

**May 2, 2010**  
**Where are you Lord?**  
**Come, Lord Jesus**  
**Revelation 19:11-16**

Some of you know that I have been speaking on Revelation in our workshops in India with the Pastors and Spouses. Today I want to share with you some insights from one of the talks. I think it fits well with the readings we have been doing in Hebrews for Bruce's study guide. The book of Revelation is best seen as a **tract for tough times**. In tough times our hearts should naturally cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus." But this cry is a courageous choice. When life seems out of control it would be easier and more natural to our worldly nature to accuse God or give up, feeling abandoned, doubting if there is a God. The book of Revelation, however, shows the courage of faith in a time of great persecution by an overwhelming political power, Rome.

*Rev 1:7* **Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.** *Rev 1:8* **"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."** The book of revelation is wrapped up in this amazing assurance that Jesus is coming. We see it here at the beginning of the book and again the book closes with this same promise; (22:7; 22:12) *Rev 22:20* **He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.** This scripture is not a prediction only for some far off day, rather this promise here is that he is near; he is already on his way! And when he repeats the promise at the end of the book he accentuates the fact that he is soon to come.

So join us on a tour of Indian churches as we together with them cry, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Visit churches about half way down the east coast of India.

### 1. The call to open to him.

In fact as he speaks to the church in Laodicea he says; *Rev 3:20* **Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.** Who did Jesus speak these words to? I would ask the Pastors. Now this was a perfect church? No. They were spoiled by the good life and lukewarm commitment. In India I had to admit that this is more often true of Canadian churches than churches in India, yet they too know the challenge. Spiritual coolness was why Christ was at the door of the Laodicean church and not among them. Yet even with all their problems Christ had not abandoned them, he was nearer than they ever imagined. He was at the door, just ready to come in and join them when they opened the door! Churches are made up of people like you and I therefore churches struggle, we know they we are not perfect, yet Christ gives this invitation to us. Here is a big church for a village in India, The convention of the Baptist churches of the Northern Circars (CBCNC) is still in factions and we still look to the day they can be united for ministry. Especially the mission beyond themselves suffers without a united convention. The people in this large church did not seem to have the same freedom and spontaneous joy we have grown to expect. We were pressured in the service to congratulate them on certain accomplishments and we wondered about the now old list of donors on the wall who gave money to build the church. Wealthy leaders in the Indian church can be very controlling and proud. They have their struggles too. These are

some of the reasons we feel committed to bring the Pastors and Spouses and Canadians together each year. We need to be reminded of Christ's invitation; <sup>Rev 22:17</sup> *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.* Open the door. Dine with Christ.

Come, Lord Jesus! These are the greatest words any of us can say to the Lord. We worship a Lord who invites us to come to him, and promises that when we seek him we will find him, He is not far off, he is nearer than we think. The women's workshops saw some amazing reconciliations between neighbors where jealousy and bitterness had brought a barrier. Come, Lord Jesus, are the greatest words for our life. Why do we struggle so hard to say those words, why do we so easily get on the wrong road, enticed by the things of the world and lukewarm? We are infected with a virus and the virus tries to suggest we don't need God, we can do it on our own.

## 2. The need to discern

Everything is not as it first appears. These young boys were having fun hiding behind masks. Just after John saw the vision of the Lamb on the throne he was so inspired and the angel cries out Come; <sup>Rev 6:1</sup> *I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!"* <sup>Rev 6:2</sup> *I looked, and there before me was a white horse!* I used to always read this as a cry for the horsemen to come. Now I think it is a cry for Christ to come, this is the cry of the whole book. But when we cry out for Christ to come the adversary tries to trick us into thinking we can make it happen ourselves. These churches in India have this same challenge to discern. The world's answer is substituted for God's. At first we wonder if this is God's answer? See the white horse, the crown, the bow, the conquer bent on conquest! Some scholars even debate, "is this not the Christ?" I think not, it is our best human answer to the cry for Christ, it is our masquerade, our attempt to be the savior of the world. And when people, or nations step out in their own strength to force what they think is best what is the result? In Revelation 6 what follows is the red horse and the black horse and the ashen horse. This happens over and over through history. Conquest breeds war and war breeds famine and famine breeds death, and as always in this world it is the innocent, the vulnerable, that suffer the most. The four horsemen represent the kinds of things that happen when Jesus and his kingdom begin to press in on the world. Jesus does not cause the misery and terror but when he is near that is when the resistance and opposition is greatest, resulting in man made solutions that yield misery and terror. That is why sometimes in our life when we try the hardest to honor Christ is when we face the biggest opposition.

The church in India faces a visible opposition. I have told you before that on an average 1 Christian missionary a week is killed for their faith in Orissa. Threatened by the spread of faith in Christ the radical Hindu's can riot at any moment like the destruction in Orissa in 2008 when this Christian village was destroyed. Here we witnessed this year the beginning of a new village thanks to the help of the Indian Government, CBM, and other missions. Yet even here we must be careful, discerning. Foreign money can lead to the charge that people become Christians only for foreign help. India needs to see courage and determined faithfulness through the struggles of these people. These people know first hand the words of scripture; <sup>Heb 10:33-35</sup> *Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of*

*your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.*

Peter Ma reporting on his Short Term Mission trip to Rwanda in Africa says; "On our second day there, we toured the Rwandan Genocide Memorial. For me, walking through the memorial was like having a bomb go off in my mind. Realizing that something like this happens presses on my faith. It sends me on a journey to reconcile whether the cross/gospel is sufficient against all the evil and cruelty in the world, and to wrestle with the human capacity to inflict pain on one another. (With this was the uneasy feeling I could have been one of those who did this very thing). My heart yearned for Christ's return. Yet as the week progressed, I saw emerging hope after such an atrocity.... I hold on to God's Word because otherwise my faith would be crushed by the atrocities of humanity." My heart too yearns for Christ's return, for the day when his name will be hallowed, when his kingdom will come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven! Come, Lord Jesus!

### 3. The call to follow him through the struggles of this world.

*Rev 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.*

*Rev 19:12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.*

*Rev 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.*

*Rev 19:14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.*

*Rev 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.*

*Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written:  
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

This time we see a white horse again. Yet now the rider is faithful and true. (1:5) He makes a different kind of war, it is a war with justice. Our wars never have justice, always the innocent suffer the most. His eyes are like blazing fire, does that remind us of something? Yes the vision of the risen Christ in Rev. 1:14. Eyes open our souls; Christ's are bright, penetrating and purifying. Nothing is hidden from him. On his head are many crowns or diadems. A strange picture these are symbols of victory, of wealth, these are many victories, too many to count! Could we be some of his victories, our church one of his crowns? He has a name that no one else knows. This could be a reference to the sacred name of God, the "I AM" translated Jehovah or Yahweh. The fact is we do not really know exactly how that name was pronounced. It is also a way of saying Jesus is under no ones control. It is also showing us that Jesus is the "indefinable gift." (2 Cor. 9:15) As much as we know of Jesus there is always more to know! He wears a robe dipped in blood. What strange battle dress. Where is the amour? Interesting, here his robe is stained before the final battle. Whose blood is it? The blood on his robe is his own. He won the battle over sin and death through the shedding of his own blood. At the cross Jesus suffered *outside the city* <sup>Heb 13:12</sup> *And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.* <sup>Heb 13:13</sup> *Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.* <sup>Heb 13:14</sup> *For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.*

Jesus shed enough blood to suffice for all who wish to come for all ages, even enough for you and me! His blood is sufficient; yes this is a cruel world, sometimes we wonder with Peter, Is the cross/gospel enough to suffice? Yes! Is the scriptures answer! God recognizes all our sin down through the ages, all the ways we have destroyed each other, and he has covered it all in his blood. This explains why the armies of heaven which follow Jesus are dressed in linen. Linen is the uniform of priests not of soldiers? They have the invisible amour (righteousness, truth, peace...) of Ephesians 6. Enjoy these pictures of the Indian church. We are part of a worldwide army! Remember, <sup>Rev 12:11</sup> *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.* Our faithful witness on earth can win battles in heaven! Jesus wins by the sword, the word of God. Yes evil is strong, it mimics God himself yet it is no match for the word of God! Makes sense that the Word of God would use the Word of God! This is a strange battle. Where is the physical battle? I think Christ is victorious not so much by killing evil as by letting evil kill itself. As in the case of the fall of Babylon the beast turns on the whore, (17:16) That is why evil is so lethal, in the end it always turns on itself. The genocide in Rwanda was a terrible example of this truth. Here even Christians thought they could love Christ and hate their enemy but scripture warns us that hatred leads to death, *the wages of sin is death*. That is why Christ is so demanding that we love him above all else. He is trying to save us from ourselves. This conquering warrior in Revelation is Christ. He won the battle on the cross as the lamb that takes away the sin of the world, and as we faithfully follow him we know Satan and evil will be finally done away with. Only Christ carries the name: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS!** John was saying; Sorry Caesar you are not, there is a king over you, who will still be king long after you are gone. And to his church he says; you will overcome. And down through the ages he speaks to us, his church today. Amazing, the faith he has in us!

Are you overwhelmed by the evil in your world? See the Lamb of God, victorious on a horse, and find strength to stand even in the face of death knowing you are on the winning side! **We are not abandoned, he is not far off! Come Lord Jesus, look he is coming, he is at the door, he is there out front leading his church, leading us on!** <sup>Heb 12:2</sup> *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.* <sup>Heb 12:3</sup> *Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.* **Come, Lord Jesus! Maranatha!** (1 Cor. 6:22) is the ancient cry of the people of God. We long for the day when his kingdom will come and his will be done on earth as it in heaven. Yet we should not miss Jesus' other words to us through John; <sup>Jn 14:17-20</sup> *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.* Where is Jesus we often cry? Look!, says scripture, **he is on the way, he is at the door, he is out front leading his church, he is in you, the hope of glory!** (Col:1:27) **Jesus is nearer than you think!**

Pastor Ron Harris  
First Baptist Church