

Revelation 1:9-20
The Living One

Warm Up

What do you visualise when you think of Jesus? An actor who has portrayed Him? A painting of Him holding a lamb? The Good Shepherd image?

What do you most fear about persecution? Pain, isolation, imprisonment, starvation, loss of dignity?

Background and context

When we consider that one of the main purposes of the book of Revelation is to strengthen Christians and prepare them for persecution, then this first vision of Jesus as King is central to the book. Each of us has a particular way of seeing Jesus; the Suffering Servant, the Good Shepherd, the Messiah, the Resurrected One etc. But here, this vision is total different. Here we see Jesus as He really is, the God and King of the universe, omnipotent, omniscient, and all glorious. This is an image that would certainly help anyone facing persecution.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Revelation 1:9-20. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. What personal circumstances does John tell us before he reveals the vision of Jesus? How might this be helpful to his readers?
2. What do you think it means to be "in the Spirit?" Is this something available to us? Are we seeking it? Is it different to just coming to church and worshipping?
3. **Read v 10.** What is the significance of the sound of the voice? (**Exodus 19:16**). What does it tell us about Jesus?
4. How many Old Testament references can you see in this vision? Now look up the following and compare them with the vision. **Daniel 7:9, 8:17-18, 10:6, Ezekiel 1:28, 43:2, Isaiah 41:4, 48:12, 49:2.** In their original context, who are these verses describing?
5. **Read v17-18.** Having given the vision to John, why does Jesus say "do not be afraid"? Why might this be comforting? What does it reveal about His authority?
6. What stands out for you in this vision? What gives you most hope?
7. **Read v12- 13.** What does it mean for Jesus to walk among the lampstands?

Discipleship and Application

8. How would the vision of Jesus help the seven churches? How might it help modern Christians facing persecution?
9. In what ways do you need to expand your vision of Jesus?

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.