

Revelation- Class 4 (Revelation 4-5)
“Worthy is the Lamb”

Recap:

Last week we finished the letters Jesus dictated to seven churches
 Our approach was to look at these churches as literal churches
 Quick overview...

LETTERS TO THE 7 CHURCHES				
	COMMENDATION	CRITICISM	INSTRUCTION	PROMISE
EPHESUS Revelation 2:1-7	Rejects evil, perseveres, has patience	Love for Christ no longer fervent	Do the works you did at first	The tree of life
SMYRNA Revelation 2:8-11	Gracefully bears suffering	---	Be faithful until death	The crown of life
PERGAMOS Revelation 2:12-17	Keeps the faith of Christ	Tolerates immorality, idolatry, and heresies	Repent	Hidden manna and a stone with a new name
THYATIRA Revelation 2:18-29	Love, service, faith, patience are greater than at first	Tolerates cult of idolatry and immorality	Judgement coming; keep the faith	Rule over nations and receive morning star
SARDIS Revelation 3:1-6	Some have kept the faith	A dead church	Repent; strengthen what remains	Faithful honored and clothed in white
PHILADELPHIA Revelation 3:7-13	Perseveres in the faith, keeps the word of Christ, honors His name	---	Keep the faith	A place in God's presence, a new name, and the New Jerusalem
LAODICEA Revelation 3:14-22	---	Indifferent	Be zealous and repent	Share Christ's throne

But before we continue onto chapter four it is worth reminding you that
 Many educated and spirit-led people have read the same words
 And come out with different thoughts in how to interpret
 The metaphors and images mentioned here...

Even when it comes to the churches...
 Some have discussed how they were literal churches
 Or they represented something else, including Church Ages.
 I just wanted to introduce you to this theory
 And you can continue your own personal study if you like.

The Churches in view of Church History

7 Stages of Church History

Church	Era	Years
Ephesus	Apostolic Era	33-64
Smyrna	Period of Persecution	64-313
Pergamum	Era of Official Patronage	313-606
Thyatira	Middle Ages	606-1520
Sardis	Protestant Reformation	1520-1750
Philadelphia	Missionary Era	1750-1900
Laodicea	Modern Period	1900-?

The Church of Ephesus: (33-64 A.D.)

The rebuke was to return to their first love...

When we get the book Acts it covers nearly 30 years of history.

So by the time that John would write this

The church would already be a mess, fervent but missing the goal.

The Church of Smyrna: (100-312 A.D.)

The persecuted church,

within the 212 years, 10 Roman emperors reigned

Which corresponded to the "ten days" mentioned in the letter of how this church would suffer.

they launched attacks against believers killing between 5-7 million Christians.

The Church of Pergamos: (313-606 A.D.) *Constantine*

The church of perverted marriage,

They had represented the church history of 312-600 A.D

Marrying of pagan practices with the church...

The Christian Church made legal and official religion

Positive and Negative Implications...



"He freely blended pagan practices with Christian beliefs, leading scholars to suggest his public adoption of Christianity might have been a savvy political move, linking him to a rising social force in the Roman Empire... Free from persecution, the church naturally attracted more false converts. The melding of Christian themes with secular politics set a pattern that contributed to later disasters such as the Inquisition and the Crusades. Constantine's blending of pagan, building-and-priest-centered worship with Christianity also contributed to the rise of Roman Catholicism."¹

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Constantine-the-Great.html>

The Church of Thyatira (600-1500 A.D.)

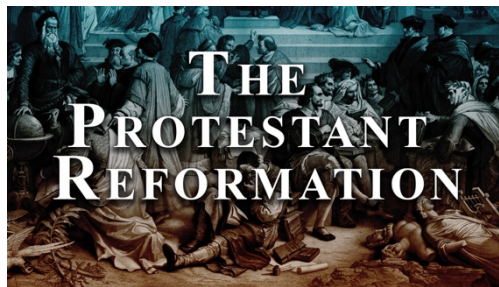
The church that allowed bad doctrine to creep in. **BIBLICALLY ILLITERATE** corruption, deceit, a dark time from the leadership of the church.

This church age represented the time the church started to *sell indulgences*

“Indulgences were nothing new and were based on the concept of the 'treasury of the Church', which held that the merits of **Jesus Christ**, the Virgin Mary, the saints, and others who had led exemplary lives, could be drawn on by laypersons to lessen their time – or that of a loved one – in purgatory or remit the penalty of sin in this life. Initially, sale of an indulgence carried with it the expectation that the buyer would perform penitential acts but, by **Martin Luther's** time, paying money for the writ was frequently considered enough.”²

The Church of Sardis (1520-1750 A.D.) FIRST GREAT AWAKENING

They were a remnant of believers that wouldn't sway from the truth.
those that stay true to the word of God will be overcomers.



Martin Luther:³

95 Thesis including translating the Bible from Latin to German (people could read)

William Tyndale: (c. 1494-1536)

An English scholar and theologian, Tyndale produced one of the first English translations of the Bible. He was convicted of heresy and executed. His last words were reportedly: “Lord! Open the king of England's eyes!”

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Father of Methodism

The Church of Philadelphia (1750-1900) SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

The church of brotherly love... represents the time in church history

Speaking of the open doors that Christ provides

Revival started into the church after hundreds of years of false doctrine

² <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1902/medieval-indulgence--martin-luther/>

³ <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/03/reformation-500-50-reformation-figures/>

This church age started with the great men and women such as Hudson Taylor, D.L Moody, C.H Spurgeon, The Welsh revival 1904-05
Evangelism was taking place and missionaries were being sent out.

The Church of the Laodiceans (1900- Present)

A church that was told that they were lukewarm
one foot in, one foot out, choose this day who you will serve!
This church was known for being self-sufficient

If you need food- you have grocery stores
If you are sick- you have doctors and medication
If you are bored- you have entertainment
If you are lonely- you have apps
If you need reassurance- you have social media
If you need knowledge- you have everything at the tips of your fingers

Revelation 3:17 (AMP), “¹⁷ Because you say, “I am rich, and have prospered and grown wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked [without hope and in great need]”

The churches representing church history is a theory.
There are strong and weak arguments for what the churches represent.
But this if you choose to adopt this theory...
It strengthens your stance to know that chapter 4 is where the **RAPTURE OCCURS**.
Since there is no other mention of the Church after chapter 3.

Let me explain what the rapture is in case there may be someone who has no clue, it's alright... you're in the right place.

Revelation 4:1 (ESV), “4 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me **LIKE A TRUMPET, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”**

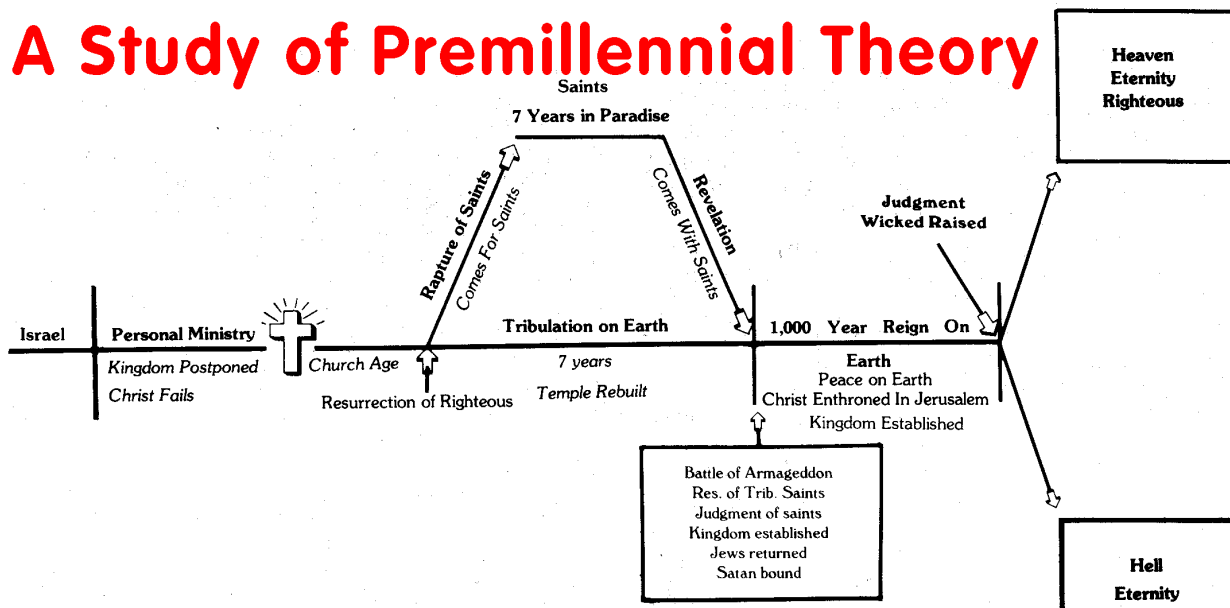
In Revelation 1:19, John was commanded to write

- The things he has seen (Chapter 1)
- That he currently see's (Chapters 2-3)
- And will see... (Chapters 4-22)

The key words here are **“After this”**

Meta tauta... After Jesus finished his business with the churches...
OR if you adopt the church ages theory, “after this church age.”
meaning that the church will be gone
The only other time the word church is used in Rev. 22:16

A Study of Premillennial Theory



Some theologians believe (Pre-Trib)

That John is caught up with the church at this time as he references
 “A voice... like a trumpet”

1st Corinthians 15:51-54 (ESV), “⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:”

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (ESV), “¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

What will happen... One view

Instantaneous transformation of our bodies to fit us for eternity.

1st Thessalonians 4:17 (ESV), “Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

1st John 3:2 (ESV), “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

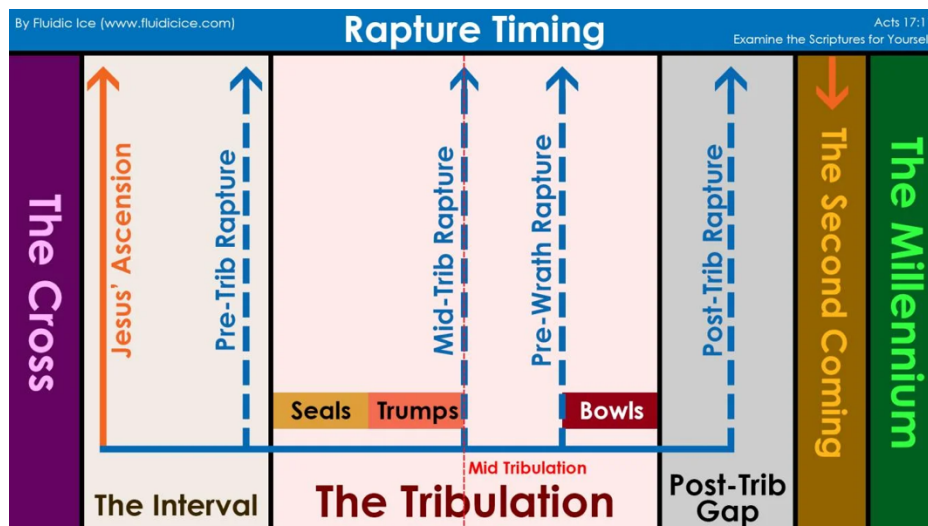
Another View...

When we get to heaven... or are caught up... we are physically like Jesus able to enter into heaven but our character and soul will not be perfected...



“He clearly understood how devastating this approach was to any serious transformative change in this present life. Given this approach, character development and the transformation of heart, mind, and soul into Christlikeness could then be viewed as nonessential or simply a luxury in the Christian life, certainly having no actual connection with the life to come. In contradistinction, Dallas saw a deep connection between the spiritual formation we are developing now in this life and the formation we will continue to experience into eternity. Our life and death and the life that is to come are delicately and deliberately interconnected. Dallas perceived that we would need to grow, develop, learn, and mature in character if we are “to endure the eternal realities of the Kingdom of Heaven.”⁴

A CASE CAN BE MADE FOR OTHER THEORIES AS WELL.



⁴ <https://dwillard.org/books/preparing-for-heaven>

It's ok to dig deeper and research more
But what's important is that Jesus is coming back!
Our prayer is that it happens in our life time

Regardless if you are pre- mid- or post trib...

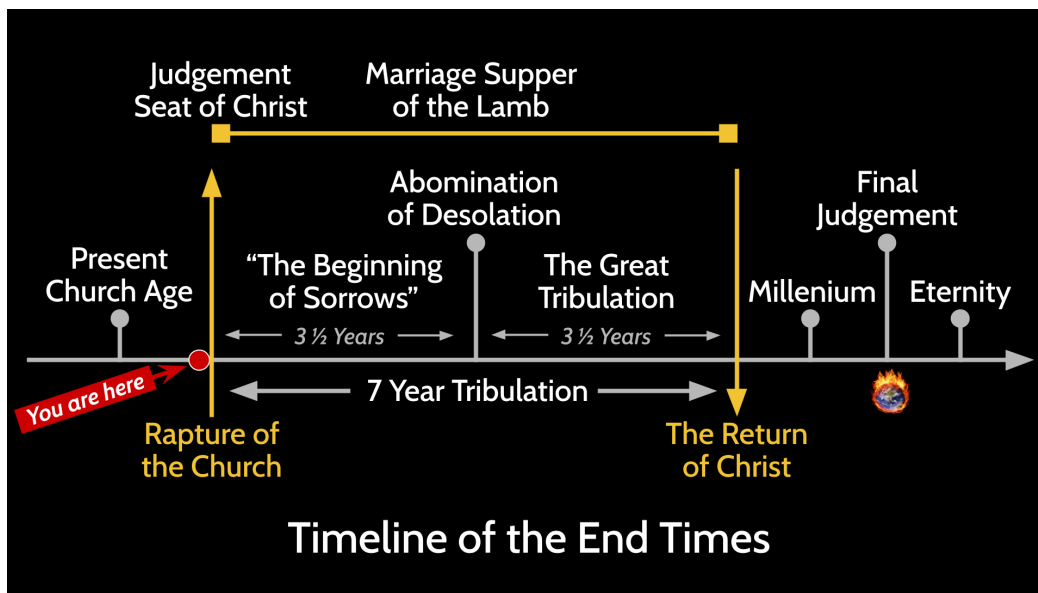
- Certain ingredients need to be involved if prophecy will be fulfilled.
- One of those ingredients is for the Jewish nation to **REBUILD THEIR TEMPLE**
- In Revelation 19, we get a picture of Jesus and His second coming
- Before he comes, the Anti-Christ will be on the scene
 - Providing 3.5 years of peace... which will include rebuilding the temple
 - Then the following will occur.

2nd Thessalonians 2:1-10 (NLT), "2 Now, dear brothers and sisters, let us clarify some things about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to meet him. ² Don't be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don't believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us. ³ Don't be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction. ⁴ He will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God. ⁵ Don't you remember that I told you about all this when I was with you? ⁶ And you know what is holding him back, for he can be revealed only when his time comes. ⁷ For this lawlessness is already at work secretly, and it will remain secret until the one who is holding it back steps out of the way. ⁸ Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming. ⁹ This man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles. ¹⁰ He will use every kind of evil deception to fool those on their way to destruction, because they refuse to love and accept the truth that would save them."

<https://youtu.be/tB8W0cLM9uA>

The plans are ready
The utensils are ready
The Jewish nation is ready
The world cries "Peace in the Middle East!"

If we adopt the pre-trib theory
The church is caught up to Heaven as we get to Revelation 4.



Revelation 4:2-4 (ESV), ² *At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.* ³ *And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.* ⁴ *Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads."*

Some notes:

- His throne was standing- permanent, unchanging, unshakable.
- The One seated... not panicking, not pacing, seated.
- Jasper is described in Rev 21:11 as Crystal clear
- Carnelian is also described as a red ruby.
- Also the colors were the first and last stones on the high priests chest plate
 - Representing the 1st and last born of the twelve sons of Jacob
 - God is keeping his covenant.

Simply, John's vision is not one of peace and comfort
 But impending judgement.
 surrounded by human representatives of the Church

Revelation 4:5-6 (ESV), ⁵ *From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God,* ⁶ *and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:*

From the throne...

Came fiery flashes of lightning

This language is used primarily of God's presence and judgement

This portion will be mentioned again in chapter 8.

The seven burning torches... the seven spirits of God
The sevenfold representation of the Holy Spirit
Torches were usually associated with war (Judges 7:16,20)

The picture God is ready to make war with a rebellious humankind
And the Holy Spirit as His war torch.

*"The Comforter of those who love Christ will be the Consumer of those who reject him."*⁵

These four living creatures are believed to be angels.
The description reveals their awareness, alertness, and knowledge.

Revelation 4:7-8a, "7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within,



Why these animals? Different view points

Represented creation....

- Lion represented wild creatures
- Calf represented domestic animals
- Eagle represented flying creature
- Man the pinnacle of God's creation.

Represented Israel

Reuban- son of man

⁵ John MacArthur, Pg.151

Dan and others – eagle
Ephraim- a calf
Judah- a lion

Represents Christ as found in the Gospels

Matthew- Depicts Jesus as the Messiah the Lion of Judah
Mark- Depicts Jesus as the suffering servant in the form of a Calf
Luke- Depicts Jesus' humanity in the form of man
John- depicts Jesus' Deity in the form of an eagle.

Whatever these angels represent they will participate in the judgement
The six wings represent their constant worship before God.

***Revelation 4:8b-11, "and day and night they never cease to say,
"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!"***

⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

***¹¹ "Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created."***

This scene can be compared to a rally

God is about to judge Satan, demons, and sinners, and take back His creation.

These elders are not fixated on their crowns (weight, shine, or size)

They have no care of how they look as they throw themselves on the floor.

They are not focused on reward, but enamored with the presence of God.



But then the worship experience was interrupted.

Revelation 5:1 (ESV), "Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals."

Commentators wrestle with what the scroll is
The popular opinion is that it is the deed to the earth.
This deed would include judgement and doom
But also justice and redemption

Revelation 5:2-3 (ESV), "2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it,"

This unnamed angel, with a booming voice asks,
Who has the power, virtue, worthiness to defeat Satan and his demons?
Who can redeem this broken and lost world?
Who can reverse the curse of all creation?

Silence...

Do you think the angels thought for a second, maybe me?
Do you think one of the heroes of the faith entertained the thought?
If you're there, what would go through your mind if you heard that question?

Revelation 5:4-5 (ESV), "4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

He wept: A strong unrestrained emotion

A question: Why would he be weeping right now?
You're in heaven! You see the throne of God
You are witnessing his angels... He may be seeing heroes of the faith
Bowed down and worshipping
And you're crying?!?!?

Trying to be in his sandals...
Yeah but, I'm exhausted, over load!
My people are facing unjust cruelty
I've been faithful for so long
I've longed for this day and I'm overwhelmed....

Even when he was in the very presence of God.

Even when Jesus was ever present... it may feel like hope is lost

It may be like the silence is deafening

But we need that reminder just as much as John did... "weep no more, behold!"

Revelation 5:6-7, (ESV), "6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne."

Horns were symbolic of strength and power

Seven being the number of perfection

- Perfect power
- Seven eyes... complete knowledge and understanding

Revelation 5:8-14 (ESV), "8 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying,

***"Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth."***

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice,

***"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!"***

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

***"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"***

¹⁴ And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped.