



The Real Church: A Series in Revelation 6/11

John Bodily – 26th July 2026 (watch talk [here](#))

Revelation reminds us that behind the visible world there is a spiritual reality in which God is ultimately victorious over evil. Written to encourage the early church in the midst of hardship, Revelation 7:9-10 gives a powerful vision of God's people gathered in victory before his throne. In this sermon, John explains how this seemingly impossible, beautiful and irrepressible vision provides continued hope for Christians across the world today.

Zoom Out

Revelation was first written to the early church to encourage them amidst challenges and opposition, and to help them make sense of the world they lived in, in which hardship and suffering were very real. During this time, Christianity was viewed as a slightly strange offshoot of Judaism with no political power, no military force and no significant leader emerging under the oppression of a seemingly invincible, all powerful and eternal Roman empire. Revelation 'pulls back the curtain' to enable readers to see what's going on beyond the visible, pointing to the spiritual battle between good and evil, and God's ultimate triumph through the salvation offered by Jesus, the Lamb.

Zoom In

An Impossible Vision: John's vision, in which the church stands victorious having overcome the trials, challenges and powerful forces of this world would have seemed impossible in the first century. Yet, over 2000 years on, Christianity has spread across the globe, the Roman empire has fallen and this vision continues to inspire Christian hope.

A Beautiful Vision: In John's vision he saw people '*from every nation, tribe and language*' (Rev 7:9) representing a diverse church united in worship and celebration; a beautiful contrast to the division and disunity often seen throughout history and in the world today.

An Irrepressible Vision: Above all John's vision is one of hope. The church endures and overcomes not because of human strength but because of God. In the vision the crowd cry 'salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb'. God's people are acknowledging that their salvation (their rescue and renewal) is from God, the father enthroned in heaven and Jesus who—like a sacrificed lamb—died on a cross for them, giving them victory.

Press In



We continue to live in a world scared by war, injustice, suffering, natural disasters, and countless expressions of evil. Revelation helps us see these realities through the lens of God's greater story. We are encouraged not to lose heart. Our hope rests in Jesus, who reigns now and will one day make all things new.

For reflection:

- Where do I most need the hope of God's bigger story in the midst of today's challenges and uncertainties?
- How does John's vision of people from every nation, tribe, people and language shape the way I view the church and those who are different from me?
- Are there any areas of my life where I might be placing my confidence in human solutions rather than in Jesus?
- What would it look like for me to live more boldly and faithfully in light of God's promised victory?