

# HIGHER GROUND CALVARY CHAPEL SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

## New Testament Survey

### Lesson 6

#### The Johannine Epistles and Revelation

#### I. 1 JOHN

##### A. Author:

- Not mentioned by name. In that, it is similar to the book of Hebrews in form: more of a sermon or a treatise, written to a broad audience, rather than an epistle.
- Early testimony by Papius, Polycarp, Irenaeus—all of whom knew John in their youth—indicate that John wrote this epistle. That attribution not seriously questioned by the early church.
- John the Apostle was the son of Zebedee and the younger brother of James, son of Zebedee (James the Greater).
- According to Church tradition, their mother was Salome. Also according to some traditions, Salome was the sister of Mary, Jesus' mother, making Salome Jesus' aunt and her sons, John the Apostle and James, Jesus' cousins. These traditions might be the result of misreading the syntax of certain Gospel passages.
- Jesus calls James and John “Sons of Thunder” (Mk 3:17, Lk. 9:54)
- The disciple whom Jesus loved. (Jn 13:23, 19:26, 21:20-24)
- The disciple whom Jesus commanded to care for His mother, Mary (Jn. 19:26). Did so until her death.
- Early tradition states that he resided in Jerusalem until the destruction of the Temple in A. D. 70, then moved to Ephesus where he wrote his gospel and three letters
- Superintended the ministries of the churches in Asia Minor.
- The only surviving apostle at the time of his writing.

##### B. Date: A. D. 90

- Exiled to the island of Patmos around A. D. 95 during the persecution under Domitian who had reinstated and enforced Emperor worship.
- Domitian's older brother had been the Emperor Titus who, before he took the throne, had razed Jerusalem as the general in command of the Roman legions and had destroyed the Temple.
- Wrote his gospel and these letters from Ephesus before this imprisonment, around A. D. 90.

##### C. Audience:

- Not mentioned.
- Probably an encyclical to the churches under his care in Asia Minor (cf. the audience for The Book of Revelation), referring to them as “my little children” throughout the epistle (2:1, 18, 28, etc.).
- Thus making this a General (Catholic) Epistle.

##### D. Occasion (Acts 20:28-31):

- Heresy had crept into the churches of Asia Minor as Paul had predicted, in the form of an incipient gnosticism:

#### Characteristics of Gnosticism

1. Dualistic.
  - a. Matter inherently evil; spirit inherently good
  - b. Affirmed a duality between Jesus and the Christ:
    - Denied Jesus' divinity. The Christ came on Jesus at His baptism and left Him at His crucifixion. Or...
    - Denied Christ's humanity. The man, Jesus, was a phantom and not flesh and blood at all.
2. Antinomian. If saved, the deeds we do in the body have no connection to or effect on one's spirit. We can deny God's law or that sin even exists.
3. Elitist. These insights constitute a higher mystical knowledge (gnosis) that is above and beyond the revealed Word of God. Can only receive this knowledge from one of the elite. Other members of the faith community should be shunned and rejected as unenlightened.

#### E. Purposes:

- To correct this false teaching (2:18-23)
- To reassure the faithful, who have been marginalized by these elitists, of their fellowship with God through His Son Jesus. (5:11-13)

#### F. Subject (1:3-10): Fellowship

#### G. Theme:

- Those who practice sin are not in fellowship with the Father, the Son, or His Church. OR...
- Those who walk in the light have fellowship with the Father, the Son, and His Church.

#### H. Structure and Outline

- I. Conditions for Fellowship (1:5—2:14)
- II. Cautions to Fellowship (2:15-27)
- III. Characteristics of Fellowship (2:28—5:3)
- IV. Consequences of Fellowship (5:4-21)

## II. 2 & 3 JOHN

### A. Author (2 John 1, 3 John 1):

- "the elder"
- Early witnesses say this is John the Apostle, but accepted late into the canon along with 3 John, 2 Peter, James, Jude
- Perhaps because he calls himself "the elder." Discussion centered on the question as to whether this was a different John, entirely.

### B. Dates: Probably shortly after 1 John. A.D. 90

### C. Similar Structures:

- The shortest books in the NT

- Friendly letters following the Greco-Roman format for epistles
- Addressed to individuals rather than to groups. They resemble Paul's letter to Philemon.
- Both share similar themes related to hospitality.

### 2 John

#### A. Audience (1, 4-5, 13):

Either...

- An esteemed woman ("elect lady") and her children in an unidentified local church, or...
- Some local church

#### B. Occasion (7-11):

- Same heretics mentioned in 1 John who taught that the incarnation was not a reality and that the Christ only appeared to have a human body (Jesus).
- These false teachers were traveling to the churches under John's oversight and taking advantage of believers' hospitality and charity as enjoined upon them both Christ and culture.

#### C. Purpose (10-11)

- To warn the elect lady to be on guard against these men
- To inform her how she might recognize them
- To command her to deny them Christian hospitality

#### D. Subjects:

- Truth
- Love
- Obedience
- Hospitality

#### E. Theme (4-6): Christians must continue to walk in truth, love, and obedience.

#### F. Outline:

- I. Walking in the Truth, Living in Love (1-6)
- II. Separating Oneself from False Teachers (7-11)
- III. Future Plans and Final Greetings (12-13)

### 3 John

#### A. Structure: Four Actors in this letter

- John, who wrote it (1)
- Gaius, who received it (1)
- Diotrephes, who caused it (9-10)
- Demetrius, who carried it. (12)

#### B. Audience (1): Gaius

#### C. Occasion (3, 5-6, 9-10):

- John had sent representatives who returned with a good report of Gaius who had offered them hospitality (3, 5-6)
  - But Diotrephes had not, and had even excommunicated those who did (10).
  - He also opposes John (9). Has a personal feud with the apostle.
- D. Purpose: To alert Gaius to the present situation
- E. Subjects: [NOTE: SAME AS 2 JOHN, BUT THEIR ORDER OF PRIMACY REVERSED]
- Hospitality
  - Truth
- F. Theme (8): Offer hospitality to those who work together for the truth.
- G. Outline:
- I. A Commendation of Gaius's Christian Hospitality (1-8)
  - II. A Condemnation of Diotrephes' Open Hostility (9-11)
  - III. John's Confidence in Demetrius's Integrity (12)
  - IV. John's Concluding Remarks (13-14)

### III. REVELATION

- A. Author: Early and widespread agreement that the Apostle John wrote it when in exile on Patmos during the persecution under Domitian
- B. Date: circa A. D. 95
- C. Audience (1:4, 11; chs. 2-3):  
The 7 Churches at...
- Ephesus (2:1)
  - Smyrna (2:8)
  - Pergamum (2:12)
  - Thyatira (2:18)
  - Sardis (3:1)
  - Philadelphia (3:7)
  - Laodicea (3:14)
- D. Occasion (Revelation 1:9-20)
- Exiled to the island of Patmos around A. D. 95 during the persecution under Domitian who had reinstated and enforced Emperor worship.
  - Domitian's older brother had been the Emperor Titus who, before he took the throne, had razed Jerusalem as the general in command of the Roman legions and had destroyed the Temple.
- E. Purposes
- To reveal to the churches what is to come. (1:1, 22:6)
  - To offer them hope in the midst of persecution: "To him who overcomes, I will...", etc. (chs 2-3)
  - To exhort them to holiness and dedication in light of the Lord's appearing. (2:1-7, 22:12)
- F. Subject

- 4 Views of Revelation:
  - Historical View: It's all about the Church
  - Preterist View: It already happened in the 1st century
  - Symbolic View: It's all about the struggle between Good and Evil
  - Futurist View: It's all about the future and the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy
- (Taking the Futurist view): The Gospel and the future of God's kingdom

#### G. Theme (Revelation 1:1)

- "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place..."
- God Is Going To Win !!

#### H. Structure

##### 1. Three Literary Genres involved:

- Epistle (1:4, 11; chs. 2-3)
- Prophecy (1:3; 22:6; chs. 4-22)
- Apocalyptic

##### 2. Apocalyptic Literature

- a. Definition: A Jewish literary genre written B.C. 200—A.D. 100
  - i. Gk. "apokalupsis" : an unveiling; a revelation.
  - ii. A disclosure from God by a heavenly messenger concerning the imminent coming of the end of this present evil age and the establishment of His Messianic Kingdom.
- b. Pseudonymous, claiming to be a prophetic word from some honored figure from ancient times. Examples are...
  - The Book of Enoch
  - The Apocalypse of Ezra
  - The Apocalypse of Moses
  - The Apocalypse of Abraham

Revelation is NOT pseudonymous.
- c. Revelatory: a new message brought by a heavenly messenger
- d. Visionary: Heaven opened, mysterious symbols, numbers, figures, beasts, etc.
- e. Concentrates on the past; Revelation concentrates on the future.
- f. Written during a time of persecution, subjugation, or religious/social unrest
- g. Foretells the final confrontation between Good and Evil and the establishment of God's Kingdom reign
- h. A resurrection for the righteous; No resurrection for the wicked, only punishment. Revelation teaches a resurrection for both the righteous and the wicked.

##### 3. Fulfillment Of Old Testament Prophecy

- 278 out of 404 verses contain OT references, quotes, or images
- Psalms, Daniel, Zechariah, Genesis, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Joel

##### 4. The Second Bookend of the Bible

- Creation of the heavens and earth. (Genesis 1—2)
- Creation of the new heavens and new earth. (Rev. 21—22)
  
- The first Adam reigning on earth (Gen. 1:26)
- The Last Adam reigning on earth and in glory (Rev. 19:6, 15-16; 20:4; 21:5)
  
- Night and seas created (Gen. 1:5, 10)
- No more night; no more sea (Rev. 21:1, 25)
  
- A bride brought to Adam (Gen. 2:18-25)
- The Bride prepared for Christ (Rev. 19:7-9, 21:9—22:5)
  
- A tree of life in Eden (Gen. 2:9, 3:22)
- A tree of life in the new creation (Rev. 22:2)
  
- Satan utters the first lie (Gen. 3:1)
- Nothing that lies enters the city (Rev. 21:27)
  
- Death and a curse (Gen. 3:14-19)
- No more curse or death or tears or mourning or crying or pain (Rev. 21:4, 22:3)
  
- Conflict between Christ and Satan begins (Gen. 3:15)
- Satan's final defeat and judgement (Rev. 20:10)
  
- Man driven from God's face (Gen. 3:23-24, 4:14-16)
- Man sees God's face in glory (Rev. 22:4)

#### 5. 3 Sets Of 7 Tribulation Judgements

- Seven Seal Judgements (6-8)
- Seven Trumpet Judgements (8-11)
- Seven Bowl Judgements (16)

#### I. Outline (Revelation 1:19)

I. The Things Which You Have Seen (1)

II. The Things Which Are (2—3)

III. The Things Which Will Take Place After This (4—22)

#### J. A Brief Synopsis Of End-Time Events