

S T U D Y G U I D E



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H O P E

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S T U D Y G U I D E

Blessed Hope

The Book of Revelation

W. Robert Godfrey



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

Renew your Mind.

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Introduction

The book of Revelation offers a rich vision of blessing and encouragement to God's people in every generation. Given to a church struggling to reconcile the hope of Christ's reign with the harsh realities of life in a fallen world, this book continues to speak to believers today. In this teaching series, Dr. W. Robert Godfrey guides you through the book of Revelation chapter by chapter, clears away confusion, offers practical insight, and equips you for a new and worshipful encounter with the risen and returning King.

This study guide is a companion to the video teaching series. Whether you are using the DVDs, streaming the videos on Ligonier.org, or going through the course in Ligonier Connect, this resource is designed to help you make the most of the learning experience. For each message in the series, there is a corresponding lesson in this guide. Here is what you will find in each lesson:

INTRODUCTION	The introduction is a brief paragraph that summarizes the content covered in the lecture and considered in the study guide lesson. How to use: Use the introduction to each lesson to get a sense of the big picture before watching the video. Refer to these statements as you work through the study guide to remind you of what you have already covered and where you are headed.
LEARNING GOALS	The learning goals are the knowledge and skills that the study guide lesson will endeavor to equip you with as you work through the lecture content. How to use: Familiarize yourself with the goals of each lesson before engaging its contents. Keeping the overall purpose in mind as you watch each video and reflect on or discuss the questions will help you get the most out of each lesson.
KEY IDEAS	The key ideas are the major points or takeaways from the lecture. How to use: Use these ideas to prepare yourself for each lesson and to review previous lessons. They describe specifically the knowledge that each lecture is communicating.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	The questions are the guided reflection and/or discussion component of the lesson that is intended to help you prepare for, process, and organize what you are learning. How to use: Reflect on individually or discuss in a group the questions in the order in which they appear in the lesson. The time stamps in the right margin indicate where the answers to questions during the video can be found.
PRAYER	The prayer section offers suggestions for how to close the lesson in prayer with respect to what was taught in the lecture. How to use: Consider using each lesson's prayer section as a guide to personal or group prayer. These sections follow the ACTS prayer model, which you can learn more about in R.C. Sproul's Crucial Questions booklet <i>Does Prayer Change Things?</i> This helpful guide is available as a free e-book at Ligonier.org.
REVIEW QUIZ	The review quiz is a set of six multiple-choice questions that appears at the end of each lesson. How to use: Use each quiz to check your comprehension and memory of the major points covered in each lecture. It will be most beneficial to your learning if you take a lesson's quiz either sometime between lessons or just before you begin the next lesson in the study guide.
ANSWER KEY	The answer key provides explanations for the reflection and discussion questions and answers to the multiple-choice questions in the review quiz. How to use: Use the answer key to check your own answers or when you do not know the answer. Note: Do not give in too quickly; struggling for a few moments to recall an answer reinforces it in your mind.

Study Schedules

The following table suggests four plans for working through the *Blessed Hope* video teaching series and this companion study guide. Whether you are going through this series on your own or with a group, these schedules should help you plan your study path.

	Extended 26-Week Plan	Standard 24-Week Plan	Abbreviated 12-Week Plan	Intensive 8-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
1	*	1	1 & 2	1–3
2	1	2	3 & 4	4–6
3	2	3	5 & 6	7–9
4	3	4	7 & 8	10–12
5	4	5	9 & 10	13–15
6	5	6	11 & 12	16–18
7	6	7	13 & 14	19–21
8	7	8	15 & 16	22–24
9	8	9	17 & 18	
10	9	10	19 & 20	
11	10	11	21 & 22	
12	11	12	23 & 24	
13	12	13		
14	13	14		
15	14	15		
16	15	16		
17	16	17		
18	17	18		
19	18	19		

	Extended 26-Week Plan	Standard 24-Week Plan	Abbreviated 12-Week Plan	Intensive 8-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
20	19	20		
21	20	21		
22	21	22		
23	22	23		
24	23	24		
25	24			
26	*			

* For these weeks, rather than completing lessons, spend your time discussing and praying about your learning goals for the study (the first week) and the most valuable takeaways from the study (the last week).

A Book of Blessing

INTRODUCTION

Many Christians simply do not know what to do with the book of Revelation. Common approaches to this book include treating it as a code to be cracked, as an inside look into events unfolding around the globe, or as an angry diatribe against contemporary culture. In this lesson, Dr. Godfrey will introduce some helpful ideas and strategies for understanding this book as God has intended. As you begin your journey through Revelation, Dr. Godfrey's hope is that you will be blessed to understand God's Word more fully and to live faithfully for Him.

LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify some of the benefits of studying the book of Revelation
- Summarize the most common interpretive approaches to Revelation
- Describe how the book of Revelation is structured

KEY IDEAS

- Revelation is given to the church not as a puzzle book or secret code but as a book of blessing for every generation of believers.
- Understanding the structure and setting of Revelation is necessary for understanding its message.
- The heart of the book of Revelation is to reveal Jesus Christ and to draw believers closer to Him.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- What first comes to mind when you think about the book of Revelation? What are common perceptions of this book in our culture?
- Have you ever studied eschatology? Why or why not? What do you hope to get out of this teaching series?

Scripture Reading

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

—Revelation 1:1–3

- According to these verses, what is the origin of the book of Revelation? What is its purpose?

During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

The Significance of the Book of Revelation

0:00–4:01

- What is the connection between the book of Revelation and blessing?
- How will Dr. Godfrey *not* be approaching Revelation during this teaching series? What will be part of his approach?

Approaches to the Book of Revelation

4:01–12:25

- What four basic approaches to Revelation does Dr. Godfrey mention? What distinguishes each approach?
- Which of these four approaches to Revelation is Dr. Godfrey going to follow in this teaching series? What books does he mention that also take this approach?

The Structure of the Book of Revelation

12:25–24:10

- How did Dr. Godfrey’s outline of the book of Revelation come about? How is this outline organized?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- Which of the four approaches to the book of Revelation is most familiar to you? Which of them seems most strange?

If you are in a group, have the members discuss their familiarity with the different views on Revelation. Which views are represented in your group? Has anyone’s approach to Revelation changed over time?

- Does everyone agree on a basic structure or outline for the book of Revelation? Do you think this is helpful or harmful? Explain your answer.

If you are in a group, have the members each take a few minutes to sketch out a brief outline of Revelation 1:1–3. Compare them. What do they have in common, and how are they different?

- The book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ—that is, its intent is to make Jesus known to its readers. How has Jesus used Scripture to reveal Himself to you?

If you are in a group, have some members share specific Bible verses or passages that have shown Christ to them in new or meaningful ways.

PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for providing His church with a book of blessing for every generation.
- Confess any fear, pride, indifference, or other improper attitudes of the heart that you bring with you to this study of Revelation and the end times.
- Thank God for revealing Himself through this mysterious book.
- Ask God to open up your mind and your heart to encounter Jesus anew in this study.

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. The book of Revelation is meant to convey blessing to each generation of Christians.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. The preterist approach to Revelation closely associates the book with which of the following years?
 - a. 30
 - b. 70
 - c. 1517
 - d. 2012
3. Dispensationalism is a popular form of which of the following interpretive approaches to Revelation?
 - a. Church-historical approach
 - b. Futurist approach
 - c. Present-blessing approach
 - d. Preterist approach
4. Why did Dr. Godfrey formulate his own outline of the book of Revelation?
 - a. No good outline existed for the book of Revelation.
 - b. All outlines of the book of Revelation are outdated.
 - c. His outline needed to follow a preterist approach to the book.
 - d. His outline needed to follow the fruit of his study of the book.
5. Which of the following does *not* appear in groups of seven in Revelation?
 - a. Beasts
 - b. Churches
 - c. Plagues
 - d. Seals

-
6. Which of the following best describes the original meaning of the word *apocalypse*?
- a. “A cataclysmic disaster”
 - b. “A lifting of a veil”
 - c. “A return after an extended absence”
 - d. “An outpouring of judgment”

Answer Key—A Book of Blessing

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

These are personal questions. The answers should be based on your own knowledge and experience.

Scripture Reading

- According to these verses, what is the origin of the book of Revelation? What is its purpose?

Revelation 1:1–3 states that God the Father gave this revelation to Jesus Christ, who in turn made it known to the Apostle John through an angel. God gave this revelation to the servants of Jesus to show them “the things that must soon take place.” Other aspects of the purpose of this book are that it would serve as a revelation “of Jesus Christ”—that is, to reveal Christ Himself—and that it might impart blessing to those who read it and put its teaching into practice.

During the Video

The Significance of the Book of Revelation

- What is the connection between the book of Revelation and blessing?
The opening verses of Revelation declare that those who read the words of this prophecy aloud, those who hear them, and those who keep them are all blessed. Dr. Godfrey expresses his hope that as a result of this study of Revelation, you will be blessed in your understanding of God’s Word and in your efforts to live faithfully for Him.
- How will Dr. Godfrey *not* be approaching Revelation during this teaching series? What will be part of his approach?

In this teaching series, Dr. Godfrey will not be approaching Revelation as a puzzle book, as a code to be cracked, or as a book that is incomprehensible. Instead, he will approach Revelation through the lens of how God is speaking blessing to His people in every generation. This approach will view Revelation as a whole, coherent message.

Approaches to the Book of Revelation

- What four basic approaches to Revelation does Dr. Godfrey mention? What distinguishes each approach?

One interpretive approach to Revelation is the preterist approach, which sees the book as having already been mostly or completely fulfilled by events that took place surrounding the destruction of the temple in AD 70. A second approach to Revelation is the church-historical approach, which sees the book as a prophecy about the whole history of the church, century by century, from the ascension of Christ to His second coming. A third approach is the futurist approach, which views most of Revelation as foretelling future events that have not yet taken place. Finally, Dr. Godfrey mentions a fourth approach that could be called the idealist school, the spiritualist school, or the present-blessing school. This approach views the book as describing what is taking place throughout the history of the church in every generation, culminating in the return of Christ.

- Which of these four approaches to Revelation is Dr. Godfrey going to follow in this teaching series? What books does he mention that also take this approach?

Dr. Godfrey will follow the fourth approach, which he describes as the present-blessing school, in this teaching series. Other examples of this approach in Reformed scholarship include William Hendriksen's More than Conquerors, G.K. Beale's The Book of Revelation, and Dennis Johnson's Triumph of the Lamb.

The Structure of the Book of Revelation

- How did Dr. Godfrey's outline of the book of Revelation come about? How is this outline organized?

In his study of Revelation, Dr. Godfrey paid careful attention to how the book presents itself and kept noticing the recurring pattern of sevens throughout the book. The more he noticed this theme, the more he began to suspect that this theme of seven is the controlling structure of the book. As a result, he will be arguing in this teaching series that Revelation consists of seven major cycles, each with seven subpoints.

After the Video

- Which of the four approaches to the book of Revelation is most familiar to you? Which of them seems most strange?

The answer to this question should name one of the four main interpretive approaches (preterist, church-historical, futurist, or present-blessing) that you have interacted with the most and one of the four views that you find, or have found, particularly difficult to embrace or understand. In your answer, there should be a definition of this approach based on the lecture.

- Does everyone agree on a basic structure or outline for the book of Revelation? Do you think this is helpful or harmful? Explain your answer.

Dr. Godfrey shared how he approached his friend Dr. Dennis Johnson to ask if it was appropriate for him to come up with his own outline of Revelation. Dr. Johnson replied, "Everybody has their own outline of the book of Revelation. Why

shouldn't you be able to have yours?" One benefit of this plurality of outlines is that it shows a commitment on the part of many believers to studying this book for themselves and forming their own conclusions. In his efforts to outline this book, Dr. Godfrey was careful to let Revelation speak for itself rather than imposing a man-made structure on it.

- The book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ. What should you then anticipate in this study on Revelation?

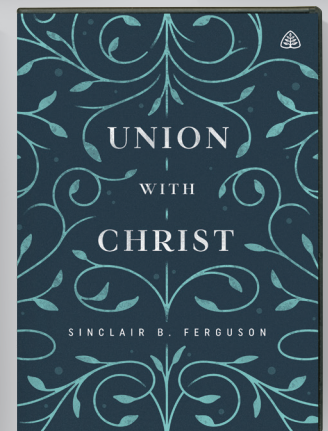
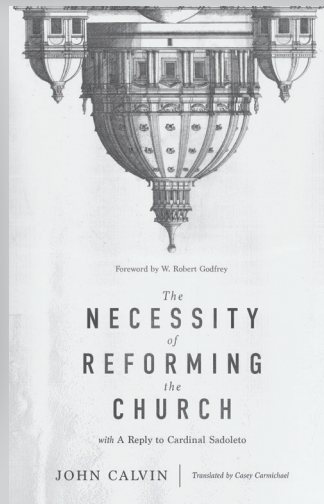
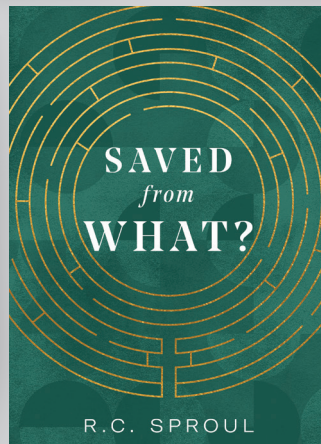
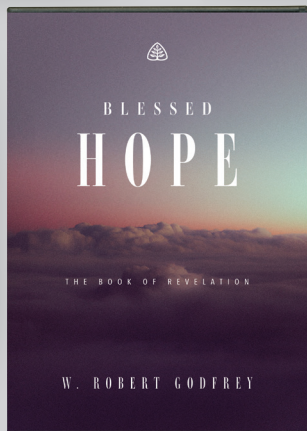
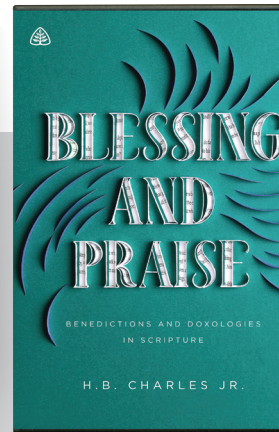
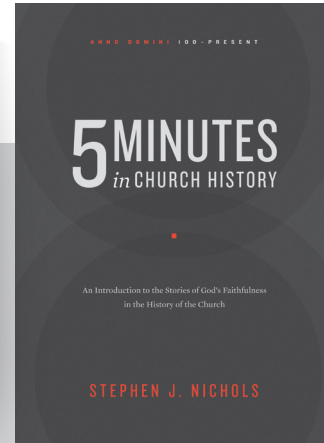
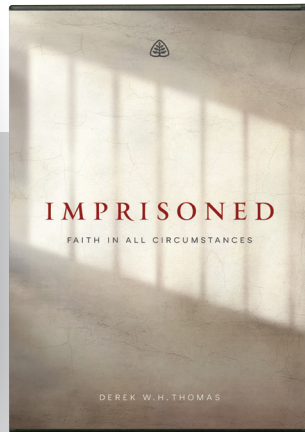
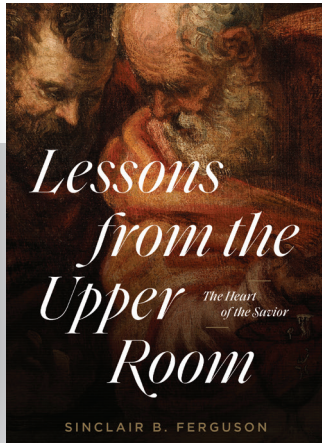
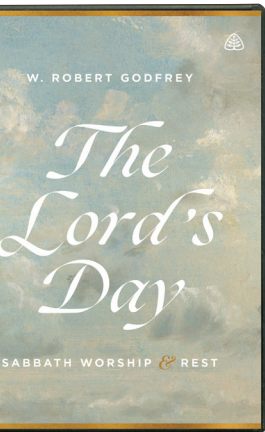
Because the book of Revelation is "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1), you should anticipate gaining a fuller picture of who Jesus is through studying it. The book of Revelation is the revelation from Jesus about Jesus. It is the testimony of Jesus Christ, and it speaks directly to His church.

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 1

1. **A.**
Dr. Godfrey explained that his approach to Revelation in this teaching series will focus on how God is speaking through this book to His people in every generation to impart spiritual blessing to them.
2. **B.**
Preterism, which considers most or all of the book of Revelation to have been fulfilled in the past, associates much of this book's content with the destruction of the Jewish temple in AD 70.
3. **B.**
Dispensationalism is an influential and well-known example of the futurist approach to Revelation. From its nineteenth-century origins, it has spread quickly to become the most common approach to Revelation in the United States today.
4. **D.**
Dr. Godfrey was encouraged to form his own outline of Revelation because of the abundance of outlines that already existed for the book of Revelation. Dr. Godfrey had reached different conclusions about the structure of the book in his study, so he needed to remain true to his study of the book.
5. **A.**
The controlling structure of Revelation comprises sets of seven. In addition to the structure of seven cycles, other sets of seven in this book include seven letters to seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven plagues. The beasts of Revelation, which appear later in the book, are an exception to the theme of sevens.
6. **B.**
The Greek word apokalypsis, from which we get our English word apocalypse, refers to the act of lifting or drawing back a veil so that what was once concealed may now be seen and understood.

We want to see men and women around the world connect
the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



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