

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn from *Navigating the Book of Revelation* by Kenneth Gentry

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested, a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Revelation 21:1-8

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from *Navigating the Book of Revelation* by Kenneth Gentry)

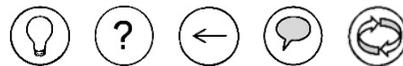
Many good and godly men and women differ on the interpretation of the book of Revelation. I am still sorting it out myself – and expect I might still be when my journey on this earth is finished. Kenneth Gentry’s books on Revelation have been helpful to me. The notes for the rest of this week are drawn from his book *Navigating the Book of Revelation*.

Despite initial appearances, Revelation 21-22 does not speak of the consummate new creation order. Rather, it provides an ideal conception of new covenant Christianity, presenting it as the spiritual new creation and the new Jerusalem. Though the ultimate, consummate, eternal new creation is implied in these verses (via the now / not yet schema of New Testament revelation), John’s actual focus is on the current, unfolding, redemptive new creation principle in Christ.

John is encouraging the beleaguered first century saints to hold on through their trials: Once Jerusalem falls, they will complete their entry into the final redemptive-historical order which has been gradually dawning since the time of Christ (Jn 4:21-23). As the writer of Hebrews puts it: “since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (Heb 12:28 NIV; cf. Heb 8:13).

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What does Gentry believe John is focusing on?
2. Who is John writing Jesus’ revelation to?
3. How does Hebrews teach us about our relation to the Kingdom?



Praise Pray

- Psalm 150a²
1. Ask God in prayer to keep you learning from Revelation
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Revelation 22:14-21

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from *Navigating the Book of Revelation* by Kenneth Gentry)

Eighth, in fact, the city contains the “tree of life,” which produces leaves “for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22:1-2). This also requires conditions existing prior to the eternal order... Revelation’s healing of the nations strongly suggests conversion.

Ninth, John even declares the continued existence of “dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying” (Rev 22:15), though they are “outside” of the city. Presumably they are the targets of evangelism, for whom the healing leaves of the tree of life and the water of life exist.

The principle of gradualism is important to understand as we, look into the idea of the present new creation process. Gradualism recognizes that God generally works his will incrementally over time rather than catastrophically all at once...

For instance, our Lord establishes his kingdom in the first century...He states that “if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mt 12:28). Yet he also teaches us to pray: “Your kingdom come” (Mt 6:10). So then, the kingdom is present, yet it also is to come; it is now (in one sense), but not yet (in the full sense)...

Thus, in the kingdom that Christ establishes in the first century we find the new creation order in spiritual form, anticipating its growth through time, and its ultimate climax at the end of history. Consequently, the new heavens and new earth presently exist within the bosom of the Church.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How does the gospel bring healing to the nations?
2. How is the Kingdom “already” and how is it “not yet”?
3. How is the present reality like/unlike the final reality?



Praise Pray

- Psalm 150a
1. Pray that Christ will perfect the work He has begun in you
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

Reading

Revelation 22:6-13

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from Navigating the Book of Revelation by Kenneth Gentry)

Fourth, John writes in Revelation 21:22: “And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple.” This suggests a first century reality, for with Christ’s coming and death the temple is rendered unnecessary (Mk 15:3811; Jn 4:21; Ac 17:24; Heb 8:13), for He is the temple (Jn 2:19-21; Eph 2:19-20) and is greater than the physical temple (Mt 12:6)...Because Christ indwells us, we spiritually reflect the glorious truth of the temple (I Co 3:16; 6:17; 2Co 6:16; I Pe 2:5, 9).

Fifth, that “the nations shall walk by its light” (Rev 21:24a) suggests that the nations as separate national entities still exist... Thus, historical conditions still prevail, rather than radically new, eternal conditions of perfect union and the fading of all national divisions.

Sixth, the declaration that “its gates shall never be closed” (Rev 21:25b) pictures the city’s openness to new converts. This shows the ongoing work of evangelism operating in the pre-consummate order. As Christ exhorts: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28).

Seventh, the city is not a purely consummational phenomenon, for the “unclean” and he “who practices abomination and lying” are not allowed in (Rev 21:27). This implies a pre-Judgment setting, where sinners still exist.

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How is Christ the temple now?
2. How is God giving light to the world now?
3. Will sinners always exist where God’s people are? Why/not?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalms 150a

1. Rejoice in prayer that there will be a final end
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading

Revelation 21:9-21

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from Navigating the Book of Revelation by Kenneth Gentry)

But why does John’s new creation revelation differ from Peter’s which speaks of the consummate order in similar terms (2 Pe 3:10-13)? Why should we believe that John focuses on temporal redemption in Christ as the new creation whereas Peter highlights the eternal result of that redemption?...

First, John seems to settle the new creation’s inaugurated, first century existence for us. Immediately upon ending this vision set describing the new creation/new Jerusalem at Revelation 22:5, the very next verse (Rev 22:6) records the words of the angel showing him all of this: ...to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place.

Second, we must remember that John employs bold symbolism in Revelation rather than descriptive literalism... If John can present historical realities and redemptive truths by such dramatic symbolism, surely he may present Christ’s Church ideally in glorious symbols. The case for redemptive-historical preterism is not special pleading: it fits the whole character of Revelation.

[And], the flow of Revelation’s drama expects the immediate appearance of the New Jerusalem bride (Rev 21:2). John’s theme involves Christ’s judging Israel (Rev 1:7; cp. Rev 3:10; 11:1-2, 8), which leads to the destruction of old, historical Jerusalem. Once the old city is destroyed in A.D. 70 we should expect the New Jerusalem to take its place. Indeed, the New Testament declares the heavenly Jerusalem is already present in Christianity, as over against Judaism (Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; cp. vv 18-21).

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. When does the angel say these things must take place (22:5)?
2. What is the present glorious reality of Christ’s Church?
3. Where does the NT say the heavenly Jerusalem is now?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalms 150a

1. Commit in prayer to see glory in the church as it is now, with God’s help.
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading

Revelation 21:22-27

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from Navigating the Book of Revelation by Kenneth Gentry)

John's immediate source material in Revelation 21:1 is surely Isaiah 65:17-20 (cf. LXX). And Isaiah's prophecy clearly portrays the coming new covenant order established by Christ, which Paul calls a "new creation" (2Co 5:17; Gal 6:15; cp. Eph 2:10; 4:24)...

We know that Isaiah was not speaking of the consummate order, for he includes aspects of the present fallen order in his description (Isa 65:20). The eternal order will not include infants, death, aging, and curse.

As demanded in the view I am presenting, we can detect implications of the first century experience of John's original audience.

First, the coming of the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:2) leads to the proclamation from God's throne: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them." This transpires in the first century as a result of Christ's work and the outpouring of God's Spirit to inaugurate the new age (Jn 7:39; Ac 1:4; 2:16-21, 33)...

Second, at Revelation 21:5 God speaks from his heavenly throne declaring: "I am making all things new." The present tense here ("making") suggests this divine activity is occurring in John's day as he writes, not centuries in the future.

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How do we know Isaiah 65 isn't discussing the final end?
2. How is God among His people now?
3. What do we know from the Bible that God is now making new?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalms 150a

1. Commit in prayer to seeing God at work now in His church
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading

Revelation 22:1-5

Notes
(Notes this week are drawn from Navigating the Book of Revelation by Kenneth Gentry)

In his grand vision John also presents redemptive truths embodied in the gospel of Jesus Christ and its ultimate effect on the world. First, the promise of the water of life without cost echoes Isaiah 55:1 - which extends God's offer of salvation. This of course is related to the redemptive-historical order established by Christ in the first century...

Second, the twelve foundation stones of the city in Revelation 21:14 picture the historical church, which Paul presents as already "having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:20; cp. Mt 16:18; 1 Co 3:10).

Third, in Revelation 21:16 we learn that the city appears as a cube of 12,000 stadia (1400+ miles) on each side. This also suggests a first century setting for the new Jerusalem. Mulholland writes: The vision has a practical purpose in the dimensions of the city. If one takes a map of the Mediterranean area and draws a square of 1,400 miles to the scale of the map, then places the center of the square on Patmos... At the time of John's revelation, whether it took place in the 60s or the 90s, all the Christian communities known to exist were located within those boundaries.

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Why is the water of life available to us without cost?
2. How is Jesus building His church?
3. How has Christianity spread since the 1st century?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalms 150a

1. Rejoice in prayer that Jesus is building His church now
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member