

Revelation 13:11-14:20 Small Group Discussion Guide

Key Takeaways

1. The False Trinity of Evil

Satan mimics God's Trinitarian nature through:

- The Dragon (Satan) - playing the role of God the Father
- The Beast from the Sea - political/governmental power (Antichrist figure)
- The Beast from the Earth - religious power and propaganda (false prophet)

2. The Mark Represents Allegiance

The mark on the forehead and hand symbolizes:

- Forehead = ideological commitment, what we believe
- Hand = practical outworking, what we do

This is spiritual allegiance, not necessarily a physical mark (though it could be both)

3. 666: The Number of Man

- Six is the number of humanity (created on day six)
- It falls short of seven (God's number of completion)
- 666 represents humanity trying to be God without God—ultimate incompleteness
- May also specifically reference Nero Caesar through gematria

4. The Harvest is Both Warning and Hope

- The blood flowing 1,600 stadia represents Christ's blood sufficient for all
- The harvest represents salvation, not just judgment
- The gospel goes forth even as Babylon falls

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Text

1. What does the "beast from the earth" represent, and how does it differ from the "beast from the sea"?
2. How do political power and religious/cultural influence work together to oppose God's people?
3. Read Revelation 13:16-17. What does it mean practically that people cannot "buy or sell" without the mark?
4. How might economic pressure be used to enforce conformity today?
5. Why do you think God allows the beast to have power "for a time"?

6. What does this reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?

Personal Reflection

- The podcast mentioned that during COVID, the world was "taught something" about compliance. How did you navigate that season spiritually?
- What did it reveal about where you place your trust?
- How can we prepare spiritually for future pressure situations?
- Worship can be misdirected—toward politics, entertainment, or other things. Where are you most tempted to give your passionate allegiance to something other than Jesus?
- How can you tell the difference between healthy engagement and idolatry?
- The podcast stated: "Religion sustains political power." What examples of this do you see in our current culture?
- How can the church avoid being used as a tool for political agendas while still engaging in the public square?

Application and Discernment

Read Revelation 14:12: "Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus." What does endurance look like practically in your daily life?

What specific areas require endurance for you right now?

The podcast emphasized that "there is no middle ground—either you're filled with the Holy Spirit or you're inviting other things in." How does this challenge the idea that we can remain spiritually neutral?

What "small compromises" might Christians be tempted to make that lead to spiritual drift?

Darrell Johnson's friend asked, "If the U.S. military leaves, what will happen to God's work?"

Where do you place your confidence for the advance of God's kingdom?

In what ways might we subtly trust in American power, resources, or stability more than God?

How can we remain "in the world but not of the world"?

The sermon reinterpreted the "blood flowing" in Revelation 14:20 as representing Christ's blood sufficient to cover all sin. How does this change the tone of the passage?

How does this give you hope when reading difficult judgment passages?

Revelation 14:13 says, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." Why is death described as a blessing for believers?

How should this perspective change how we live and face suffering?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Audit Your Worship

Track what gets your most passionate response this week (news, sports, entertainment, politics, worship, prayer) Journal about what this reveals about your heart's allegiance

Practice Discernment

Before consuming news or social media, pray: "Lord, help me see what spirits are at work here"
Ask: "What am I being asked to believe or do? Does this align with following Jesus?"

Examine Your Dependencies

List the things you believe you "need" for your security, happiness, or God's work to succeed
Pray through each one, surrendering it to God and affirming that He alone is sufficient

Proclaim the Gospel

Share the good news of Jesus with one person this week
Remember: the harvest is ready, and Christ's blood is sufficient for all who will repent