

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

Part 37 of Foundations 260. Revelation 6:1-17.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. November 9, 2025. Revised.

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

Is the world getting worse?

- I'm a pessimistic optimist.

Revelation 6-10 answers the question.

INTRODUCING REVELATION 6

Introducing the Book of Revelation.

- It was written by the apostle John to seven churches in Asia Minor, though its message is relevant to every Christian. It was written for Christians who were under pressure to give up on Jesus. The book contains a series of visions given to John by Jesus. It uses dramatic imagery and symbolism designed to spark our imaginations. Many passages reflect scenes in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, and other Old Testament books.

Introducing Revelation, Chapter 6.

- To understand Revelation, Chapter Six, we need to remember what happened in Chapter Five. The risen and exalted Lord Jesus took the scroll, a rolled-up document.
- The scroll contains God's plans for salvation and judgment. It is sealed with seven seals. Seven is a symbolic number that represents perfection or completeness. God's plan is complete and perfect. The scroll is sealed so its contents cannot be altered. God's plans will not change.
- So, in the vision, Jesus takes the scroll and begins to open its seals (6:1–8:5). **LET'S READ REVELATION 6 NOW.**

THINGS ARE GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE

The world is the way it is because it is under God's judgment.

- God's plans unfold as the Lord Jesus opens each successive seal on the scroll. This is happening NOW.
- The imagery used is fascinating—four horsemen, living creatures in heaven, the altar in heaven, and cosmic disruptions. These vivid pictures are also found in Zechariah, Isaiah, Hosea, and Jesus's Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, all in the context of God judging the world.
- Revelation 6 is a message to believers. It urges us to stand firm in Christ without compromise, even as things go from bad to worse. It's all in God's plan.

WHAT DOES GOD'S JUDGMENT LOOK LIKE?

God's judgment is often the natural consequence of rejecting or replacing him.

- Each seal represents an aspect of judgment on earth.
- Seal One: Military build-up or conquest.
- Seal Two: Armed conflict or war.
- Seal Three: Hunger or famine.
- Seal Four: Grief or death.
- Seal Five: Hard-heartedness or martyrdom. Martyrdom of believers reveals the hard-heartedness of godless people. But when they kill the Christians, they cut themselves off from hearing about salvation freely offered in Christ. That's judgment on them.
- Seal Six: Terror or cosmic disruptions at the Return of Christ and the Final Judgment.

WHAT IN THE WORLD SHOULD BELIEVERS DO?

The options are:

1. **Separate:** Live in a “church world bubble” and minimize contact with the outside world. Separation *may* make it easier to live for the Lord (though I doubt it), but it also makes evangelism difficult or impossible.
2. **Assimilate:** Embrace the culture entirely. This approach will lead to a loss of Christian distinctives so that we won’t be the salty conscience of the community. Assimilation is not an option when we live in a world under judgment; it would compromise our commitment to Christ.
3. **Engage:** Remain distinctly Christian, following Jesus without compromise while also building relationships, advocating for kingdom values in the public square, and sharing Christ and the gospel whenever possible.

The Option for American Christians.

1. Stay salty. Don’t compromise your faith in Jesus.
2. Raise godly kids who love Jesus, the Bible, and the Church.
3. Commit to your local church—time, talent, treasure.
4. Love your neighbors in sacrificial ways.
5. Work to redeem the culture primarily by sharing your faith. As you have time, skills, or interest, or opportunity, you could also get involved in the community, volunteer for public service, run for office, critique godless ideas, practices, and policies in debates or public settings, and vote for candidates who represent godly values.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Review

- Review Peter's November 9th teaching and study guide. For more resources, visit www.famousgod.com/small-groups.
- What were the main insights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What were the main applications or takeaways for your life?

Discuss

- Even in judgment, God's destruction is limited as an opportunity for repentance (Revelation 6:8). How do you reconcile God's love, mercy, and patience with his righteousness, holiness, and justice?
- Peter said believers should "stand firm in Christ with uncompromising faith." What helps you stay faithful when tempted to compromise? What makes it hard to do so? How does knowing the outcome for Christian martyrs (fifth seal), and rewards for faithfulness (eg, Revelation 2:8, 11, 17, 26) encourage you—or challenge you—to stand firm in Jesus?
- Only those who trust in Christ will stand at the final judgment and be sheltered by Him. How does it affect your sense of urgency to share the gospel with others? How can we be more intentional about sharing Christ?

Prayer Focus

- Pray for grace to follow Christ with uncompromising faith.