

The General Conference of the New Church

APOCALYPSE STUDY GROUP

Presentations made at the launch ceremony
The Apocalypse Pictures – Hayes Conference Centre
27th July 2010

GETTING INTO THE APOCALYPSE

Part 1 – Rev Clifford Curry

The book begins “the revelation of Jesus Christ” and you heard earlier the vivid vision of the Lord that John sees.

PICTURE 1. this is a vision full of dynamism, energy and power. What John sees overwhelms him, until he is reassured by the Lord’s loving touch, and the Lord’s voice telling him he has nothing to fear lifts him up

This is the opposite of a crucifix which looks back into the past. Instead, this is the risen Lord who says, “I am the living one; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever.” This is the Lord as He is today. This book reveals how He comes to us to transform the inner world of our human spirit by the power of His Holy Spirit.

This book reveals how the Lord works to transform and purify us and we need to stay in touch with this image and remember that through all the upheavals described, with the Lord in control we have nothing to fear.

PICTURE 2. A childlike view of the world sees a mixture of good people and bad people but this is not how the Lord sees us. Instead He tells John to write to the churches to explain that even in the lives of those who strive to love and serve the Lord there is a mixture of good and bad, truth and falsity, holiness and hypocrisy, kindness and cruelty. These things cannot continue to exist side by side. Love must explain the nature of our mixed motives and mixed up emotions. There is to be a liberation of positive angelic qualities from bondage to negative impulses like fear, envy, greed or pride.

PICTURE 3. There is good and bad in all of us, and we read what the Word tells us about this. But it is very different when the Lord “knocks on the Door” of our heart, mind and life, and asks us to let Him in. This comes in the last of the seven letters. Now the written word has become the living Lord – the Word made flesh. His call is “be earnest and repent... those I love I rebuke and discipline.” Have we the courage to open our heart to Him?

PICTURE 4. The next chapter begins with a door standing open in heaven. A voice declares, “Come up here and I will show you what must take place after this.” Inviting the Lord into our life lifts us to a higher level of awareness. A process the Word describes, called by Swedenborg judgement, is beginning. It is a process in which what is good is separated from what is bad, and it is overseen from the throne of heaven.

To Him who sits on the throne, all in heaven give glory honour and thanks - thanks for the process about to unfold.