



Can you do a Bible Study on the book of Revelation?"

Revelation (there's no "s" at the end of it) is not only the last book in the Bible, it's also the one that I get the most requests to study - and it's not even close.

It's been a few years since I've led a study on this book, so the short answer is: "Sure. Why not."

I'll tackle the study on Sunday mornings with the challenge of not getting so focused on the "trees" that we miss the "forest." Not getting so caught up trying to figure out the identity of, for example, the beasts, that we miss the main purpose God gave the "revelation" to the Apostle John in the first place: To encourage Christians to hang onto their faith in tough times.

Not long ago, one of the questions I tackled in this space was "Is the Bible literal or figurative?" My answer was, "Yes, and Yes." We interpret individual passages the way the author intended them. If the intent was literal, then we interpret it as literal. If the intent was figurative, then that's how we interpret it. One huge challenge in interpreting the book of Revelation is that much of the book of Revelation is figurative. It is FULL of symbolism.

Every day in life we see symbols that we have to interpret. For example, when you see a 8-sided red sign or an upside down yellow triangle at an intersection, you don't think, "Hmmm, that's cool, they're teaching geometry class as I drive." You interpret them, not literally as geometrical shapes, you interpret them figuratively as "signs" telling you to STOP or YIELD.

You'd get into big trouble if you interpreted those octagons and triangles as merely geometric shapes. It's the same with the book of Revelation. We get into big trouble when we interpret the many symbols in book literally instead of as signs that represent something.

So, please join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 for coffee as we attempt to unpack the meaning of the many signs that are designed to encourage us. (The study will start on September 14.)

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net