



**Behind the scenes
Revelation 1:1-8**

Warm Up

When have you ever thought, “there’s more going on than meets the eye”? What events or situations in life make you think that?

Background and context

We live in a world where what we see on the surface is not always everything that is actually happening. There is an awful lot going on behind the scenes in governments that we never get to hear about, both good and bad. In the 1970s two journalists brought down the US president by exposing the lies he and others were trying to hide. Sometimes a whistle-blower reveals the dirty secrets of a company or business that leads to a change in laws or a prosecution for criminal activity. The book of Revelation is John’s exposé of what is happening in the invisible world, where God is orchestrating His control and rule. It was written to the Church to prepare them for persecution, to give them hope for the future by prophesying Christ’s return. It is a letter that demands a response from its readers.

Revelation is apocalyptic in style, meaning it reveals things that are hidden. This was a common form of literature in the 1st century. It often contrasted good and evil, extremes with no middle ground. It was filled with imagery and symbolism, which can make it a challenge for us, today, to interpret it.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity



READ Revelation 1:1-8. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don’t you really understand?

1. What was life like for Christians at the end of the 1st century? What do you know?
2. What is the purpose of this revelation to John? Who is it from and who is it to? Why should the churches read it?
3. **Read v 4-8.** What do we learn about Jesus? What **IS** He doing? What **HAS** He done and what **WILL** He do? How would this encourage the seven churches?
4. Rome claimed to be the eternal empire that would last for ever. How does **v8** challenge this and give the Church hope?
5. The letter of Revelation is a prophecy of what will ‘soon’ happen. How then does it apply to us today? Read **Rev 1:19** for guidance.
6. Why is it important that we interpret the message for the seven churches first before we seek to find meaning for today’s world?
7. **Read v7.** Why will the peoples of the earth mourn when they see Jesus? **Read John 3: 17-18** to help you. Does this encourage you or worry you?

Discipleship and Application



8. If we find ourselves under pressure in life, like the seven churches, what should our response be? How will this introduction to Revelation be a strength and support?
9. Research the number 7 in Revelation, both the obvious and hidden. How does it reveal God’s signature or fingerprints to show the unique inspiration behind the book?



Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.