

AUSTELL GRANDVIEW SDA CHURCH PRESENTS



THE
APOCALYPSE
SERIES

SHOWCASING JESUS CHRIST IN PROPHECY

OUT OF
ONE
MANY

EPISODE 5

OUT OF ONE, MANY

Based on Revelation Chapter 7

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MAIN IDEA

People who make it in the end (and not everyone makes it in the end) have something clear: "Salvation belongs to our Lord." These multicultural, gospel-drenched survivors who love serving recognize that at the end of the day we won't be proud of our ability but God's salvific power. The key phrase is: *Out of One, Many*.

KEY POINTS

Revelation 7 gives some very clear clues about what type of people will be very comfortable in heaven. We would do well to look at ourselves and ask some important questions about our present reality and how it matches with our future home. The saints in heaven will have these four characteristics:

1. MULTICULTURAL EXPRESSION:

Verse 9 After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. Three points really jump out as you read this passage:

- a. **OUR.** The people standing before Jesus believe it takes a village, no man is an island, and even though salvation is individual it always leads to a communal experience.

b. **VAST.** Some might want to paint heaven a place where only a small minority of a small minority are able to achieve. The saved will be a greater number than you have been led to believe. The reason they carry palm branches is because they are ready to recognize such great grace. They aren't full of themselves, they are full of thanksgiving.

c. **EVERY.** It's interesting they aren't all the same color. God sees color and values it, even in heaven we will celebrate our diversity which is a glue not a wedge.

2. CLEAR ON THE GOSPEL.

Verse 10 And they were shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

The redeemed are the shouting kind! The confusion we often experience where we equate silence and reverence is cleared up in this passage. You can be reverent and loud. Why are they so excited? Salvation belongs to the Lord! They understand they are there not because they are good, but because God is good. They don't shout "Salvation belongs to US, we played a part too!" No, they affirm the biblical doctrine of salvation by grace.

3. HIGH TOLERANCE FOR PAIN.

Verse 14 ...Then he said to me, "These are the ones who died in the great tribulation.

The best way of saying it the neighborhood I grew up in was this: They have gone through stuff. Pain is often thought of as an enemy, yet countless people will be in heaven precisely because pain helped them turn towards Jesus instead of away from Him. Note that the tribulation is "great". This is good news for someone who is going through tribulations right now. Both at a micro and macro level in our lives we can experience God's comforting embrace while we hurt.

There are three things God says about pain pretty consistently in the Bible:

God told us we will hurt.

God told us he will be with us when we hurt.

God told us one day he will eliminate forever the hurt.

It is because of passages like these that we can look forward to a better day even if today isn't.

4. SERVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

Verse 15 "That is why they stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his Temple.

Notice that service comes at the end of the chapter. The order of the elements is important to the outcome of the formula. We don't serve because we want to get merit for salvation, we merely serve because we recognize how much we have been delivered from. A God who values us, a God who saves us, a God who has delivered us from the hurt. That God is our privilege to serve. Show me someone down here who struggles to serve and I will show you someone who struggles with understanding the amazing deliverance God has provided.

INSIGHTS

The redeemed have some clear characteristics. It may be that as you look at them and compare to your life you may feel lacking. The worst thing you can do is to put your trust on your ability to emulate other saints. The key is to always go back to the phase:

Out of One, Many. Out of Jesus, many shall be saved.

That many is you. Believe it. Accept it. Rejoice in it. And start shouting!

INVITATION

Would you, by faith today, invite that great God into your life as your leader and savior and commit to search for an ever increasing understanding of His character by placing value of people, embracing His grace, enduring the pain and serving Him as a result?