

# FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS - 72554 EDITION

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## Revelation - The Most Difficult Book?

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**T**he book of Revelation is, to say the least, one of the most interesting books in all the Bible! It is full of visions, symbols, numbers, and beasts. It seems that the book is either neglected altogether because it feels intimidating or it is terribly misused because it is greatly misunderstood. Is there a way to read and study the final book of the Bible so it can be better understood, or should we just not read it because of its difficulty?

Anyone who claims that Revelation is easy to understand has clearly not put in the effort to read it! It is difficult. All of the signs and symbols can be intimidating! What do all of the numbers mean - especially the number seven?! Before we jump to all the questions we may have, let's consider some of the things that we **can know** about Revelation.

First, it is the book of Revelation, not the book of Revelations!

Second, it was written by the apostle John (1:1, 4, 9; 21:2; 22:8). We learn this about him: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ?" (Rev. 1:9). Notice a couple of things from this verse - (1) John was "in the kingdom of Jesus Christ." There are many in the religious world who teach that the kingdom of Christ has not yet come. Well, John was in that kingdom nearly 2,000 years ago! (2) John was a "companion in tribulation."

Just as with the kingdom, there are those in the religious world who teach that the tribulation is yet future. That is not correct! John and his fellow-Christians were in the midst of the tribulation nearly 2,000 years ago! Isn't it amazing that when we allow the Bible to interpret itself, we don't have to be confused by incorrect teachings like a future tribulation or kingdom?

Third, the book of Revelation, from the very beginning, tells us about it's nature or style. While there are many who are looking for the literal events they think are in Revelation to come true, John wrote this: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). Notice the word "signified." The books that make up the New Testament were originally written in Greek. The word translated "signified" comes from a Greek word that means, "a mark, a sign." That is the nature or style of Revelation. It is a book of signs and symbols. Sometimes the text will tell you what the symbol means. For example, read Revelation 12:8. Other times, no definition is given and to assume what it means can be dangerous. Let the Bible define itself!

Fourth, the book of Revelation repeatedly tells us the **when** of the events to be fulfilled. This is **EXTREMELY** important!! Many people go to Revelation in a futile effort to talk about modern-

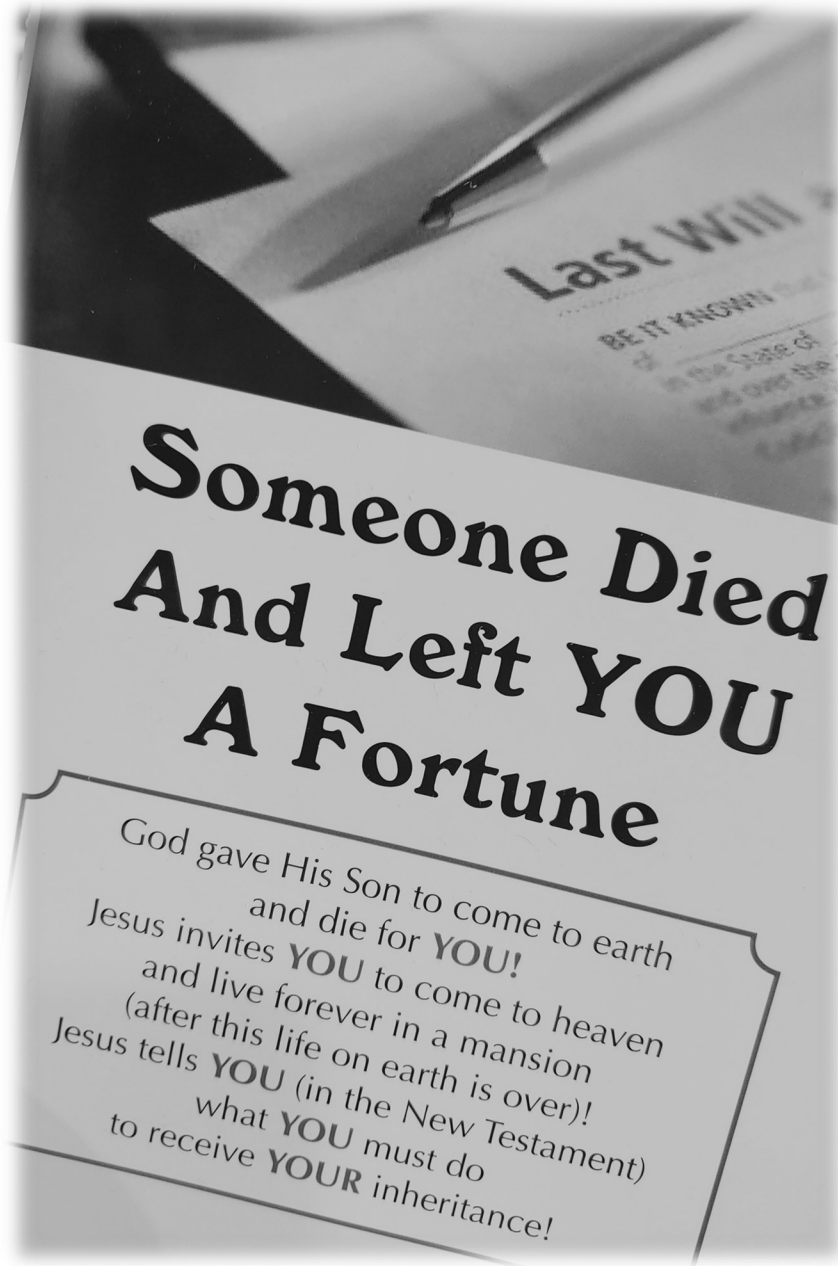
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# New Free Bible Study Material!



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Is your heart right with what God has said in His word?

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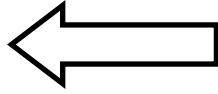
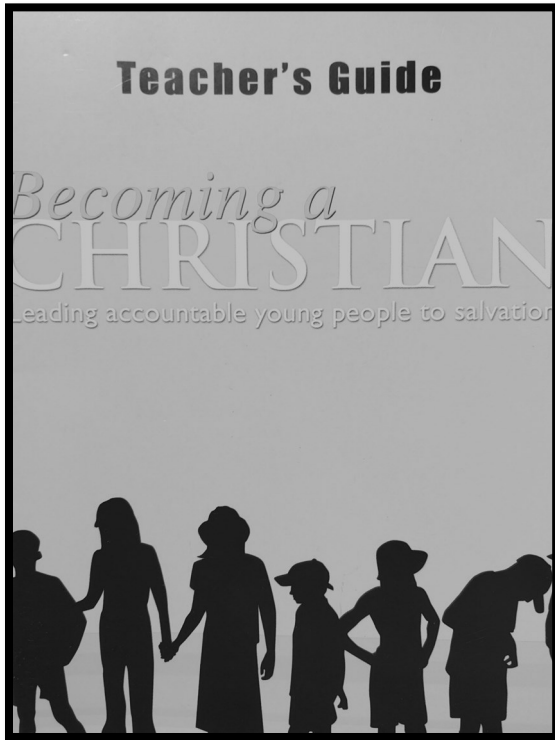
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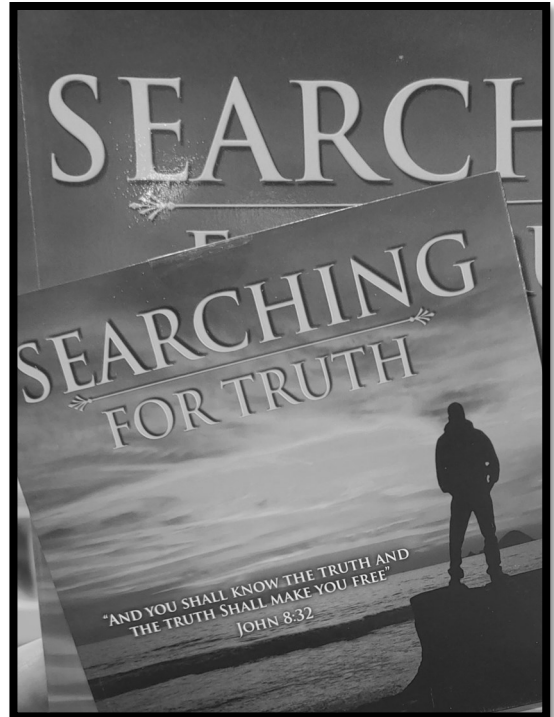
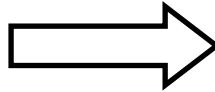
Send a message to Church of Christ at Mammoth Spring on Facebook

# Would You Like to Study the Bible?



*We have workbooks for young people who would like to learn more about becoming a Christian.*

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day politics and events. How about this - let the book tell us the time-frame! Pay close attention to these verses in Revelation...

- 1:1 - *"things which must shortly come to pass."*
- 1:3 - *"the time is near."*
- 6:17 - *"for the great day of His wrath has come."*
- 22:6 - *"things which must shortly be done."*
- 22:10 - *"the time is at hand."*

How many times do we have to be told the time-frame before we stop trying to make future predictions with Revelation?

Fifth, and finally, the book of Revelation was not written to me or you! Can you believe it?! We know exactly to whom the book was written because Jesus told us. *"John, to the seven churches*

*which are in Asia"* (Rev. 1:4). Also, *"What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea?"* (Rev. 1:11).

Just by way of a brief, common-sense initiation you now know several things about a difficult book in your Bible. You know the name, the author, the style, the time-frame, and the audience of the book of Revelation. While those five things can be easily and quickly understood, it is still true that Revelation is not simple! Perhaps, since it was not written to us today, we are not meant to comprehend everything in it. That's okay! We don't have to know everything!

## LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

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### Unique features of the Church of Christ

- We use the Bible only (2 Pet. 1:3). We have no creed book, convention, or central headquarters.
- Our name is after the One who died to establish His church (Rom. 16:16).
- The church of Christ began in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Acts 2:1-4).
- Jesus promised to establish His church (Matt. 16:18).
- That church was purchased with Jesus' blood (Acts 20:28).
- The church is married to Christ (Rom. 7:4).
- It was established in the first century (Acts 2:41, 47).
- Jesus is the one and only Head of the One Body (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23).
- You can only be added to the church by God Himself (Acts 2:41, 47).

### What about being saved?

- All people are saved by grace, though faith (Eph. 2:8-9).
- No one is saved by faith alone (Jas. 2:14-26).
- No one is saved by grace alone (Matt. 7:21).
- Jesus said that belief plus baptism will produce salvation (Mk. 16:16). That is a promise, not a command.
- The Bible teaches that repentance plus baptism produces remission of sins (Acts 2:37-38).
- Belief, confession, and baptism is seen in the account of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37-38).
- The Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8).
- Christ is "put on" in baptism (Gal. 3:26-27).
- The apostle Peter said that "baptism does save us" (1 Pet. 3:21).

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Sunday Worship - 10:45 & 6:00  
Wednesday Classes for all ages - 7:00 PM  
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