**Revelations 14: The Lamb and the 144,000**

**14**Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. **2**And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. **3**And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. **4**These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among mankind and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. **5**No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.

The Lamb: likely not a real lamb and only an exhibition of traits associated with Jesus as the Lamb

Mount Zion: reference to Psalm 2 where first century readers would not think about the mountain but rather the affirmation of the OT passage.

This image signifies the great victory that has been won through the cross

144,000: figurative number to represent lots and lots —> many more than we can imagine

7 marks of the lamb's people

1. The Lamb's people know that they are not their own any more We are now “purchased " with the price that Jesus paid on the cross.
   * Mark of ownership: They have the name of the father and the Lamb "written on their foreheads" (14:!) in contrast to the way that the mark of the beast is on the foreheads and the hands of those that have been deceived into following the beast.
   * Seal of our destiny: by being "joined" to Jesus, we can be sure that he will not let us down because we now represent him
2. They know they themselves are an offering, a sacrifice to God—> symbolized by the offering of the "first fruits”
   * They gladly yield their lives as living sacrifices (Rom12:1) and do not compartmentalize life
3. They know they are engaged to the Lamb--> the 144000 have kept themselves chaste (14:4)

There are three options to read this:

* 1. Only way to make it into the kingdom is through celibacy--> does not correlate with the rest of the Bible
  2. Referring to warriors in a holy war: where the OT soldiers were required to abstain from sexual relationships and that this whole entire scene is the great cosmic battle still taking place—> but in Rev. 7 they are not referred to as "soldiers" and also includes both “men and women"
  3. Metaphorically where sexual intimacy is used as an analogy of our relationship with God.
     + Israel is the bride and has been defiled by lusting after other gods
     + Lamb's people have not chosen to engage in intimacy with Babylon- in the deceitful enchantment of the world but have stayed faithful in their relationship with Jesus

1. They want to be like the lamb
   * “No lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless" (14:5)
     + Does not lie: fear is the root cause of lying - we lie when we are afraid in order to create a world where think is safe, but we need to know that the truth is what sets us free
     + Blameless: to walk in integrity, to confess our sins, and to put it under the blood of the Lamb so that no one can blame us
2. They are followers, not leaders; although end up leading through their following
   * + They’ve given up trying to make their own lives happen but instead choose to do whatever God tells them to do
3. They win the victory over the beast
   * + To win: means to keep you faith strong even in the face of death
4. They are known by the song they sing
   * + Songs are saturated with scripture and it is radically God-oriented
     + When we sing, we acknowledge what God has accomplished and not what we have accomplished.
     + ie: when we cry out to God in times of need but then end up giving ourselves the credit for a positive result

**Revelations 14: The Three Angels**

Chiasm structure:

Vision of the redeemed (14:1-5)

new song

Three angels (14:6-13)

announcing

The Son of Man reaping (14:14)

Seven angels (14:15-20)

reaping what was announced

Vision of the redeemed (15:1-4)

song of Moses and of the Lamb

**6**Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. **7**He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

* While satan is deceiving the world, the angels are preaching the gospel concurrently.
* People have the freedom to choose who they will worship
* Knowing that judgement is real leads the church into telling the good news
* Death is only a means to a better reality and can be a way to spread the gospel -- we need not fear death

The First Angel

Proclaims eternal gospel “fear God, give him glory,…” to "every nation and tribe…”

The hour has come —> a phrase that has been repeated multiple times in the gospels. (Mark 1:15; John 12:23-24: John 12:27; John 12:31)

**8**A second angel followed and said, “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,’[a] which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.”  
  
The Second Angel:

“Babylon” now stands for a nation or city that has rejected God and has rebelled. In Revelations, Babylon was Rome

This foreshadows the fall of Rome and gives hope to those living under her oppression

**9**A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, **10**they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. **11**And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” **12**This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.

The Third Angel:

Announces the crisis of choice- that the decisions made by those living in the end times (and any time) have a direct correlation with their eternal fate.

God’s wrath is to allow men to choose what they choose -- if they have chosen a life separate from God, that is what they will receive.

**13**Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”

Harvesting the Earth and Trampling the Winepress

**14**I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man[b] with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. **15**Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” **16**So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

**17**Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. **18**Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” **19**The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath. **20**They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses’ bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.[c]

* “one like the son of man" reference back to the beginning of Rev (1:13) and to Daniel 7 where a human-like figure approaches the Ancient of Days and receives a kingdom that does not end
* There are two analogies of harvests --> one with the grain and one with the wine (joel 3:13)
* There will be a harvest when things are ripe —> God doesn’t rush to harvest but gives everyone ample opportunities
* Sickle for grain: Jesus reaps the harvest of what he has sown
* Sickle for wine: angel reaps harvest of judgement for what people have sown for themselves and treads the grapes into the wine of wrath

**First grain harvest**

* Someone with a sickle
* Jesus
* angel comes out of the temple and calls for Jesus to "put in your sickle and reap"
* "the harvest of the earth is ripe”
* Jesus swings his sickle and reaps the earth
* Salvation

**Second grape harvest**

* someone with a sickle
* angel
* angel comes out of the altar in the temple and calls for an angel to “put in your sickle and gather the cluster of grapes”
* salvation?
* "outside the city” is a place of salvation because this is where Jesus was crucified

The wrath of God against sin is expressed “outside the city" at the cross. The winepress outside the city, and blood flowing is the blood of Jesus, the vine of the earth, and the blood of his people who suffer with him—> Jesus swings his sickle and gathers in those who have been saved by his blood

Four re-evaluations for discipleship

1. all of our decisions result in a consequence.
2. there is a remedy for wrong decisions --> blood of Jesus can forgive and cleanse you forming you into a new person when you choose to die to your old self
3. Why be driven by that which is fallen? Do not love the world and the things in it.This world is temporary and only a fragment of what eternity will be like.
4. Join the angels in announcing the gospel! that is our role in the world!

Key phrases: “the hour has come" "Babylon is always falling" "Worship the living God" "There is blood enough for the sins of the whole world

Revelation 15: Seven Angels With Seven Plagues

**15**I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God’s wrath is completed. **2**And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God **3**and sang the song of God’s servant Moses and of the Lamb:

“Great and marvelous are your deeds,

    Lord God Almighty.

Just and true are your ways,

    King of the nations.[a]

**4**

Who will not fear you, Lord,

    and bring glory to your name?

For you alone are holy.

All nations will come

    and worship before you,

for your righteous acts have been revealed.”[b]

**5**After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is, the tabernacle of the covenant law—and it was opened. **6**Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. **7**Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. **8**And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

As humans we like to believe we are autonomous decision-making, self-managing people that are objective in our decision making and impartial in our thought processes. However, reality is that we are always influenced by something. Thus we serve a master and are influenced by a spirit—whose disciple will you be?

STRUCTURE OF THE NIGHT:

Review with large paper and implications of discipleship (30 mins)

Chiasm structure: teach them about the structure and what it is —> look at other parts of the Bible (ie Mark) and then ask them to identify what they think is the most important part of the two chapters?

Spend time talking about the similarities and differences of the two harvests

Application: 7 Marks of the Lamb’s people