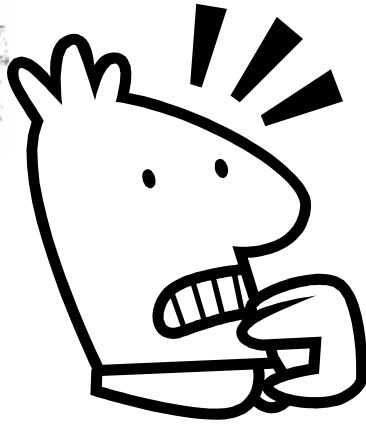

Do We Fear the Book of Revelation?



February
2008



Over the years the book has been treated many different ways. It has been feared, avoided, misunderstood, and definitely abused. Over the years a number of Christians have not been properly exposed

to this most wonderful, yet intriguing book.

Much of what you think of the book is based on your presupposition. A presupposition is a predetermined idea formed ahead of time that influences your understanding. One will view the things of the world through their presupposed ideas.

There are many presuppositions about the Book of Revelation. One is that it is a book about the coming end times. Well, this is true - it is about end times. But when are the end times, when do they start or when did they start? Another common presupposition is that the book can be used to explain particular events of our day. No, it cannot and should not be used for this. This is very dangerous. The Book of Revelation is not intended to be interpreted literally with present day events seen in its pages. Please be careful as you listen to anyone who tries to do this!

So, what presupposition should we have as we enter this book? I will answer that with a question. What is the name of the book? The name is found in verse one of chapter one. It is *the revelation of Jesus Christ*. And then in verse four we read that it was *written to the seven churches in the province of Asia*. This book was written by John to the church and its subject is Jesus Christ and it is about the work of Jesus and his body the Church. It concerns the things that must, according to verse 1, *soon take place*. This is the only presupposition we should have.

Now comes the question - how do we read this book? To begin to answer this lets look at its style of literature. The first three chapters can be considered an epistle, or a letter, similar to 1, 2 & 3rd John. The remainder of the book beginning at chapter 4 is somewhat more difficult. Its literature style is referred to as apocryphal. The word apocryphal means to 'unveil' or to 'uncover.' Apply this to the Book of Revelation and we should expect that the subject will be discussed using symbols and represented language and its meaning will be unveiled to the reader (with the guidance of the Holy Spirit).

Let me offer you an example. A road sign can be said to be apocryphal. As you drive along a sign appears. It is amber in color and diamond in shape. On that sign is a symbol. It is a bold, black line extending upward then bending to the right very sharply with an arrow at the end. Now, you the driver must uncover the meaning of the sign before you travel much further. The sign is of course a symbol warning you of a sharp curve. You are to unveil the meaning of the symbol as you drive.

The Apocrypha of Jesus Christ, or the Revelation of Jesus Christ, means that the truths of Jesus and his church are going to be unveiled. Sounds simple, huh?

An apocryphal literature style is not to be read literally but is to be read with the understanding that the fantastic language and symbols will be used to create an image or a picture in the mind of the reader.

Turn to chapter 12 in your Bible and read verses 1-4. What picture is formed in your mind? Is this a real encounter between a woman having a baby with a dragon nearby? No. It is an extravagant image of the birth of the Christ Child and Satan's intent to kill him. You probably read of this actual event a couple of weeks ago when you read the story of King Herod trying to kill the baby Jesus.

As we read this apocryphal book always remember this instruction, the message is primary, the details are secondary. Don't get overwhelmed or overly intrigued by the symbols and their fantastic representation. The symbols have meaning but

but only in support of the message. The message is first and primary. And what is that message? That can be found in many places within this book but the best is found in 17:14.

Speaking of the details and the message, one major difficulty in reading the book is that the book is not written in chronological order. It speaks of events and through these events the message is delivered. John will write from time to time, *after that I saw*. This means that the vision was simply seen after the previous vision, not necessarily that the event took place next chronologically.

Many times we will read several discussions concerning the same event with the following discussion adding more detail to the previous. Turn in your Bible to chapter 15 and read the first couple of verses. This speaks of the 7 plagues of God's judgement and it speaks of it being *the completed judgment of God*. Now read verse 1 of chapter 16. Here are the 7 bowls of God's wrath. These 7 bowls are a different description of the same 7 plagues poured out on the earth with greater detail. Chapters 15 and 16 discuss the same events with chapter 16 offering more detail of God's judgment. Now go to 8:6 and you will read of the 7 trumpets - again God's judgment. These chapters provide several discussions of the final judgment of God BUT not in chronological order.

Let's continue to answer the question - how do we read and understand this book? The next issue is context. To who was the book written and under what circumstance? What did the first people hear as they heard this book being read in church services? The persecution of the Christians by the Roman Empire was on the rise by the late 1st century. The people needed comfort, direction and the care of a pastor. John responded to that need even as he found himself in exile on the island of Patmos. He wrote this letter and it was to be read to the churches to inform them of their condition (chapters 1-3) and that their Lord knew the persecution they were experiencing. And, as they read the final chapters, they would read that he was coming to rescue them in the end. This letter was written to inform and encourage the believer.

The beauty of this book is that we the readers will have pictures formed in our minds

Its apocryphal style was popular in the 1st century. The style was not easily understood so the Roman soldier that might ask what was being read could not easily perceive that it was a Christian writing. So the letter did not, at first glance, cause further problems for its reader.

The beauty of this book is that we the readers will have pictures formed in our minds revealing God's work through Jesus Christ both in heaven and on earth. Simultaneously we will see events in the heavenly realm as well as the earthly.

This book is God himself speaking to his people. Read verse 1 once again. The Book of Revelation throughout directs attention to its primary composer, God. He is the divine artist, the chief architect. It is a divinely constructed volume of work in which God shows his handiwork.

Just as it was designed to inform, bring comfort and hope to the 1st century Christian so it should us today. Should we fear this book? No, we are to trust our God to instruct us and as believers we are to never fear his word! So we press on toward the goal for which we have been called and that is the blessing of reading and studying the very word of the very God of all creation.

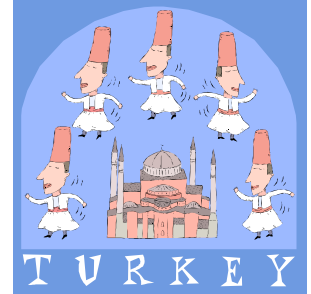
The Book of Revelation, it is the unveiling of Jesus Christ to his people.

In His Service,

Pastor Tim



Missionary News



We arrived safely back in Balikesir, Turkey last Friday evening. The Lord has really calmed some of our anxieties by providing us with warm welcomes from our old friends. The day after we arrived we visited the new fancy mall in town - which has a Burger King! We ran into half a dozen or so folks that we knew, including one of Daniel's classmates. She took Daniel's hand and invited him to play air hockey with her. And so it's been a good first week of getting reacquainted and readjusted - thanks for praying. Please pray as we look into teaching at a new language school this year. Also, please pray as we register Daniel (2nd grade) and Micah (kindergarten) for school. On Monday, a couple from the UK will arrive to join us in the work of planting a church here. Please pray for their good adjustment and that the Lord will bless their service here.

Thanks for praying.

Yours in our Savior,

Rob and Rachel Turner

ATTENTION LADIES!!!!!!!

If you are interested in attending Women of Faith this fall please let Delinda Mauney know by February 17. The conference will be on Friday October 31 and Saturday November 1. Also, the conference will not be in Charlotte this year but in Greensboro. If you would like to buy tickets please let Delinda know by the specified date.



COMING SOON!!!!!!

The Missions Committee



and



March 29, 2008

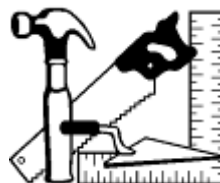
Mark your calendar!!!



Stir up the
gift of God
which is in
thee.

-2 Timothy 1:6

Now accepting new or
newly used items,
hand made crafts,
home baked items, etc.



Please place donated items for the auction on the
stage in the fellowship hall

Ladies, Our Women's Ministries Bible studies got off to a great start with approximately 70 women participating. If you are not participating, you can still join one of the circles. Don't miss the blessing of studying God's Word with other women once a month. Our schedule for the month of February is:

Golden Christian will meet at 9:30 on February 4th at New Sterling Church

Study Book: Let's Study Luke

Treasure Keepers will meet at 7:00 pm on February 5th at the home of Cindy McNeely

Study Book: Bad Girls of the Bible

Mary-Martha Sunset will meet at 7:00 pm on February 19th

Study Book: Having A Mary Spirit

Mary-Martha Sunrise will meet at 9:30 am on February 20th with Betty Sides

Study Book: The Afternoon of Life



There will be a called Women's Ministry Council meeting on Saturday, February 23rd at 9:00 am in the Friendship Sunday School Class Room. All council members are encouraged to attend.

When we think about the month of February we think about Valentine's Day; in turn we think about LOVE. We love because He first loved us. What a gift God has graciously given to us. *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 1 John 3:7.* The challenge for the month is to share the great love that God has given to you with those that He places in your journey. Don't miss the opportunities that God gives you to love those around you.

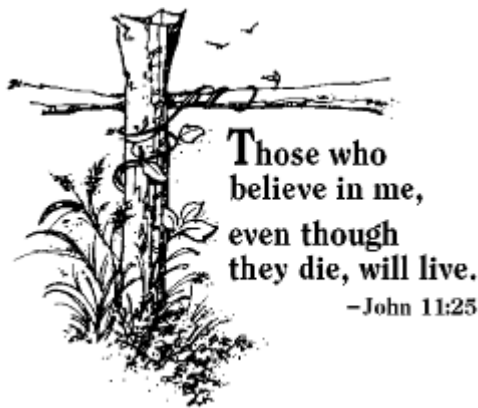
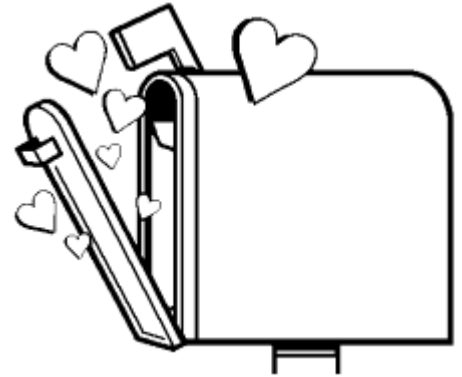
I also want to remind you to be praying for your secret sister. This is a good month to show her that you care!

Look weekly for the upcoming events in our church bulletin on Sundays.

God Bless you,
The Women's Council



Guess who is engaged???? **Todd Winters and Nikki Campbell.** An April 5 wedding is planned. Congragulations!.....**Kelly Pugh** is now working at Thornton Elementary School in the Newton/Conover School system teaching 2nd Grade.....**Kitzi Emery** is now working at Mitchell Community College helping students obtain their GED.....**Scott Graham** passed his test and now has a Professional Engineering license.....**Tony Harper** was caught stealing milk from **Steve and Judy Stewart**—right in front of them!! Beware if you see Tony in Food Lion—Guard your groceries!!!!.....**Mara Hairyes** sang “Mary Did You Know” in front to the congregation of Hiddenite Methodist Church.....**Taryn Setzer and Cooper** were playing the snow and did not realize they locked themselves out of the house.....**Esteline Jenkins** recently had surgery.....**Avis Pope** spent some time in the hospital after having a stroke.....



Those who
believe in me,
even though
they die, will live.
—John 11:25

*Our Sympathy is expressed
to the family and friends of
Barbara Jo Fulbright Reid*

May 6, 1933 —

January 2, 2008

ANGEL HOUSE PROJECT SIGN-UP SHEET

We are in the process of scheduling help for the construction phase of the Angel House. If you are interested in any of the following, please fill out the form and print your name at the bottom of the page.

I am interested in the following. Please Check all that apply

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1) Rough framing floor section | _____ | 10) Plumbing | _____ |
| 2) Rough framing house | _____ | 11) Hanging wall board | _____ |
| 3) Rough framing roof | _____ | 12) Finishing wall board | _____ |
| 4) Installing shingles on roof | _____ | 13) Painting | _____ |
| 5) Installing windows / doors | _____ | 14) Interior trim work | _____ |
| 6) Installing exterior siding | _____ | 15) Installing flooring | _____ |
| 7) Interior rough trim work | _____ | 16) Bath / kitchen tile | _____ |
| 8) Installing insulation | _____ | 17) Landscaping | _____ |
| 9) Electrical wiring | _____ | 18) General Cleaning | _____ |

I'm experienced in the above items I have checked _____

I'm not experienced but willing to help in areas I have checked _____

I know someone or know of a company willing to help in areas checked _____

I can provide materials in areas checked _____

I'm willing to lend a hand to help others _____

I'm available to work during a normal work week _____

I'm available to work on weekends only _____

Print your name

We will contact you when the area you checked becomes available and will line up a time for you to help us on the Angel House. Thank you for helping with our Mission project.
Sincerely, David Brady

Family Nights Begin March 2



As we study the Book of Revelation I am sure there are questions come up that you would like to discuss. Please make note of these. On Sunday evening during our Family Nights I want to address these questions. Plus there are many 'views' of Revelation that I would like to discuss as well. So please make plans to come Sunday evening 3/2 and lets discuss this beautiful book.

Pastor Tim

Angel House Christened With It's First Snow!!

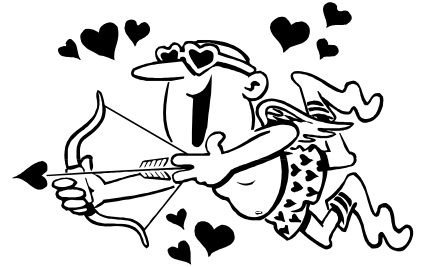


Look at progress!!! But building funds are running low. You can help by making a donation to the Angel House. Like David Sides said, " There's plenty of money.....but it's still in your pocket!!!" Please give.

COMING EVENTS



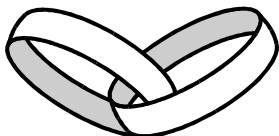
February 2	9:00	Knit Wits with Aarene Reese
February 3	9:15	Praise and Worship
February 4	9:30	Golden Christian
February 5	7:00	Treasure Keepers with Cindy McNeely
	7:00	Men's Bible Study
February 6		Ash Wednesday Service
February 9		Elder/Deacon Training in Gastonia
February 10	9:15	Praise and Worship
	11:00	Worship Service with celebration of the Lord's Supper
	6:00	Youth grade 3-5, Jr. and Sr. High begin meeting
February 11	10:00	Sterling Silvers
	7:00	Care Ministry Committee and Team Meeting
February 14		Remember Your Valentine!
February 17	9:15	Praise and Worship
		Newsletter Items Due
February 18	7:00	Knit Wits with Muriel Jenkins
February 19	7:00	Mary and Martha Sunset
February 20	9:30	Mary Martha Sunrise with Betty Sides
February 21	6:00	Scrapbooking with Delinda Mauney
	7:00	Men's Life Issues Bible Study
February 23	9:00	Women's Council Budget Meeting
February 24	9:15	Praise and Worship
February 25	7:00	Men's Roundtable



Valentine's
DAY

Lefty Lore

It was not coincidence that the fourth finger of the left-hand was chosen for the wedding finger in 300 B.C. Doctors at that time believed a nerve from this finger ran directly to the heart.



Taken from "The Left-Hander's"

Comedy Corner



A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

With even greater emphasis he said, "And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river".

And finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river".

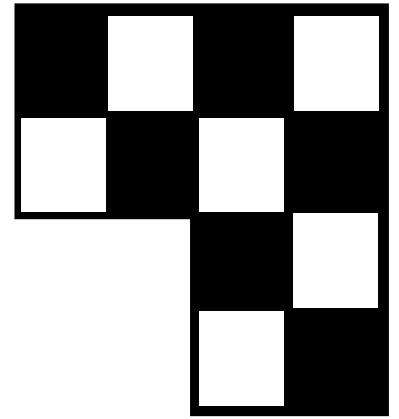
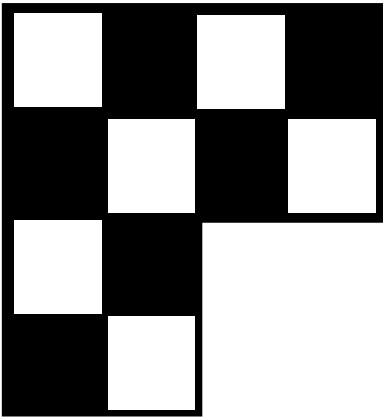
Sermon complete, he sat down.

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing, "For our closing song, let us sing Hymn #365, Shall We Gather At The River".

A guy was telling his friend that he and his wife had a serious argument the night before. "But it ended," he said, "when she came crawling to me on her hands and knees."

"What did she say?" asked the friend.

The husband replied, "She said, 'Come out from under that bed, you coward!'"

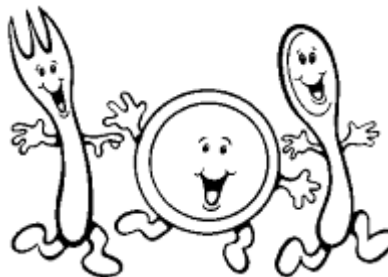


*At Spaghetti
Dinner
Hosted by
New Sterling
Youth*

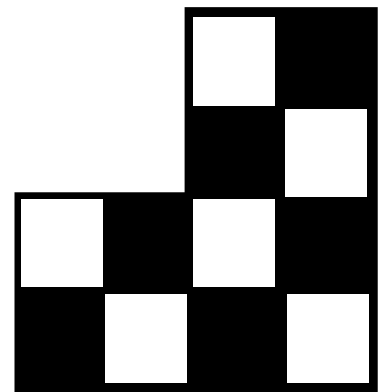
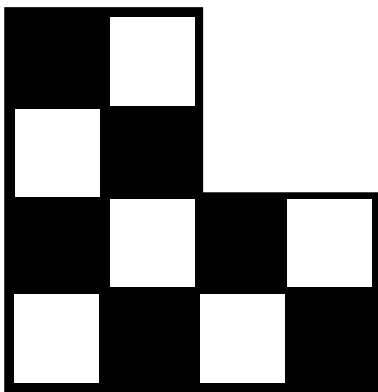
February 23, 2008

5pm- 7pm

*Everyone is
invited!!*



*Monetary donations
excepted*



February Birthdays

1 Swanie Snyder
1 Jimmy Winters
5 David Brady
6 Kelli Johnson
6 Vickie Johnson
7 Robin McCall
7 Larry Walker
8 Daniel Pugh
9 Susan Pugh
14 Shelby Bustle
14 Wayne Jenkins
15 Judy Chambers
15 Kenneth Hauck
15 Harrison Jenkins
16 Dylan Deal



18 Pauline Charles
18 Carolyn Elliott
19 Devan Winters
20 George Brady
20 Jesse Keller
21 Sheila Jenkins
23 Lauren Gryder
27 Christopher Jenkins
27 Michelle Hairyes

A Sunday-School teacher asked her little children, as they were on their way to church service.

“And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?”

One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”

