

Group Discussion Guide

What on earth is happening? Wk 3

1- What do you remember from Sunday's message on Revelation chapter 7?

2- Let's take a few minutes to review this series. The apostle John has been watching Jesus open wax seals on a scroll. As Christ opens each seal, something happens in history. Walk through the following questions together:

- What does the scroll represent? - What is the significance of Jesus holding the scroll in His hand?
- What do the first 4 seals represent? (A personification of the phases of war)
- What happened when the 5th & 6th seals were opened?

3- In Revelation 6:17b, the evil people throughout the earth ask "And who can stand?" What are they asking? Why is this question so important?

4- Revelation 7 answers the previous question. Rather than opening the 7th seal, Christ pauses all the action of chapter 6. Chapter 7 serves as an interlude and provides a special message for God's servants. Read Revelation 7:1-3 along with the following passages: Ezekiel 9:4, Ephesians 1:13-14 & Acts 2:37-39. How do these verses relate with one another? What is the method that God has used to seal us? What are some purposes for our seal? How can we be encouraged by understanding our sealing?

5- Revelation 7:4-8 contains one of the most unique listings of the tribes of Israel. In the multiple lists throughout the Bible (19-20), there is no other quite like this. Remember that Revelation often speaks to us through numbers & lists. Both are significant & symbolic to the story that John is telling. John's list doesn't follow the typical listing of Jacob's sons nor does he follow the normal order of the tribes. Judah is at the top, Dan & Ephraim are absent...and both Joseph & Levi are included. Read Revelation 7:4-8. What do you think John is emphasizing with the numbers? Who do you think these 144,000 represent?

6- The apostle Paul wrote 1st & 2nd Corinthians to a church with Gentile (not Jewish) believers. Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-18. How do these verses relate the Church with Israel? How can this passage give us insight for who the 144,000 might be in Revelation? How can this encourage us today?

7- Read Revelation 7:9-12. What details do you notice most in these verses? Have someone read verse 12 again. How many of God's attributes are listed? What truth is being emphasized through this number?

8- Revelation 7:14 mentions a Greek word that is commonly translated (in most English translations of the Bible) as 'tribulation'. This same Greek word appears 5 times in Revelation (Revelation 1:9, Revelation 2:9, Revelation 2:10, Revelation 2:22 & Revelation 7:14) and means 'suffering' or 'affliction'. Read Revelation 7:13-14. Why do you think the elder wants John to notice those who suffered for their faith? How can these verses encourage us when we suffer for Jesus?

9- Read Revelation 7:15-17. These verses proclaim that Jesus has a wonderful future planned for us. Which detail(s) excite you the most?

10- Remember the question posed in Revelation 6:17b? Who can stand in the midst of the Lamb's wrath? Who has no reason to run, hide or fear punishment? This question is answered throughout Revelation 7. 'And who can stand?' ALL of God's servants (humans & angels) can stand! WE can stand. Those of us who are still on earth can stand & those who are in Heaven can stand. We have no reason to fear the coming of Jesus! What are some ways that this truth would have encouraged the apostle John & the 1st century believers? How can it change our lives today?

11- Revelation 7 emphasizes at least 4 relational ways that Jesus interacts with His servants:

- Jesus redeems
- Jesus cares
- Jesus protects
- Jesus delivers

Which of these do you need most today?

12- Spend time in prayer. Give the area that you identified in the previous question to Christ.