

Week Seven: Reimagining the Church

Participant Sheet

Session 7: Week of November 3, 2024

A Community of Resistance, *Revelation 21:1-7*

Connecting Does anyone have a “God sighting,” – a story or testimony of how you saw God at work in the last week that you can share?

Background: The term ‘apocalypse’ comes from the Greek word for revelation. The word ‘apocalypse’ has come to designate a particular literary form. An apocalypse is a narrative account of a revelation received by a person from one or more heavenly beings. The revelation includes descriptions of the heavenly world and of a qualitatively new future. The book of Daniel in the Old Testament is also an apocalypse, Revelation is the only apocalypse in the New Testament although other books contain passages of similar content, such as *Mark 13* and *1 Thessalonians 4:13–18*. According to Irenaeus, a leader of the church in the second century, John saw his revelation near the end of the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian, perhaps around the years 95-96. The purpose of sharing the revelation is to give Christians hope and courage in a time of crisis that ultimately God will triumph and be with God’s people forever.

Questions

1. **New Creation:** What is the significance of the "new heaven and new earth" mentioned in verse 1? How does this concept relate to the idea of redemption in the Bible?
2. **God’s Presence:** In verse 3, it says, "God will dwell with them." What does this mean for believers, and how does it change our understanding of God’s relationship with humanity?
3. **The End of Suffering:** Verse 4 talks about God wiping away tears and the end of death, mourning, crying, and pain. How does this promise provide hope during suffering and difficult times?

4. **Faithfulness of God:** Verse 5 states that God is making all things new. What does this tell us about God's character? How can we trust in God's promises for the future?
5. **Inheritance of Believers:** In verse 7, it mentions that the one who conquers will inherit these things. What does it mean to "conquer" in the context of this passage? How does this relate to our daily lives as Christians?
6. **The Alpha and Omega:** How does understanding God as the "Alpha and Omega" (verse 6) influence our perspective on life, history, and our ultimate destiny?
7. **Application:** How can the truths found in *Revelation 21:1-7* encourage you in your current circumstances? What specific changes might you consider making based on these verses?

Closing Affirmation of Faith: Read in Unison *Romans 8:35, 37-39*

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.