

## I. Introduction and tonight's text in focus:

- A. During a recent message in January, we looked at Jesus' invitation to "come to Me" (Matthew 11:28-30). (Notes and audio recording for that message can be found on [gphop.org/teachings](http://gphop.org/teachings).) Tonight, we're looking at Jesus' invitation to "come up here" (**Revelation 4:1**). As John saw, there's a higher vantage point that we as Jesus' disciples are invited to see from. From this place, we see Christ—as well as the circumstances of life—with greater clarity. The circumstances we find ourselves in come into sharper perspective when, even if ever so slightly, we see what He sees.

**Revelation 4:1** | After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." (See also **Proverbs 25:6-7**.)

## II. The invitation: "Come up here":

- A. Perhaps John truly was in need of the revelation he received. The state of the church being what it was—the persecutions, the pressures, the challenges, the compromises—perhaps this was a Friend speaking to a friend something like this, "Come up here, John. See from my vantage point. Remember what's really going on. Don't just get fixated on what you see down there (**Colossians 3:1-2**). Remember that there's something much bigger going on." It seems that John, though a renowned apostle, had fears just like many of us do. After all, he was human just like we are. In giving this revelation to John, and by extension the church universal, Jesus is showing a way forward in the midst of fears, anxieties, insecurities, difficulties, delayed expectations, misunderstood promises, feelings of hopelessness, etc.

**Revelation 1:17** | And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. (Contrast this scene with how John would lean on Jesus' bosom [**John 13:23**]).

## III. Helpful background information:

- A. The book of Revelation was written by John the apostle toward the end of the first century. John himself was elderly at this point (80-90 years old). During this time, John was a Roman prisoner on a small island called Patmos (currently a Greek island), which is approximately 40 miles off the coast of modern Turkey in the Aegean Sea. Although thinking of Patmos as an ancient Alcatraz gives us a frame of reference to understand the purpose of the island in a basic way, it was more than a barren penal colony. Patmos was situated along the sea lane between Rome and Ephesus making it a hub of much activity. Also, Ephesus was where John served as an elder/church leader prior to his arrest as well as after his release. During the Roman Emperor Dometian's reign, cultic emperor worship was enforced, which the early church leadership resisted. According to the third-fourth century historian Eusebius, Dometian severely persecuted Jews and Christians for this resistance, which explains John's exile (**Revelation 1:9**). Tertullian, a second-third century Christian author, wrote that John was boiled in oil in an attempt to kill him (presumably under the direction of Dometian), but he emerged unharmed. There may have been multiple attempts to kill him in various ways. If John was exiled in 94 AD, he would have written Revelation in 95 AD prior to his release in 96 AD. His stay on Patmos was about 18 months long, and he was released after Dometian was assassinated in 96 AD.

## IV. The revelation: "Jesus Christ":

- A. "The revelation of Jesus Christ" is the first five words of the book of Revelation. This book, therefore, is ultimately about revealing Jesus in greater detail and specificity. Revelation is the final book of the Bible (both in authorship and chronology) and the final book accepted into the canon of Scripture. It could be thought of as the "final word" that Jesus has given to His beloved church. Revelation is not, however, ultimately about the church, the antichrist, the end-times, apocalyptic literature, etc. (although those themes are prominent). This book is ultimately about Jesus. To read it rightly, therefore, is to understand this Man, His heart, His plans, His ways, His thoughts, His emotions, etc. God the Father wanted the church from John's era up until the very last days of this age to have a people, a church that knew Jesus by revelation. Disciples that know Jesus by revelation of the Spirit and the Word of God are better equipped to be faithful to Him individually, and also faithful witnesses of Him to others—to the world.

## V. Four significant realities John was shown as he was taken up in the Spirit:

- A. **The throne of God (Revelation 4)**—John saw the "corporate headquarters," the "control tower" of the universe. In other words, John saw the place of God—that it's actually real. He was undoubtedly deeply and profoundly impacted by seeing not only Heaven, but the very throne and light of God Himself. John later saw his own name written in Heaven (**Revelation 21:14**).
- B. **The church of God (Revelation 2-3, 19)**—John heard that Jesus has designs on a victorious, overcoming church. He sees His church way differently than we do. Jesus walks among the churches and has affection for them as a bridegroom does a for his bride.

- C. The plan of God (Revelation 5-22)**—John learned that all of history is moving in a very specific direction under the skillful guidance of the all-wise, all-seeing One. At the center of this plan is a capable, worthy Man named Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, the second Person of the Trinity. He will rule the earth for all eternity in partnership with the church, His bride.
- D. The prayers of the saints (Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4)**—John understood that prayer is a significant part of this plan. Not opinions, not hot takes, but prayers. The prayers of the saints interact with the sovereign plan of God in way that transcends human intellect.

*Help me improve my notes! The first person to point out a legitimate mistake/typo on this document (during service) gets \$1/a gift.*

### Greater Peoria House of Prayer Announcements for February 2, 2024.

- Welcome** to the Greater Peoria House of Prayer... we're glad you're here and blessed to be worshipping God with you! Be sure to pick up any of the **free** materials at the back table in the prayer room or the desk near the front of the Gathering Grounds area downstairs, which includes teaching notes, stickers, pens, prayer cards and more. **Daily schedule:** We currently host evening prayer from 7-8 p.m. seven nights a week. Our **Friday Encounter Night** is from 7-9 p.m. and is our main corporate gathering each week featuring live worship and a teaching to inspire love for Jesus and prayer.
- General Announcements: Central Illinois School of Prayer:** Our Winter 2024 mini-mester will be announced shortly. More information at [gphop.org/school](http://gphop.org/school). **Upcoming events:** We are hosting a special two-night gathering Saturday, May 4 - Sunday, May 5.
- Prayer room ministry opportunities:** If you are interested in leading or ministering during a live worship set by singing, playing an instrument, prayer leading or on the sound board, please contact us at [info@gphop.org](mailto:info@gphop.org). We'd love to have you serve on one of our teams! **Team ministry opportunities:** If you feel the Lord has gifted you in the prophetic (or would like to grow in this gifting) and would consider helping on a prophetic team, send an email to [info@gphop.org](mailto:info@gphop.org). Contact Mandy Kistner at [mandy@gphop.org](mailto:mandy@gphop.org) if you would like to schedule a future healing ministry appointment or help out on the healing team.
- Missions:** Please keep the following missionary friends in prayer as well as be considerate of their financial needs: **Ashley Bucknam** (YWAM, Nepal); **Phil Kellenberger** (International House of Prayer; Kansas City, MO) **Babett Mueller** (111 Global; Kansas City, MO); **Kerusso Perhay** (Pioneer 61; Mozambique); **Eric and Erin Simmons** (Bethany Global University; Bloomington, MN); **Alicia Wright** (ACTS, India); **Austin and Amy Zhu** (International House of Prayer; Kansas City, MO).
- Military:** Please keep the following members of our military in prayer as they valiantly serve the United States of America: **Jake Gerst**, stationed in Fort Johnson in Vernon Parish, Louisiana. **Kyle Nix**, stationed in Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane County, Washington.
- Social media:** Follow us on Facebook (Greater Peoria House of Prayer - GPHOP), Twitter (@GPHOPrayer), Instagram (@GPHOPrayer), TikTok, Vimeo and YouTube for regular updates and inspiration. Use these social media sites to get the word out, share pictures, quotes you heard, etc. Contact Derek at [derek@gphop.org](mailto:derek@gphop.org) if you're interested in helping with GPHOP's social media.
- Haven ministries:** Do you need space to pray? Maybe your Christian group needs a place to meet every once in awhile. We're making available the upper Prayer Room and lower-level Gathering Grounds for rent by donation. Email [info@gphop.org](mailto:info@gphop.org) if interested.
- We provide **free Wi-Fi** to everyone here! The password for the **GPHOP** router is on the chalkboard in the downstairs fellowship area. You can also connect to Xfinity if you have a personal Comcast account.
- Prayer requests:** If you would like our community to pray for someone or something specific, please submit it to [prayer@gphop.org](mailto:prayer@gphop.org).
- Giving:** If you have been blessed by the GPHOP and would like sow financially into the ministry, we would be more than blessed. You can give in cash, but if you would like to give to GPHOP with a check, please make it out to "Greater Peoria House of Prayer" or "GPHOP"—your gift is tax deductible. Thank you for your generosity! It's helping make day and night prayer with worship possible in central Illinois. You can place your gift in the Friday night offering during the 7 p.m. teaching or drop it in either of the two black donation boxes. Donations can also be mailed to our physical address at 117 East Washington Street, East Peoria, IL 61611. Donors can also use PayPal or our website ([gphop.org/donate](http://gphop.org/donate)) to give electronically.

*Thank you for helping to **keep this prayer room sacred** by ensuring conversations with others are brief and kindly reminding others to do the same. Use the large Gathering Grounds fellowship area downstairs if you would like to chat at length.*