

## Urbana's Interpretive Commitments

There are a broad range of theological approaches to interpreting Revelation. In our study together we won't solve centuries of debate or answer all of our questions. But we will come to understand the central message of Revelation if we share a core set of interpretive commitments:

1. Seek God
2. Focus on the text
3. Honor history and culture
4. Receive the whole Bible

### **Seek God:**

We come to Revelation with a desire to know and be transformed by God.

- How does Revelation call us to faithfulness now?
- Are we approaching Revelation with a posture of faith in God's goodness, willingness to trust God's Word, and openness to receive correction or redirection?

### **Focus on the text:**

We seek to let the Scriptures speak for themselves and welcome them exposing and changing our preconceptions. We wrestle with questions that arise from a close reading of the text.

- Where have our ideas about Revelation come from? How open are we to setting these aside?
- What concerns does the text raise or address?

### **Honor history and culture:**

We seek to understand how John of Patmos and the churches he wrote to saw the world, rather than reading Revelation through the lens of our time and culture.

- What taken-for-granted knowledge (such as Old Testament imagery and first century life in the Roman Empire) do we need in order to understand this text?
- Where might my cultural perspective help or hinder a faithful reading? What other cultural perspectives will help me gain a more faithful reading?

### **Receive the whole Bible:**

We read Revelation within the context of the larger story of God's redemptive mission told by the Bible.

- How does the larger biblical story (especially creation and fall as described in Genesis 1-11) shape the meaning and significance of Revelation?
- Is our reading true to the vision, plots, values, and trajectory of the entire Bible?