the old—dispensationalists teach two distinct people of God:

- Israel, an earthly and political leading entity is the recipient of the Old Testament promises, which leads to the belief that the establishment of the modern state of Israel directly fulfills prophecy.
- The church is the spiritual and heavenly people of God to which God offers a new and completely unrelated covenant than the covenant offered to the Old Testament people of God.

Reformed theologians find this problematic because it divides the seamless integrity of Scripture. Reformed doctrine strongly asserts that the Bible is the one story of God’s covenant with Israel that is now extended to the whole world. As God declares to Abraham, “All peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen. 12:3).

Another feature of contemporary dispensationalism is its literal interpretation of the millennium of Revelation 20. It teaches that the millennium is a literal thousand years in which Christ will reign on the earth, after which there will be a great worldwide rebellion of Satan’s forces and the earth will be destroyed. Prior to this, however, there will be seven years of severe tribulation leading up to a decisive literal battle at Armageddon (in modern day Israel). It teaches that the church will be “raptured” or instantaneously lifted up to heaven (based on what we believe is an erroneous interpretation of 1 Thess. 4:17), before the millennium (thus *premillennial*), and before Christ’s final return. In the most

common strand of this teaching, the church will be “raptured” before the tribulation, and thus spared its suffering (*pretribulation*).

Adherents of a premillennial approach tend to be less connected to the creation, since they believe its destiny is destruction and believers will live in a heaven unrelated to this creation. In contrast, the Reformed view teaches that God will inaugurate a new creation of this universe at Christ’s one and only return. This belief enhances a sense of connection to and responsibility to care for God’s good creation.

❖ LEADING THE SESSION

Warm-up

(5 minutes)

Hand out copies the session guide and ask participants to complete the warm-up activity on page 5. After a minute or two, ask for volunteers to share which items they checked, and why they feel that way. Summarize the activity by saying that our purpose is to gain a better understanding of what Jesus is showing us about himself through this exciting but often puzzling book. To help us do that, during the first part of each of the eight sessions we’ll watch a video explanation by Rev. Lew Vander Meer, a veteran high school Bible teacher and senior pastor of New Community Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After the video, we’ll clarify information as needed, discuss issues, and ask our own questions.

Video Presentation

(about 25 minutes)

Ask everyone to watch for the two ways of interpreting Revelation that Pastor Lew describes, including what events happen in what sequence (you can even playfully warn them that they’ll be constructing timelines later in the session—or just surprise them!). Point out the space for taking notes should they wish to do so.

Then play the video through without stopping.

❖ ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Use this alternate warm-up activity if group members need to get acquainted. Say: **Since this is a study of Revelation, take a moment to introduce yourself and to “reveal” one little-known fact about yourself.** Go around the circle, starting with yourself. Then welcome everyone to this video study of the book of Revelation as in the main step above.

❖ TIMESAVER

Skip the opening step and proceed directly to the video.

Video Discussion Guide

(30 or more minutes)

1. Read Revelation 1:1, 9-11. Then jot down some basic facts about

- **the author, John.**
- **the date and location of writing.**
- **the meaning of “Revelation” and who was to be revealed.**
- **the original audience and reason for writing.**
- **the role of visions/symbols.**

Ask someone to read the verses aloud, then quickly review what the video said (and what participants already know) about the items above.

Here are some guidelines for your discussion:

- **the author, John:** John identifies himself as the author three times in this first chapter. He is generally assumed to be the “disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23) and the one who wrote the gospel of John and the three letters of John. According to the *NIV Study Bible*, John was “a Jew, well-versed in Scripture, a church leader who was well-known to the seven churches of Asia Minor, and a deeply religious person fully convinced that the Christian faith would soon triumph over the demonic forces at work in the world.” He was likely in his eighties when he received “the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
- **the date and location of writing:** Most Bible scholars say Revelation was written in about A.D. 90 (or a few years later) on the island of Patmos, a Roman penal colony about fifty miles off the coast of modern Turkey. **Ask why John was there** (“because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” — Rev. 1:9). As a key leader of the church in Asia Minor, John was banished to Patmos. The church at that time was under heavy persecution by the Roman emperor Domitian, who insisted that all his subjects throughout the empire worship him as Lord. In the year A.D. 92, Domitian had some 42,000 Christians killed for refusing to acknowledge him as Lord. John himself was likely spared out of fear of making such a popular leader a martyr.
- **the meaning of “Revelation” and who was to be revealed:** “Revelation” or *apocalypse* means to unveil or disclose. The book of Revelation uncovers things that would otherwise be hidden to us. It reveals Jesus, what he has done, what he is doing now, and what he will do in the future. Jesus has ascended but he is still very much with his church—a message of tremendous comfort to churches and Christians struggling to stay alive in a hostile world.
- **the original audience and reason for writing:** John wrote to the seven churches mentioned in Revelation 1:11 (much more on these in our next session). Why did he write? Because God directed him to (1:11). From reading the rest of the book, we know that John’s purpose was to warn the seven churches of impending persecution and to encourage them (and us today) to remain faithful during times of difficulty and struggle. God’s message to the churches is that God

TIP



We suggest you allow at least an hour for these sessions. Even with that amount of time, however, you will likely need to select from among the suggested questions and activities. Don’t feel you have to cover everything. For today’s session, do try to cover at least questions 1 and 2.

TIP



It’s a good idea to have an *NIV Study Bible* handy during these sessions. The introduction to the book of Revelation and the numerous footnotes are helpful.

will prevail over evil. God wins! Therefore, we have hope and peace and joy.

- **the role of visions/symbols:** Refer to verse 10: “I was in the Spirit.” The NIV Study Bible says this refers to “a state of spiritual exaltation—not a dream, but a vision like Peter’s in Acts 10:10.” The visions John sees are sent by God (1:1) and will show him things that cannot be known in any other way. These visions, Pastor Lew argues, are not meant to be taken literally but are symbolic and figurative. You may want to review the definition of apocalyptic literature (see the Word Box in the session guide) at this time.

2. Break into groups of two to four persons. With others in your group, attempt to make two timelines, the first showing the “Left Behind” or premillennial view, the second showing the Reformed historical or amillennial view. On the left side of your timeline, write “incarnation”; on the right side, write “eternity.” Then fill in the details as best you can. Extra credit if you can list some of the sub-events (like the mark of the beast) under the broader time span when they are supposed to occur.

Give each group a sheet or two of newsprint and five to ten minutes to complete their timelines. Then display the timelines and see if you can end up with a reasonably accurate version. See sample timelines below:

❖ ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

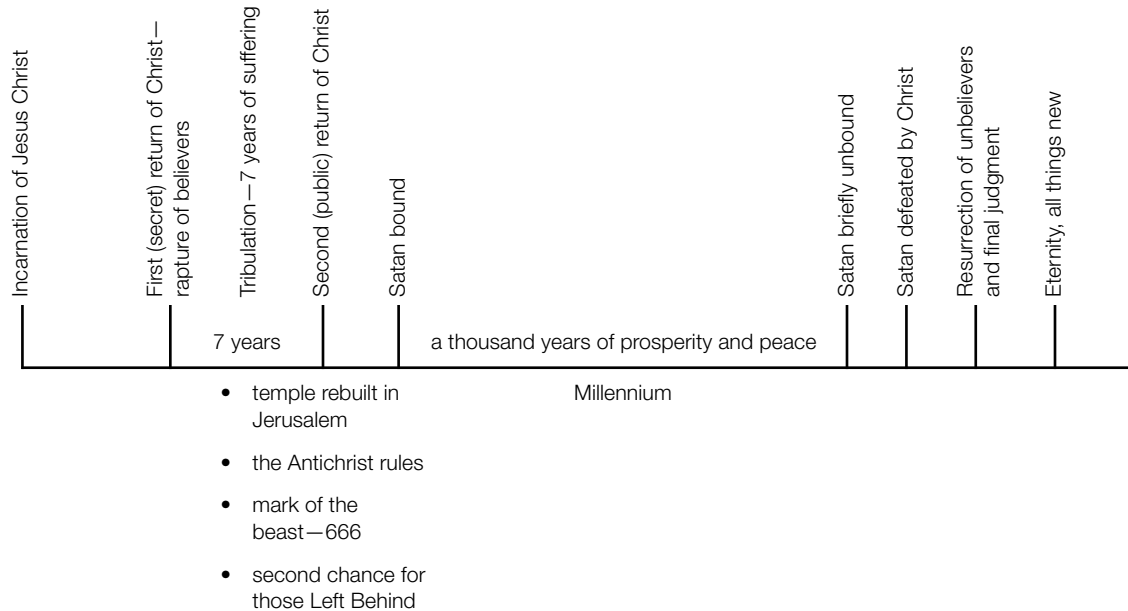
Instead of question 1, try this more open-ended approach to covering some of the same information. Divide into small groups of two or three persons. Ask each group to imagine that they are contemporary marketing agents for a Christian publisher and that the book of Revelation has just been discovered and translated. Their task is to develop a short, back cover blurb about the book that would make the book as appealing as possible to the public. What would they say about the author and the circumstances under which the book was written? What value would it have for today’s readers? How about the visions and mysterious language in the book?

Give the groups a sheet of newsprint and have them try their hand at writing a blurb. You may also want to have a few copies of the *NIV Study Bible* available for reference to the introduction to the book of Revelation.

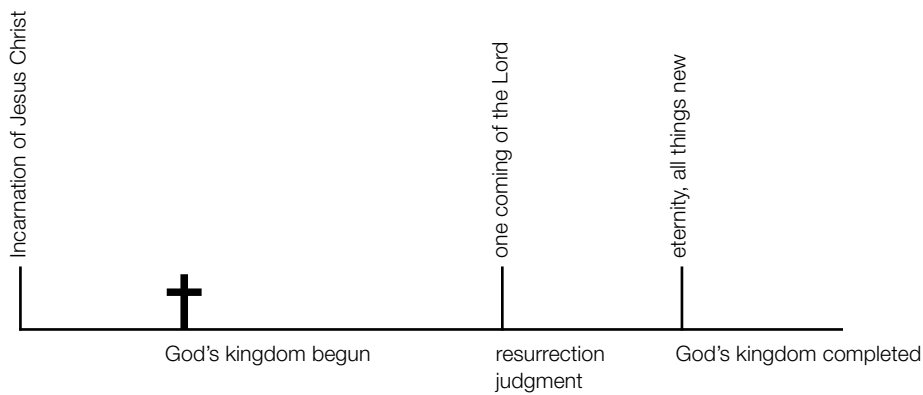
After ten minutes or so, have the groups report what they wrote—or at least an angle that they would use to try to sell the book.

Supplement with anything essential from the answer to question 1 (above) that the groups may have missed.

“Left Behind” (Premillennial) Timeline



Reformed Historical (Amillennial) Timeline



Note: The above timeline shows a couple of items that were not mentioned on the video: the incarnation and the kingdom, which is present and growing in this world today but will be complete when Christ returns.

❖ TIMESAVER

Instead of having small groups prepare timelines, construct two large timelines with the entire group. Draw the timelines on your board or on sheets of newsprint taped together. Solicit details from participants as you enter the events on the timelines.

Conclude by asking the groups to summarize how the Reformed historical (amillennial) view differs from the “Left Behind” (premillennial) view.

The Reformed historical view

- holds to only one return of Christ that everyone will see; the premillennial view seems to have two returns: one secret, one public.
- does not include a rapture that secretly removes believers from a world about to be plunged into seven years of suffering.
- does not take literally the thousand years, the seven years of tribulation, or the binding and releasing of Satan, all of which are part of the premillennial view. Reformers generally look on the thousand years as symbolic of completion and wholeness, indicating that throughout the time between the Lord’s first and second return Satan will be bound by the power of Christ.
- has the theme of “God wins!” for the book of Revelation instead of the “Get ready!” theme of the premillennial view. Looks primarily to the past rather than to the future.
- views apocalyptic Scriptures in both Old and New Testament as symbolic, not literal.
- does not divide history into seven blocks of time or dispensations (during which God changes the way he deals with people). Rather, we hold to the unity of Scripture from Eden to Paradise. We believe that God has one great purpose throughout history: establishing his kingdom in the world and bringing it to completion.
- does not see the church as temporary and unconnected to ancient Israel but rather as the new Israel on its way to becoming the perfect people of God.
- does not believe Christ will establish an earthly kingdom with the Jews and a heavenly kingdom with Christians.

Note: The video does not include the last three points above, nor some of the distinctions of the dispensational view explained in the session background. If you wish to find more detailed information about dispensationalism, an excellent source is *The Day of Christ’s Return* by Andrew Kuyvenhoven (available from Faith Alive Christian Resources). See also “For Further Study” on pages 10-15 of the session guide. Here you’ll find additional information on the Reformed historical view, a brief history of premillennialism, and a guide to dispensationalism.

❖ ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

If you prefer a more verbal (and less time-consuming) approach to question 2, please see the fill-in-the-blank exercise at the conclusion of today’s session. Print out (or photocopy) the exercise for each participant, then read through it together, filling in the missing words as you go along. This will accomplish the same purpose as making the timelines.

3. Why do those holding the Reformed historical view say that the book of Revelation primarily points to the church in the past?

The answer lies in the perspective of time—“what must soon take place” and “the time is near” (Rev. 1:1, 3). As Pastor Lew explains, John’s visions don’t pertain only to the distant future (end times) but have a sense of urgency and the immediate. Edwin Walhout points out that the word *soon* in Greek “connotes a sense of things happening *quickly, immediately, swiftly, surely*; a more literal translation

of the phrase would be ‘with speed’” (*Revelation: Making Sense of John’s Visions*, p. 9). So, from our perspective today, much of what John saw has already happened to the church—it’s history. Yet there’s an ongoing aspect to the visions as well, as they describe the kind of struggles that the church faces even now and will face in the future until the Lord returns.

4. If time permits, you may want to take a closer look at one key premillennial teaching: the rapture. Begin by reading John Hagee’s description of the rapture (see quote at the end of this session guide). Then read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the foundational passage in support of the rapture. What do we take this passage to refer to, if not to a rapture of believers prior to a great tribulation? And finally, read Andrew Kuyvenhoven’s comments (quote). What reason does he suggest for rejecting the rapture teaching? Do you find it convincing?

Those who hold the Reformed historical view generally regard 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 as referring to the one, final coming of Christ rather than to a secret coming to “snatch up” believers before a time of suffering on earth. Paul is writing to people who are worried about Christians who had died and who might miss Christ’s imminent return and be left out of the new life (v. 13). Paul assures them that “we who are still alive” will not precede or have an advantage over those who have already died (v. 15); in fact, the dead in Christ will rise first, then the living believers will be caught up together and meet the Lord in the air (v. 17). So that when believers (still on earth when Christ returns) are caught up, “raptured,” or “snatched away,” they are simply going to meet the Lord in the air (Kuyvenhoven, *The Day of Christ’s Return*, p. 32).

In the session guide quote, Kuyvenhoven argues that “the most objectionable feature of the rapture teaching is the world flight by the church.” The rapture becomes a “great escape” from a suffering world.

5. Are you comfortable with the idea of interpreting Revelation as a book of symbols and pictures rather than as a literal description? Why or why not?

Review some of the examples Pastor Lew gave of figurative language; for instance, the depiction of the devil as a serpent or dragon. We know almost instinctively that these and many other descriptions in the book of Revelation were never meant to be taken literally, at face value. You may want to make a few additional comments along these lines:

- While Revelation does contain a huge number of images and word pictures, it also requires literal interpretation in some instances: for example, the seven churches to whom John wrote this letter were actual churches in Asia minor.
- Imagery can go deeper than mere words. Pictures and symbols are memorable, as any marketer worth her wages knows. As used by John, they help reveal things that go beyond the intellect, that penetrate to our emotions and imagination.
- Images and figurative language are an important part of what is known as “apocalyptic literature.” You may want to review the other characteristics of apocalyptic literature—see the definition in the “Word Box” section of the session guide.

Encourage participants to keep an open mind to the symbolism and imagery in the book of Revelation, even if some of it strikes them as grotesque and even if its meaning isn’t immediately clear. Keep in mind that even John had to ask the interpreting angel for help at times!

6. The “Left Behind” or premillennial view is immensely popular with many Christians today. What do you think accounts for its appeal?

Sample the group's opinions. Somehow the belief persists that if we can just unlock the "codes" of apocalyptic Scriptures we'll be able to recognize and even predict the cataclysmic events in the future, and thus "get ready" to face them. There's a certain amount of security that comes with knowing at least something about what the future holds. And it's natural to anticipate the time when our Lord will return to earth and reign for a thousand years. One article in *Newsweek* (Nov. 24, 2008) notes that millennialist movements "gain prominence especially when the world grows chaotic, during wars and at the turn of every century." The same article cites a 2006 Pew foundation study that found that a third of white evangelicals believe the world will end in their lifetime.

In your discussion today and throughout this series, keep in mind that some group members may be genuinely attracted to the "Left Behind" books and movies. Others may help support television evangelists who promote the premillennial stance, and still others may find the premillennial interpretation to be more reasonable than the Reformed historical, amillennial interpretation. It's important to remind participants that these issues are not basic to our salvation. As Pastor Lew says elsewhere in this video series, if he finds himself being raptured, he will be only too happy to admit he was wrong!

7. From what you've seen and heard so far, what value do you think the book of Revelation might have for Christians and the church today?

It's early in the course for this question, we know, and you will want to return to it often as the course progresses. For now, perhaps it's enough to say that the great thing Revelation aims to do is to show us Jesus in a fresh, new light, not as a distant deity in a far-off heaven but as powerfully present with his church and with each of us today.

TIP

Always be open to and invite questions that group members raise. Their questions are often better than our precooked ones! You may want to keep an ongoing list of such questions on a sheet or two of newsprint for reference during this study.

Closing

(1 minute)

You may want close with this prayer:

Living Lord, as we now dare to make our way through Revelation, will you please help us. Help us understand why you have spoken to us in this unique and strange way. Help us understand what it is you are wanting us to know and do. Help us stay true to your intent in giving us this book. And most of all please help us to meet you in it. You are the ultimate subject of this book. Amen.

—from *Discipleship on the Edge* by Darrell W. Johnson, Regent College Publishing, p. 17.

✧ FOR NEXT TIME

Encourage group members to read Revelation 1-3 at home this week. Also, take a moment to explain that the section in their books called "For Further Study" is intended for optional reading at home should they want more information on the book of Revelation and today's topic.

✧ ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Use the "fill-in-the-blank activity on the next page as a substitute for question 2 of the regular session. Print (or photocopy) enough copies for everyone in your group.

As leader, you may want to save the timelines produced by your group. You can refer to them again in session 7 and whenever the contrast between the two approaches comes up in this course.

Fill in the blanks to nail down some important distinctions between the “Left Behind” (premillennial) and Reformed historic (amillennial) approaches to the book of Revelation.

“Left Behind” or Premillennial Approach

This view, as popularized in the “_____” books and movies, has the theme of “_____!” as it points toward events in the _____. A _____ will sound, Christ will return, and all _____, dead and alive, will suddenly and secretly be snatched from the earth in an event called the _____. They will meet Christ in the _____. Seven years of suffering called the _____ will follow on earth, during which time _____ who are left behind will receive the mark of the _____, the number _____ that will allow them to buy and sell. The _____ will rule the earth during this time, although some _____ Jews will be converted. After seven years of tribulation, Christ will publicly return with all the believers, _____ will be bound in a pit, the nation of _____ will be reconstituted, and _____ will reign triumphantly with all the believers from _____ for _____ years of prosperity and bliss. Near the end of this time, God will briefly allow Satan to be _____, but Christ will _____ him. Then God will _____ all people; believers will live with Christ in the new _____, unbelievers will be put finally and forever into hell. This view takes a _____ rather than a _____ view of Scripture.

Reformed Historical or Amillennial Approach

This view has the theme of “_____!” as it points primarily to events in the _____ of the church. As seen from John’s A.D. 95 perspective, the events described in Revelation were indeed “what must soon take place” (Rev. 1:1) and what is “near” in time (Rev. 1:3). In the amillennial view, which interprets Revelation as a book of _____ and pictures, Christ will only return _____, and _____ on earth will see him coming. The final _____ will immediately follow. There will be no _____ (thousand year reign of Christ). This view takes a _____ rather than a _____ view of Scripture.