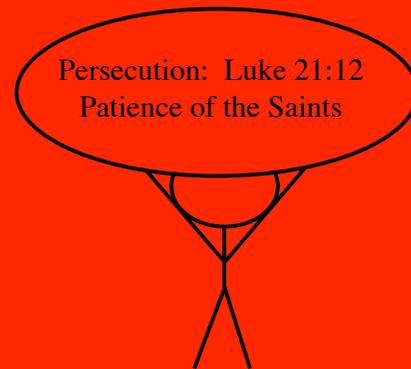
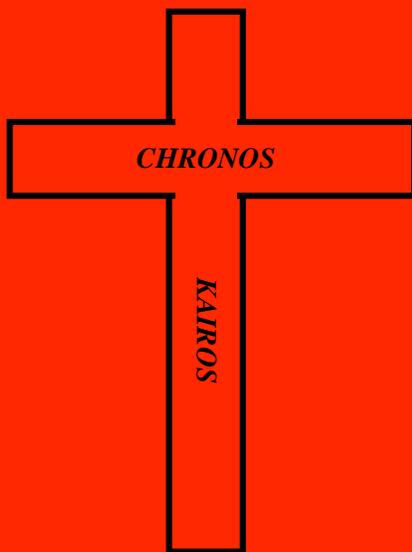


Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series

Book 2

Destiny for Disciples

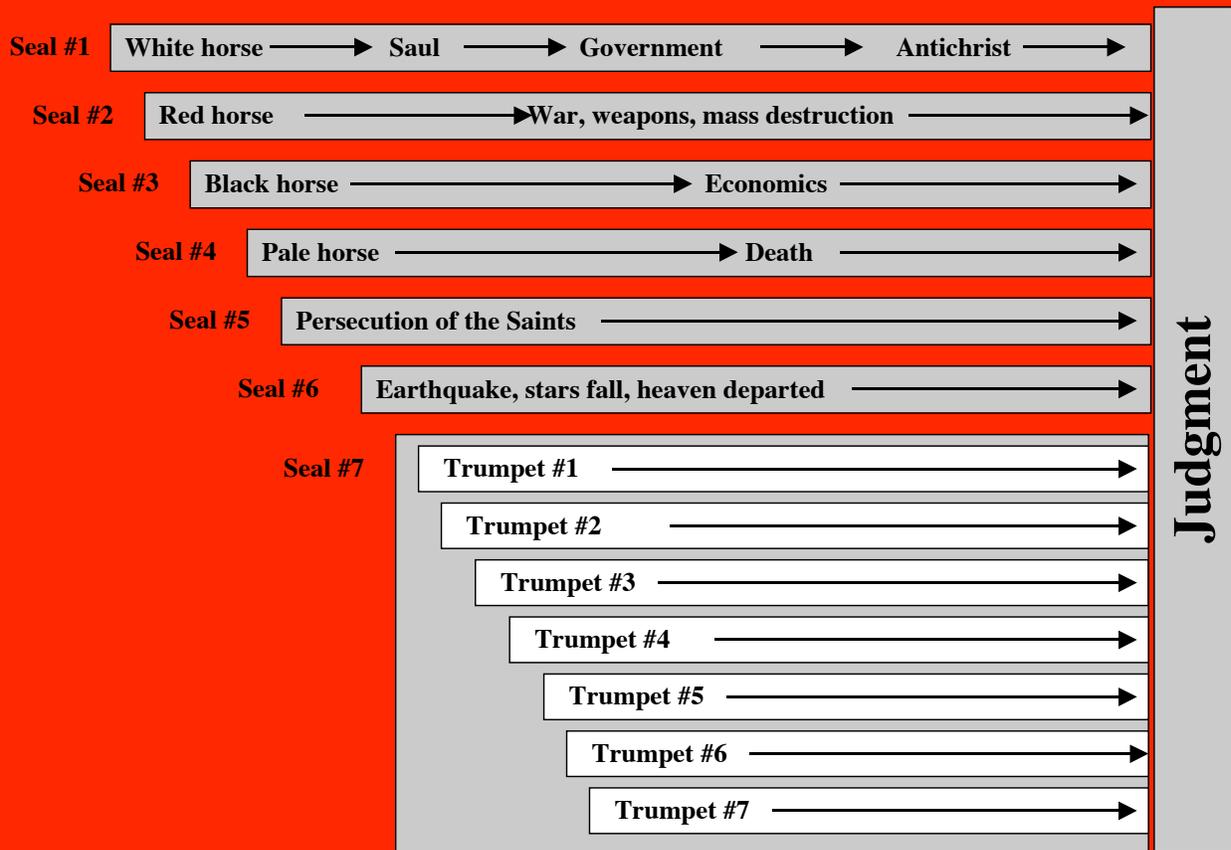
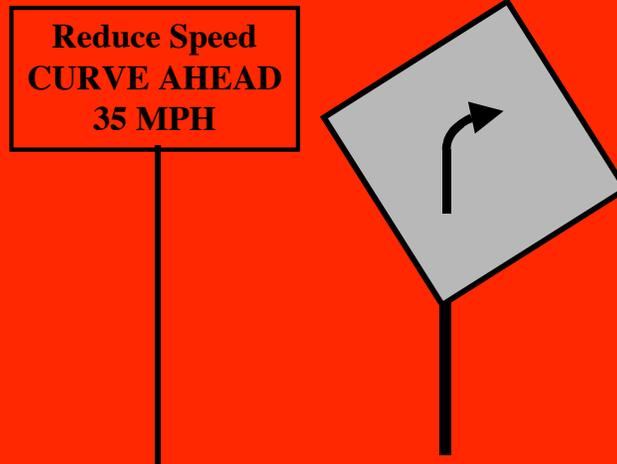
A New Look at the Book of Revelation



by
William E. Vinson, Jr., PhD

Destiny for Disciples: A New Look at the Book of Revelation

SIGNS



4 *Disciples*

For Further Materials and Online Classes See:

[*www.4disciples.org*](http://www.4disciples.org)

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**CLASSROOM IN A BOOK
DISCIPLESHIP SERIES**

Book 2

**DESTINY FOR DISCIPLES:
A New Look at the Book of Revelation**

by:

William E. Vinson, Jr.

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Preface

THE CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

The *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is a unique approach to education. The author has twenty-five years of experience in classroom teaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Internet teaching. The teachings covered Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Hermeneutics, Christian Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Evangelism, and Biblical Backgrounds. In other words, the teacher was a generalist in the world of specialization.

During recent years of teaching, God sent two people into the classrooms that have made this series possible. One student brought in some audio recording gear into the seminary classrooms and recorded everything said by teacher and students. The other person, Helen Agnew, transcribed the tapes into weekly sessions. Finally, Helen put all the weeks together for a course into a book, which became the nucleus for a formal book. Next came the editing phases in which the improper English and sentence construction was corrected. Also, the organization and thought flow was improved in order to facilitate a reader's comprehension.

Each class session became a chapter that went through several iterations of the editing process. Also, Helen provided computer drawings of the theological charts and models used by the teacher. These models were inserted into the book at the appropriate places.

INFORMAL WRITING STYLE

You should be aware that the chosen style of communication in this series of books is

much more informal than the typical. I have worked to retain the folksy way of expression that I use in the classroom and pulpits. In a formal treatise, like my doctoral dissertation, the expression was stiff and formal (one may even say that it was written by a stuffed shirt). So, who is going to read my dissertation because of its stiff formality?

These books are going to be easy reading because they will be what you hear in everyday conversation. In the classroom, I am a great communicator. When reading the transcripts of my audio-recorded classroom lectures, the students have commented that they could actually hear my voice with its inflection and volume in the printed words. These sensory experiences add to the impact and learning by the reader. So, I want you to know that the folksy level of communication was purposefully chosen in order to enhance your learning experience.

Dear saint, you are in for a treat. There will be points of time in which your mind will be so absorbed into thinking new and analytical thoughts of our Most Wonderful Lord, that you will be unable to resist sharing them with a loved one. In my editing passes of the various drafts, I found myself reliving the classrooms and all the high emotion and drama. My pulse rate would quicken and convictions and tears would return.

CLASS PROCESS

Each book is a semester-long class. The subject matter is explored very thoroughly because all the students are participating in the questioning and answering. You will

have the next best thing to being in the classroom. In fact, there will be times in your reading in which you will be in the classroom through imagination.

BENEFITS

Discipleship has been declared by many to be the greatest need in Southern Baptist life today. In my many years of teaching, I have had churches to bus in many of their members to take my classes at Southwestern Seminary. The reason that was given, was that it was a very good source for discipleship training. This discipleship training is a step up from Sunday School and other training because *it involves seminary training at the lay level*. Armed with this new discipleship training, the new lay ministers are fulfilling their calls and impacting the Kingdom of God in a very positive way. Pastors are benefiting by having some new lay ministers to help them minister. Churches and society are benefiting by receiving positive help that is theologically sound and practical.

For you, the busy Christian of today, this series is a rare opportunity to actually participate in a seminary classroom to learn from the teacher and your peers in high

impact and focused studies that are not available in any other books. The teacher's experience of teaching as a generalist will provide *interconnected insights and truths* that are not available in specialization. The *student interactions* in these books will create a *relevancy* that is unheard of outside the classroom. The quality of the *class dynamics* will lift you, the reader, up into unparalleled densely packed teachings that will greatly improve the *efficiency of your learning*. You owe it to yourself to jump into this series because you can get an education that is the next best thing to actually going to seminary.

In addition to the student interactions recorded in each chapter, the major points that I made which would be the source of the tests given to the classroom students are stated in the text, and the *test questions* are stated at the end of each chapter (class session). The *answers* to those tests are given at the end of the book for you to check yourself. If you seriously want to know that you have accomplished the goals of each chapter and to be able to teach a course like this, answer those questions to the point that you can do so without going back into the chapter itself—i.e. memorize those points and charts.

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Introduction

I want you to know that my observations are general in nature. I am not singling you, your family, your church, your country, your theology, or your anything out for critique. I am pointing out general problems. Now, if the Holy Spirit uses my observations to prick your soul, that issue is between you and God. My job is to put forth God's Word as clearly as I can. My observations and subsequent analyses are my own opinions. Certainly, I can be wrong in my conclusions, but I do not think that I am. You have every right to discard anything that I say. However, it is my sincere hope that you prayerfully consider my statements and become a real disciple, not of me, but of our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ.

The disciple of Jesus Christ needs to know something of the Church's destiny. The book of Revelation provides a guide map for the disciple. There are some hard times coming. How do we prepare for them? The Lord gave us a preparation manual so that we will not crash and burn in the critical end times.

There is a significant problem though in studying the book of Revelation. That problem is that it is intended only for the Lord's slaves (true disciples of Jesus Christ). Unlike current understanding, a Christian is not necessarily a disciple, or a slave. Certainly, every Christian has been purchased, but the chains to the Christian's heart are not made of iron. They are made of love. Jesus says repeatedly in the book of John that whoever loves Him will obey Him (John 14:15, 21, 23). In reverse, He says that the one who does not obey Him does not love Him (John 14:24). I must then conclude that a great portion of the Lord's Church is in rebellion.

Instead of obeying the "do not's" and the "do's," which comprise the Lord's commandments, the average Christian is climbing the

ladder of success. We want nice houses, good jobs, good educations, wonderful toys, great vacations, lots of money, fancy cars, the adulations of our acquaintances, power, children to go to the best schools and achieve all of the American dream. We devote ourselves to obtaining these things.

Well what about our religion? We know that the local church is an obligation for us. So, we attend it regularly and give sizable contributions to it. By doing this, we think that God is pleased and swooning over our wonderful Christian walk. We are good citizens of our respective countries, good members of our respective local churches, and obviously moral people. We are doing the best that we can and really cannot think of anything for which we should repent.

Well, my friend, we are in trouble! Christianity calls for our primary devotion to be to Jesus rather than devotion to self, family, or anything else. A Christian cannot even be a disciple unless he first deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34; Luke 14:26-35). In our modern understanding of discipleship, there is little, if any, sacrifice. Many of us are indulging ourselves by following after the American dream. I don't care how much you or I love Jesus with our sentimental emotions, we are not disciples if we are going after our temporal dreams. Temporal dreams are of treasures in this lifetime, like those described above. Eternal dreams are of treasures in heaven. Paul expressed this principle by saying that temporal treasures are like dung to him. His thinking was that temporal gain for him was really a loss for Christ, and therefore they were dung. His total devotion was toward the excellency of knowing Christ.

We know that the Church in general is in apostasy. How can we know that? Look at 2

Chronicles 7:14. If our land is currently in good shape, then we are not in apostasy. However, it does not take a genius to see that our land is in a mess. Many in the Christian Church cannot figure out right from wrong, good from evil, or light from darkness. Those in Satan's camp know those differences instantly. They want abortion, pornography, homosexuality, divorce, corrupt government, higher taxes, lotteries, government control of life from the womb to the tomb, homosexual marriage, reversal of the gender roles, exclusion of God's Name and the Ten Commandments from all of society, inclusion of Santa Claus and Easter bunnies, inclusion of Satanic worship at Halloween, inclusion of other religions and humanism, anything goes because what is right is intuited by each

individual (with the exception of Christians), removal of the Law, replacing the law code with the subjective law of robed men, removal of free enterprise, expanding restrictions that will kill all but the politically correct businesses, mandating that all journalism be balanced between liberal and more liberal (without any conservative views allowed), education to be dominated by left-wing America-hating socialists. I could go on and on here, but I think that you get the drift.

Well then how should the Christian then live? The answer to that question is the subject matter of this book. You are on a path toward destiny. Please make sure that your destination is correct and your path is straight.

Warning!

Warning: Please know in advance of reading this book that you could have a huge change to occur in your life. If you do not want to change, then do not read this book. Also on the other hand, this book alone will not change your life. You must mix faith with your knowledge and then be willing to change. Change is difficult and many times painful. This much I know—the cost of discipleship is sacrificial, cross-bearing following of Jesus Christ our Lord.