

## **The Book of Revelation Course.**

These notes of mine have time code references shown in brackets. They relate to Mike Bickle's MP3 audio files on his Book of Revelation study. You may also refer to his complete pdf session notes on the IHOP website. Mike has also produced an excellent A5 size study guide which can be purchased from IHOP.

The purpose of these notes, for each session, is to complement what Mike has already written. Many of the sentences written in my notes, are what Mike has actually said on the audio file.

### **03. Why we must understand the 7 Churches in Rev. 2-3**

#### **I. Review: Message of the book of Revelation**

(00-06:00) The messages given in chapters 2-3 are what Jesus considers necessary and wants for his church to understand in the last days. God is raising up a people all over the earth who dwell with him in 'the secret place' on his terms. Psalm 91 is a description of God's people in these times. The storm described by MB is against the kingdom of darkness. These will be the judgements released by the praying church but there will also be revival in this time frame. Rev. 2-3 are key passages for the prayer and the prophetic movements.

(06:00-18:00) A review of the teaching in the overview in chapter 1. MB reminds us that Jesus cannot release us in end-time power unless we are walking totally in step with him.

#### **II. Outline of Revelation** (see MB pdf notes gives break up the chapters for clarity.)

#### **III. Letters to the 7 Churches: Preparing to Overcome and Operate in Power.**

**A-B-C.** (18:01-27:00) The 7 prophetic messages instruct us on how to partner with him in his worldwide action plan related to his second coming. The letters show us the kind of church Jesus is building including the spiritual maturity it will have. The letters show what he thinks about 'relevance is' in these days. The primary concerns on the Lord's heart are found in Rev. 1-2-3. This is where God dwells with His people. It is the only safe place to be with Him. MB says we do not know 'who He is' and if he came 'as He is', He is terrifying. Most believers and specifically leaders would be in severe trouble if the Lord showed up 'as He is', because we are nowhere near ready! Mike describes here the awesomeness of God and how he protects us 'in the secret place' from his fierce righteousness. If we were exposed to him, even slightly, as we are, we would be consumed.

#### **IV. How to apply the seven letters: Five ways.**

**A-B-C-D-E.**(27:01-33:05) The five ways are: a) Individually b) Corporately c) Historically d) Universally e) Eschatologically. Most power and blessing is experienced in corporate gatherings but for this they need to be free of the rubbish which in the church. The Laodicean church was repulsive to the Lord. The majority of the church today is profoundly off the mark as to what the Holy Spirit is now saying. The Charismatic-and Pentecostals are leading the way (of being profoundly off the mark) in what they define as love. The Lord is in pain when he looks at his church. He wants to vomit. **Without question, the messages given in 2-3 are for the church of today.**

#### **V. Studying the seven letters: The common elements in the letters.**

**A-B-C-D-E-F.**(33:06-40:52) This section covers a) Historical context b) Affirmation of faithfulness c) Rebuke for compromise d) Exhortation to respond e) Promise for overcomers f) Revelation of Jesus.

In a) He knew that the 7 churches would be good examples to give light for the end-time church. In c) passivity, neglect of first commandment, immorality, idolatry (covetousness-money, you do not need to be rich to fit this category), these are the main 3 compromises. Jesus wants these dealt with by his people because he is going to restore the first commandment to first place. In e) While eternal rewards mainly relate to the Millennial, Jesus offers them to us now to help motivate us to stand firm. MB says that the current body of Christ is almost totally illiterate on the subject of eternal rewards. Try asking someone in your church to name them.

#### **VI. Sixteen descriptions of Jesus: Applied to specific Temptations**

(40:53-45:23) Refer Rev. 2:1-3:14) In here Jesus gave us 16 descriptions of his heart and his glory. (Note: In Rev. 1 there are 18 and in Rev. 2-3 there are 16. 10 of them overlap). Without our own revelation of these descriptions we will likely get off course. This is the Jesus we must encounter.

Strangely, the most neglected subject in the kingdom of God...is God. God encountering the human heart. In the church we hear of 'money, honour and comfort, you, you you' where it really needs to be 'righteousness, peace and joy, me, me me'. The most missing element in the charismatic church today is 'God'. **We should be really troubled about this both individually and together.**

Just some of the references:

To ... Ephesus write, "These things says He who holds the seven stars ... who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands..."<sup>8</sup> To ... Smyrna write, "These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life..."<sup>12</sup> To ... Pergamos write, "These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword..."<sup>18</sup> To ... Thyatira write, "These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass..."<sup>3:1</sup> To ... Sardis write, "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars..."<sup>7</sup> To ... Philadelphia write, "These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David..."<sup>14</sup> To ... the Laodiceans write, "These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 2:1-3:14)

## VII. He who has an Ear, let him Hear: Five implications.

**A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H.** (45:24-50:30) The exhortation of Jesus '**he who has an ear let him hear**' are words that only he used and they are the words he used **most**. This means Jesus considers what he is saying is vitally important and you will need the Holy Spirit to assist you in getting deeper understanding of the gems he is telling us. Take these 8 statements in the gospels and the 8 in Revelation, study them and ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight. (Mt. 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mk. 4:9, 23; 7:16; Lk. 8:8; 14:35; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9). Jesus is saying, be careful to pay attention, you will need the supernatural help of the Holy Spirit, check out my eternal rewards and it will take focussed determination to lay hold of the truths I am giving you. Give up your 'right to play' and other variables of this world and go hard after me. Remember, the opinion of you, by the man at the right hand of the father is all we should be concerned about. See pdf notes related to A-H.

## VIII. The Angel to the church: Apostolic leadership.

**A-B-C.** (50:31-54:14) "The angel to the church" refers to the apostolic leader over each church mentioned. It is translated as 'messenger'. Here he is talking about a human messenger. The messenger's job was to guard the message. Not to let it get distorted or lost. We are not to get into holy huddles but be able to proclaim our given message with consistency and boldness. This is being a faithful messenger. Do not get put off by the critics.

## IX. Promises to Overcomers: Eternal Rewards

**A to F.** (54:15-58:28) Jesus gave his most in-depth teaching on rewards. It is vital for believers in this age to become familiar with all that Jesus taught on this subject. We cannot get ready for God without our hearts being anchored in eternity. Feed your spirit on the things of heaven because, **if you don't think rightly of heaven, you won't think of heaven!** We must have an eternal perspective or we will not have the courage and resolve to stay the course and be able to understand the judgements of God when they come. His judgements and his love are one and the same thing. As such, heavenly rewards are offered us in return to our response to Jesus in this lifetime. How we love him with first commandment love and how we respond out of this love for him is the basis of us receiving rewards. There will be a vast difference in the measure of glory of each one's rewards. Better to believe it now than miss out for eternity.

## X. Jesus promised 20 Eternal rewards.

Eternal rewards listed in Rev. 1-3. The eternal rewards are there to motivate us in the end-times to stay faithful and be obedient..

1. To eat from the tree of life in the midst of Paradise (2:7); 2. to receive the crown of life (2:10); 3. to not be hurt by the second death (2:11); 4. to eat hidden manna (2:17); 5. to receive a white stone (2:17); 6. to receive a new name written on the stone (2:17); 7. to have power over the nations (2:26); 8. to receive the morning star (2:28); 9. to receive white garments (Rev 3:5); 10. to receive a name that is not blotted from the Book of Life (3:5); 11. for Jesus to confess one's name before the Father and angels (3:5); 12. for one's persecutors to worship before their feet (3:9); 13. for one's persecutors to know that Jesus loves them (3:9); 14. to be made a pillar in God's temple (3:12); 15. to have God's name, the New Jerusalem's name, and Jesus' new name written on them (3:12); 16. to receive gold to make one rich (3:18); 17. to receive white garments (3:18); 18. to have anointed eyes to see more (3:18); 19. to eat with Jesus (3:20); 20. and to sit on His throne. (3:21).

## **XI. Understand the call to Overcome.**

We must understand correctly that the call to overcome for a believer is related to becoming mature in faithfulness and obedience. The seven churches had seven issues requiring correction. They are given as examples for us. The seven issues were: a) recover their first love b) to be faithful in persecution c) resist immorality and idolatry d) to be watchful, develop a prayer life and hold fast to the things God had entrusted to them e) persevere in mature obedience for life f) resist lukewarmness.

Jesus when referring to the one who overcomes says to those in the seven churches that they will: a) eat from the tree of life b) not be hurt by the second death c) eat of the hidden manna d) be given a white stone with a new name on it e) given power over the nations f) rule with a rod of iron g) receive the morning star h) shall be clothed in white garments i) not blotted out from the book of life j) be made a pillar in God's temple k) will write on him my new name l) sit with me on my throne.

Overcoming refers to us overcoming sin in our lives and saying no to our desires for His desires. Overcoming is not attaining perfection but reaching for victory with all our strength. Our obedience is deeply connected to our rewards. See pdf notes for more details.

## **XII. Who are Overcomers? Two different Contexts**

A: All believers overcome worldly unbelief by believing in Jesus for salvation: thus all believers fit in here in a general way.

B: Overcoming unfaithfulness in a believer's life, means to walk in spiritual maturity, or to be consistent in obedience.

## **XIII. Who are Overcomers? Three different Views**

A. The correct view teaches that those who overcome receive eternal rewards. These are given in different measures according to one's faithfulness in loving and obeying Jesus.

B. The incorrect ALL believers view, wrongly teaches that all believers are overcomers and receive all the eternal rewards simply because of their belief in Jesus.

C. The incorrect loss of salvation view, being that if you do not overcome, you lose your salvation and of course receive no eternal rewards.