

Discussion Questions

Waking to the King of Kings—Revelation 1

(Have you ever been woken from a dream? If so, share a story about it with others in your group.)

During the sermon, Peter told a story of when he took his son on a mini adventure into dark sewer pipes. When his son was panicking to find him, Peter didn't respond for awhile. When he finally did, he was *right* next to his son and his son didn't even know it. Jesus said, "*The Kingdom is at hand*," which means it is right next to us—right here and now.

- When you realize the kingdom of God is literally at hand, how does that make you feel?

At one point, Peter said, "Liberals like a God that's large as long as He's vague and impersonal—not a person at hand. Conservatives like a God that's personal and well-defined as long as we can keep Him small and in a box: our box, our temple, our tribe—under our control."

- Do you ever feel tempted towards one of these ideas: "God is vague and impersonal." OR "I can keep God small and in a box?"
- We all try to control God at times. In what ways do you feel tempted to control God and why?

In his sermon, Peter said, "We think the Kingdom is *not* here and so we try to make it come—with politics and power, but it's 'at hand.' We think the King is not here because He won't fit in our box, but He's standing in front of us. We think we're the King and God should serve our kingdom..."

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- If our role as the church isn't about bringing God's kingdom through politics, power or through judging ourselves, others and God, what is our role?
- Can you think of any ways you might have confused God's Kingdom with your own?
- Are there any ways you have tried to use religion and politics to build your own kingdom or fulfill your own dreams rather than God's?

In The Revelation, we are given the hopeful message that God is Almighty, which is awesome! But while reading through The Revelation, we can't help but wonder: If God is Almighty and John (the author of the book of Revelation) is in the Kingdom—and even in Jesus—then, why is he facing tribulation?

- What do you think? Why is John "tribulated"—stranded on the island of Patmos?
- Why might you face tribulation even though God is Almighty?
- According to Revelation chapter 1, how do you think can we experience God's Kingdom in this world?

Jesus says, "Repent for the kingdom is at hand." But we often don't repent because we trust the illusion of our own control. We trust our dreams and we're terrified to wake up because we don't know what, or who, we will wake up to.

- What are you most afraid of "waking up to?" Why? Is there any part of Jesus that scares you?

"Repent" doesn't mean, "Try harder." It literally means, "Change your mind."

- Can you think of any areas where you might benefit from a "change of mind"?

In Revelation 1 John writes, *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades... Both John (in the book of Revelation) and Daniel (in the book of Daniel) fall as though dead at Jesus' appearing. In 1 John 2, John writes, "And now little children abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming."*

- Do you see why it's so important that you get to know Jesus now?
- What most helps you personally get to know Jesus and why?