

DATE of MESSAGE: April 17th, 2016

MESSAGE TITLE: The Global Mission of God

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 7:9-12

GETTING STARTED

The mission of God on earth is that the Gospel would be taken to every nation and people group on this planet so that people would respond with eternal praise to the glory of His grace in Jesus. Today's passage gives us a vision of not what *might* happen but what *will* happen in heaven around God's throne. God continues his unstoppable work of redeeming people from all nations, and we get to play a part in His work of redemption! One day all believers from every tongue and tribe will gather to praise God around the throne.

OBSERVATION

John introduces the Lamb in Revelation 5:9 as worthy to take the scroll because He has ransomed people from 'every tribe and language and people and nation' on earth. Where are these same people found whom the Lamb ransomed in 7:9-12?

In 7:1-8, John envisions a group of people who could be numbered. Now the vision shifts to a 'great multitude' that could not be numbered. What does John's vision of countless people standing around the throne say about God's sovereignty? About his love?

What do people in this great multitude have in common? What makes them different from one another? Notice the four distinctions John uses to describe these people.

How are they clothed? What is the significance of the white robes (see note on verse 9).

What do the people hold in their hands and what does this represent?

Besides the great multitude of people standing around the throne, who else does John identify in this vision? What are the creatures around the throne doing?

What sevenfold doxology do the host of heaven express in praise to God in verse 11? Consider all that they ascribe to God in their praise of Him.

APPLICATION

Spend some time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to God's glory and majesty revealed in this passage. How will you incorporate this glimpse of heavenly worship into your earthly walk?

How would you explain this passage to a new believer who had never read Revelation?

John's vision shows people from all nationalities worshipping God and the Lamb. How might this vision stir a zeal for world-wide missions within believers? How does God want you to be involved in global missions?

PRAYER

God, when we consider this heavenly scene, we see that people from all nations and tribes are worshipping You wholeheartedly at your throne. You are truly worthy of all our worship and praise. We can't wait to worship You face to face one day! In the meantime, we thank you that You have chosen us as your instruments for bringing this picture to life. We realize there is no plan B for sharing the Good News of Jesus with a lost world. We are your only plan for communicating the Gospel. Please use us today and throughout this week to spread Your fame where we live and around the world. Lead us to give, go and pray so that others may join us around the throne of God one day in ceaseless worship.

SHARE POINT

Read Revelation 7:9-12 and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

COMMENTARY NOTES

Revelation 7:9-12 In 5:9, the Lamb's worthiness to open the scroll is based on the shedding of His redemptive blood for 'every tribe and language and people and nation.' In 7:9, this group arrives in heaven. Since 'every nation' is listed first, this scene is a fulfillment of the Great Commission where Christ's disciples are commanded to reach all nations with the Gospel by the end of the age.

7:9 This great multitude stand before the throne and before the Lamb in heaven, worshipping their Savior. They wear the white robes of victorious martyrs. The palm branches in their hands seem to signify righteous triumph over their enemies. Many who hold to a pretribulation 'rapture' of the church think that the two groups of 7:1-8 and 7:9-17 are different (converted Jewish

people still suffering on earth in vv. 1-8, but the raptured church rejoicing in heaven in vv. 9-17). Others think these are Gentiles converted during the tribulation through the witness of the 144,000 Jewish believers who remain on earth. Those who do not hold to a pretribulation rapture usually see vv. 1-8 and vv. 9-17 as the same group, with their suffering in vv. 1-8 turned to joy and reward in vv. 9-17. The robes of this vast multitude are made white in the blood of the Lamb. This is a symbol of the redemptive work of Jesus to wash believers of their sins.

7:10-12 When the multitude extols God and the Lamb for salvation, angels and living creatures fall down and break out in a sevenfold doxology, almost replicating the sevenfold praise of the Lamb.

SOURCES CONSULTED

The ESV Study Bible

The HCSB Study Bible

Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament