***The New Song

RV179-01***

Revelation 14 is part of what we call the set of large parentheses in the book of the Revelation which interrupts the chronological sequence of the book. It begins at Revelation 11:15, and it extends to Revelation 15:8. Following this parenthetical insertion, God the Holy Spirit resumes the narrative of the book chronologically with the pouring out of the seven bowls of judgment from God. The large set of parentheses is inserted to give us additional background information on the personalities and events of the tribulation era.

**Revelation 14**

Revelation 14, actually, we will find, gives us seven specific prophecies about the great tribulation. In verses 1-5, we have the prophecy concerning the ultimate victory of Jesus Christ, and of the 144,000 over the antichrist. In verses 6-7, we have the prophecy of the proclamation of the eternal gospel to the whole world. In verse 8, we have the prophecy concerning the destruction of Babylon. In verse 9-12, we have the prophecy concerning the warning of the consequences of receiving the mark of the beast, the antichrist. In verse 13, we have the prophecy concerning the blessed state of believers who die during the tribulation. Finally, in verses 14-20, we have the prophecy of two angels harvesting unbelievers at the Armageddon war.

The first prophetic vision, in verses 1-5, which we are now pursuing, portrays Jesus Christ standing victoriously on Mount Zion. The time of this event is the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation. Mount Zion is the Temple Mount in the city of Jerusalem. The 144,000 Jewish evangelists also stand with Christ as victors over Satan. These 144,000 have been sealed at the beginning of the tribulation. They've been sealed with the name of God the Father and the name of God the Son imprinted upon their foreheads, which make them identifiable to all the world, but which also makes them immortal. They cannot be killed. The name of the Father upon their foreheads marks them as born-again children of God. The name of the Son marks them as having been saved by faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah Savior.

Before the tribulation began, these people who constitute the 144,000 were unsaved Jews, and they would have nothing to do with Christ. After the rapture of the church, they put two and two together. Perhaps they pick up a Berean tape, and they start studying the information.

**The Rapture**

One of our ladies this morning told me that she has a kind of a little shrine that she has built at home – a table on which she has placed certain tapes that she thinks will be important for people after the rapture, along with booklets; Bibles; and, other instruments of testimony for the neighbors who will be looting her house after she has left in the rapture, and they will need that testimony. That is going to happen, I'm sure, more often than we might think. Wherever the Word of God, via tapes or other publications has been placed, there will be a determined effort on the part of the antichrist to collect those and to destroy then. They will have a burnings and book burnings, just like Hitler did in Nazi Germany, in order to stop the flow of information. But they will not be entirely successful.

**The 144,000**

So, these 144,000 Jews coming, into the tribulation unsaved, get the message, and suddenly they trust Jesus, the Messiah, after all. They now are identified as one of the family of God. The fact that they were standing on Mount Zion shows their position of safety and blessing and glory on the earth, and certainly their position of victory. For now, their journey is over. The seven years have passed. The millennium is about ready to begin, and they stand in total victory on that mount with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Marks**

The mark of their divine names indicates that they have chosen to be loyal to Jesus Christ against the antichrist. In Revelation 13:16-17, we saw how antichrist marks his people with his mark – those who choose to be loyal to him.

**A Sound from Heaven**

In Revelation 14:2, John is introduced to a new song, and in verse 2, he hears a heavenly sound. John hears this sound with his actual ears, and, we read in verse 2, "And I heard a voice." This would be more accurately translated as "a sound." It is the Greek word "fone." "Fone" can mean a voice, but it can also mean a sound. Here, hear it would be better translated as "sound." He hears a sound, and he says, "This sound comes from heaven. He is referring specifically here to the third heaven, the throne room of God.

**Like Many Waters**

Then he compares it to something. He tries to us the impact upon him when he hears this sound coming from heaven. He says, "It is like (first of all) many waters." What he means by that is that it is like a large volume of water in motion. It's like the awesome sound that rushing water makes. This sound creates an image of forcefulness. There's an enormous volume of water that can create a sound such as over Niagara Falls. If you've ever been to Niagara Falls, you know exactly what he's talking about. If you've ever been to the falls in Yellowstone Park, a falls, which is in fact higher than Niagara, but not as large. But it is awesome to go down to the level where you can stand on the rock just overlooking the falls, and you can see this enormous amount of water rushing over the precipice to the canyon below. And the sound it makes is horrendous. You have a very clear impression of something which is forceful.

So, John says, "This sound had a big, forceful impact upon me, like rushing water would."

**Loud Thunder**

Secondly, he compares it to the sound of loud thunder. The sound from heaven has also the impact upon him of a high decibel peal of thunder. It's loud. John feels the reverberations of the sound, and he's impressed.

**Harpists**

Then he identifies more clearly for us the sound which he heard. He's been describing it. Now he tells us specifically what it is. He says, "It's the sound of a harpist." The Greek word is "kitharodos." A "kitharodos" in the Greek language refers to a person who sang and accompanied himself on it on the harp. This is somebody who is singing, and as he sings, accompanies himself on the harp. What John hears here is somebody singing, but not just one person. It's a large ensemble of harpists who are playing together. A large group of harpists are harping on their harps. That is what it says, in fact. This large gathering of musicians helping together produces that forceful impact of a high volume of sound, which John hears, and which he compares to water rushing over a precipice or to appeal of thunder. It creates quite an impact.

**A Song**

Then in verse 3, he gets a little more specific about a heavenly song. He says, "And they sang." The Greek word for "sang" is the word "ado." "Ado" is where we get the English word "ode," which is a song structure. He hears words set to music that the harpists are singing. He hears this choir singing specific words with a specific theme to the accompaniment of their harps.

**A New Song**

He says, "The song that he hears is a new song." There are several words for "new" in the Greek language in the New Testament. This is the Greek word "kainos." "Kainos" is new in the sense of quality. It is fresh. It is unused. It would be the word that you would use for having a new car. It is fresh; it is unused; and, it is new in quality. It is something specifically new in the sense that it's been designed for this occasion. And what they sing is a song (an "ode"), and this is a word that tells us something about the nature of what they're singing. The word "ode" is used in the New Testament only for songs which are an expression of praise to God the Father and to God the Son. So, the very use of this word, as it's used consistently in Scripture, tells us here that these harpists are singing a new song that has been composed for this special occasion. Its theme is an expression of praise to God for a triumph that these people have experienced.

**The Singers**

These singers are probably the martyred saints who come out of the tribulation persecutions, who at this point in time are in heaven. They are singing a song which has been written around this theme of their victory, in spite of the fact that they have been martyred for their loyalty to Jesus Christ.

**God's Throne**

We are also told by John that this Song is being sung: "In heaven before the throne." "The throne" here refers to God's heavenly throne in His throne room – the throne of God the Father. This is the throne which Jesus Christ the Son now shares with the Father until Christ returns to sit upon His own throne – the throne of David in the earthly Millennial Kingdom. The song is sung also in the presence of the four living creatures, whom we were earlier introduced to in the book of the Revelation, and whom we found to be for Cherubim class of angels who stand as an honor guard around God's throne. Also, they are singing this song in the presence of the elders, which earlier we found were 24 elders. These 24 elders are also sitting around the throne of God in heaven, and these 24 elders representing the church.

**The Church**

It is quite fitting that they should be there because the church at this point is in heaven. You are actually reading about an incident that you will be present for. You will see it, and you will hear it. You'll see the harpists harping away, and you will hear them singing as they accompany themselves, and you'll hear the song that they have composed for this special occasion. They're before the "thronos" of God – God's throne in heaven.

**Music**

They are singing as those who have gone through some very hellish experiences on earth in the tribulation. But they have come out triumphantly over Satan in spite of that. So, this song is an expression of great joy. Music in the Bible, you may have noticed, is always connected with heaven. Music is never connected with the lake of fire. There's no joy ever connected with the lake of fire. It is a very stupid remark that unsaved people like to make occasionally, that – yeah, they know they're going to hell, but so are all their friends, so they're going to have a good time, and they're implying that it'll be fun to be there together. It will not be fun. There's not any happiness. There's no joy whatsoever. Music is associated with a happy place, and that is heaven.

**Happiness**

These tribulation martyrs have come through suffering, sorrow, pain, strife, and tears under the hateful attacks of the antichrist and of the false prophet. Now, once they're in heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ, all this past agony is forgotten. It is important for us to remember that God is not only happy, but God is always happy. Those in His presence experience His love and His happiness. God is always happy. You might want to remember that when you observe the fact that the Word of God (Jesus himself) said that we should imitate Him as God. To imitate God is to be happy. So, it's a serious matter when you say, "I'm unhappy." It's a serious matter when you accuse other people of being unhappy.

Every now and then, somebody asks me if I'm happy. I'm hilarious. I wouldn't dare be anything else, because happiness is characteristic of the Christian who walks with the Lord. Happiness is one of the privileges and one of the benefits of the Christian life. The pagan gods are not happy. The pagan gods are always portrayed as being evil, hateful, and producing misery for people, but God is happy because He's just the opposite. He's holy. To be holy means that you are absolutely righteous, and that you exercise perfect justice. God is holy, and it is the holiness of God that produces happiness. When people are ungodly; when people are unholy; and, when they violate the moral laws of God, they introduce an element of unhappiness. It is inevitable. You cannot be unholy and be happy.

That is why we know that all the front and the froth of the people of fortune and fame, that are always interviewed on TV, and who come through as supposedly the beautiful people of our society, and they're just so happy, and things are so wonderful – down inside, they're eating their hearts out. Down inside they're gnawing in the darkness of their misery. They are ungodly; they are unholy; and, the one thing they're not is happy. They may have some euphoric moments. They may have the means to do things, because of their money, that gives them some euphoric moments. But when everything settles down, and everything is quiet in the middle of the night, these people are in misery, and you should not have any desire whatsoever to be in their place. There can be no real happiness for anyone apart from personal holiness. Of course, that means that you're in the inner circle of temple fellowship.

People who can do things that are evil are unwilling to admit the fact that they played the fool. This is the biggest occupational hazard, perhaps, of the Christian life. If you step out of line with the Word of God; if you step out of line with the will of God; and, if you step out of line with temporal fellowship, it is tough to say, "I played the fool." Yet, the wise Christian who wants a life of happiness, and an eternity of profit will readily say, "I was wrong."

Christians who are in the status of being filling of the Spirit are holy, and they're the ones who experience inner happiness. No matter what is taking place around them, there's always a millennium in the soul. That is one of the facets of the spiritual maturity structure of the soul that develops in the life of a believer who takes in doctrine, and goes on with it in his practice.

**Holiness**

When you are holy, both the Old Testament and the New Testament make the point that holy people are driven to happiness, and they're driven to express their happiness pretty regularly in song. That is exactly what we see happening with these martyred saints in heaven who came through terrible times. Because these are holy people now completely free of sin nature, and totally transformed into the image of Christ, it is natural for them to burst out into song.

For example, Psalm 40:2-3 points out this principle: "He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay. And he set my feet upon the rock, making my footsteps firm. And he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God." Here again, we use the Scripture to interpret Scripture. This gives us a little clue as to what they mean in Revelation by a new song – a song written for a special occasion. On this particular occasion, a new song is in their mouths. What kind of a song? A song of praise to our God. What are they praising Him for? They're praising Him for having brought them successfully through the tribulation without the mark of the beast upon them, and all the horrible consequences that entails. They have come through victorious.

The apostle Paul puts down this same principle in Ephesians 5. Happy people are singing people. In Ephesians 5:18-19, Paul says, "Do not get drunk (do not get high) with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; singing, and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Here again, very clearly – happy people are people who burst out in song.

So the expanse of heaven above, John suddenly realizes, is resounding with the song of these martyred saints. And the hills on the earth are alive with the sound of music by the 144,000 who cannot be touched with death. They sang a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders.

**Not Everyone can Sing this Song**

Then he points something else out to us. "No one" (not a single one) could" do something. This word "could" is the Greek word "dunamai." "Dunamai" is in a tense in the Greek language called imperfect, which means "trying again and again." Here, someone who tries again and again to do this, can't do it. He absolutely cannot do this no matter how much he tries. He cannot do something – "He cannot learn." The Greek word is "manthano." Here, the word "manthano" mean learning in the sense of being able to relate to something. It is in the aorist tense, which means at no point in time can they relate to something. It is active. They themselves can't enter into this. Infinitive mood tells us it’s their purpose to enter into something, and to relate to. It is something they cannot do. What is it relating to? To the victory song of the tribulation saints in heaven. No one is able to enter this new song, because this song expresses the triumph of faith in God in the midst of the antichrist's reign of terror. Most people today could not relate in their experience to be able to sing a song of victory like this – a song which is the expression of faith in God, in the face of terror. It is faith in God and standing firm in the face of: "Submit to evil, or die."

**The Martyrs and the 144,000**

This is a song that only a unique group of believers can ever sing. In this case here, no one could sing this song, with one exception, and he interjects the exception. And that exception is the 144,000 Jewish men. They can they can sing this song. They too, have come through some terrible times. They, too, have found themselves in the hazard of their lives. Now they're standing victoriously with Jesus Christ on Mount Zion at the end of the tribulation, and they can personally relate to what these martyrs who are in heaven have gone through. These can sing this song. Both groups: the 144,000; and, the martyred saints in heaven have been delivered from the antichrist. One group has been delivered through death into heaven. The other has been preserved alive on the earth to go into the Millennial Kingdom. Both groups have remained faithful to God through the tribulation, so they are qualified to sing this new song – the song of victory and of praise in the face of terrible oppression.

**Redeemed**

These 144,000 can do this because they have been purchased. This is the Greek word "agorazo." "Agorazo" means "to redeem." They have been redeemed from the slave market of sin by Jesus Christ. That's exactly what Christ did when he redeemed us: He bought us out of our slavery, and He paid for that with His death upon the cross. When he paid for the sins of mankind, he was "agorazo" us. He was taking us out of the slave market of sin. This is in the perfect tense, which tells us that this purchase of these 144,000 was done in the past at the cross, and now, here in the tribulation, that purchase price is still good. It is the passive voice, which tells us that 144,000 didn't save themselves. They did not come to this position of being able to relate to this song by their own efforts. The 144,000 were saved after the rapture of the church, during the tribulation, when God's wrath is being poured out on rebellious humanity. It is a time when believers are being killed all around them. These 144,000 will have found grace in the eyes of God who saves them. This is what God said of Noah in Genesis 6:8 – that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. That's what these 144,000 will also experience.

So, not everyone can sing this song of victory, as indeed can the tribulation martyrs in Heaven and the 144,000 Jewish witnesses on the earth. Both have walked through death and destruction, and both have remained God’s untouchables. They have not yielded to the appeals of Satan's society. They were the kind of believers who are described in Hebrews 11:33-34. This is the kind of people that these 144,000 and the martyred tribulation saints will be: "Who by faith conquered kingdoms; performed acts of righteousness; obtained promises; shut the mouths of lions; quenched the power of fire; escape the edge of the sword; from weakness were made strong; became mighty in war; and, put foreign armies to flight."

**Moral Integrity**

People who are in suffering, and who are under threat, can accomplish that. Here's an army of militant soldiers of Christ, taking the words that Satan can throw at them. They have defied the roaring lion Satan. They have humiliated the antichrist. They have exposed the false prophets for what he is. They have served as God's witnesses, proclaiming the gospel in the face of threats; contempt; rejection; and, demonic rage. And in the case of the tribulation saints, they have been killed. They paid with their life and went to heaven. The 144,000 cannot be touched with death, but they can be touched with suffering. Together, these two groups have fought a good fight as soldiers of Jesus Christ in the most terrible time that human history will ever have seen. And it's all still in the future.

I can assure you this very moment that the devil knows that these untouchables of the living God are coming, and he is already rising in rage and in frustration, because he knows that when these 144,000 come with every witness every place in the world, they will not be stopped by him. These men are devoted to Jesus Christ, who has saved them from out of the mass of lost humanity. So, they will keep their eyes on the Lord, and they will know how to put their mission, to which they have been called at that point in time first. They won't have any problem putting the mission first. They will not get tied up with all the cares, and all the trivialities, and all the sidetracks of life. They will denounce the antichrist's political and economic policies. The 144,000 will expose the world church of the false prophet as a spiritual harlot. They will go everywhere in the world preaching the gospel of grace salvation, and of the imminent doom of Satan. Their converts will pay a terrible price. Most of them will pay the price of martyrdom, but their converts too will prove to be untouchables.

In Revelation 14:4-5, God the Holy Spirit points out the moral integrity of these 144,000 witnesses in a very significant way. These 144,000 witnesses are purchased from the earth through the redemption of Jesus Christ. These are the ones who: "Have not." And this "not" is the Greek word "ou," which, as you may remember, is the strong negative. This is the negative that says, "Absolutely – under no condition. These men who now stand in victory with Christ on Mount Zion, at the end of the tribulation, have not done something, and that is they have not: "Defiled themselves." The Greek word is "moluno." This Greek word "moluno" means "to be smear something," as with mud, or with something that is filthy. "Moluno" is to smear yourself with something dirty – something that is degrading. It connotes soiling something in some way.

However, this does not refer merely to ceremonial defilement, such as the Jews not being able to touch a dead body. That made them ceremonially unclean. They had to go through a ritual to cleanse themselves before they could come into contact with other people, and with their service in the temple. This is not that ceremonial uncleanness. This is dirty on yourself. This is a personal filthiness that is placed upon your person, and upon your being.

In the 1 Corinthians 8:7, we have this word used where conscience is actually degraded. You are actually made filthy when you violate your own standards: "However, not all men have this knowledge, but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled." There is the word: "defiled." It's "moluno." Here, it is talking about believers who eat meat that has been offered to an idol. If you wanted to buy meat in the ancient world, the place you got the best cuts was at the local steak house, which they had in those days, which was located on the temple precincts. After they were through putting the meat on the idol's offer, they'd hang it up on the hook, and that's where you went to buy the best cuts.

Some Christians said, "That's been offered to a demon which is behind that idol," and they had problems of conscience to eat it. Paul says, "There are Christians who are grown spiritually mature enough to know that that's dumb. The idol is nothing, and that piece of meat is the best buy in town: Go for it." But if you're one of the people that has qualms of conscience, then it would be a sinful thing for you to violate your conscience, even if you're mistaken. You just haven't grown up enough as a Christian to be able to take that grace in stride. You would besmear yourself with the defilement, and besmearing your conscience. It is always out of line for a Christian to go against his conscience, even if you are hung up on some legalism that you need to get straightened out. Your conscience must be treated with integrity, for God gives guidance through that sense of right and wrong within us.

Another use of this is in Revelation 3:4, where we read, "But you have a few people in Sardis (in the church and Sardis) who have not soiled their garments ("moluno)", and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. Here, the word is used of people who, by evil acts, have soiled their garments. Their garments here are symbolic of their temporal fellowship. And Lord says, "Those who have not done that in the midst of this particular evil are going to stand before Me in clean white garments. Here, they have soiled themselves by their conduct.

So, here in Revelation 14:4, we read that these 144,000 are specifically the ones: "Who have not besmirched themselves with the 'gune' (women)." These men have not associated themselves with women in a way that has soiled their personhood – they who have been made in the image of God. It is a serious thing to soil your personhood, which has been made in the image of God. That is what you are besmirching. They have not reduced themselves to animal conduct, and so degraded their manhood. That's the other factor. Certain conduct is degrading to one's manhood. To degrade your manhood or your womanhood, in time, is to pay a very serious personal price. Such besmirching of one's person will create both mental and emotional traumas in your soul. You cannot besmirch your manhood or your womanhood by acts of evil without creating internal traumas.

Then he goes on to explain this. They have not defined themselves with women. How? "For" introduces the reason: "They have kept themselves." Actually, the word "kept" in the Greek language is the word for "are." They are something. It's the Greek word "eimi". Ii is the verb to be. It would be properly translated as: "These are ones who have not been besmirched with women, for they *are* something, and what they are is "chaste." The word "chaste" is this Greek word "parthenos." This word actually means "virgin." When it is used of males, it connotes chastity: moral purity; or, sexual purity. These 144,000 Jewish men have maintained their personal manhood, and maintained their personal moral integrity, in terms of obeying God's law governing human sexual relationships. They do not engage in illicit sex, and so they are morally pure before God.

The vital mission which has been placed upon these 144,000 Jewish men requires that they preserve their manhood with moral honor before God and man. The job to which they have been called (the mission which has been assigned to them), to proclaim to a dying world, to extend to it its final opportunity, to change their course and to preserve themselves from an eternity in the lake of fire. That's not a job for fornicators; for adulterers; or, for sexual perverts. These men have a message from God. Therefore, this is not a message for those who lack that chastity. What this is calling for is exemplary believers with moral integrity intact. Then they can be lion-hearted as they face the world. Then they know that there is not wearing away at them the corrosive quality of internal hypocrisy. They can face the world, and they can speak for the living God.

Moral purity maintained in a world of inordinate sexual evil, under the religion of the false prophet, is not going to be easy for anybody to do. Under the claim of human godhood, sexual sins are viewed as acts of a divine being, so they are not wrong. This is one of the doctrines of the New Age movement. Since you are God, you have not come to your God consciousness. You have not found who you really are, but you are God. Therefore, what God does is OK. Since you are God, whatever you do is OK. Therefore, you cannot be said to be acting in some immoral way just because you break the rules that God has set forth in the Bible.

**Temple Prostitution**

In the ancient world, therefore, the fertility religion of Babylon (which is what is going to be the basis of the antichrist's false prophet's religion) worshiped gods through temple prostitution. You contacted the god by sexual actions. Probably some form of this sexual violation and debauchery will be part of the tribulation universal religion, I don't doubt it for a moment. Some kind of fertility cult factor will be brought in as everything is moved back to the way it was in the Roman Empire of New Testament times.

**Biblical Sexual Activity**

These 144,000 men refuse to relate themselves to women in this sinful way before God, and that's what it means. Because they refuse to violate the moral code of God for human sexuality, they have not related themselves improperly to women, so they are chaste. There is a divine order for human sexuality. The Bible makes it clear that sexual relationships are reserved by God for a man and a woman who are married to one another. Such sexual activity is not defiled, but in fact, it is ennobling, and it is honorable in every way. The Bible is very clear that that is the pattern that God expects, not just of believers. Don't make that mistake. This is what God expects of all human beings. This is a divine institution, and therefore, it applies to believers and unbelievers.

Hebrews 13:4 says, "Let marriage be held in honor among all (believers and unbelievers), and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for fornicators and adulterers, God will judge. That's the point. The 144,000 know this well. They are Jews. They know the Scripture of the Old Testament. They know that fornication and adultery were capital crimes. People were executed for that when they were convicted of it. But the same action within a marriage relationship has a totally different consequence. Sex outside of one's marriage is defiling, and it is an abomination, and God will discipline those who do it.

We can't get into the discipline now. We'll probably touch upon that next time, but the consequences can be very severe. Ephesians 5:1-14 describe the picture of those who practice the violation of the moral code of God. Paul says, "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children." OK, God is holy. We are to walk in holiness. Then he says, "Walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself as a fragrant aroma offering. The he says, "Walk in love." Be imitators of God. God is love. Act in a loving way, as Christ demonstrated the love that sent Him to the cross.

Now of all things, what does he go on to in the third verse? He says, "Act in love." And how naturally it is to go into sexuality: "But do not let immorality, or any impurity, or greed even be named among you as is proper among saints." This improper sexuality should never be true of believers: "And there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting which you're not fitting, but rather giving of thanks." Instead of having a foul mouth with foul words and foul jokes to get a cheap laugh, there should be expressions of thankfulness to God.

Verse 5: "For you know with certainty that no immoral, or impure person, or covetous man who is an idolater has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." Now, before you jump to a false conclusion, do not think that verse 5 is speaking about unbelievers. Verse 5 is talking about Berean Memorial Church members. It is very important that you understand that: "For this you know with certainty – that no immoral Christian, or impure Christian, or covetous Christian who is in idolater (because covetousness is idolatry; it's worshiping your money) has an inheritance." It doesn't say, "Has an inheritance in heaven,” or "and inheritance in eternal life." No, don't twist the words. It says, "In the kingdom of Christ and God." He's talking about your rewards. He's talking about you shooting yourself in the foot when it comes to your eternal rewards as a believer. He's talking about you being a guy who's in the back row when he comes into the millennium, and was appointed his places of service.

**Jehovah's Witnesses**

The Jehovah's Witnesses say that these 144,000 Jewish witnesses (though they don't stress the Jewish part) are a group of Jehovah's Witnesses who began to be selected by God in the 19th, and they kept track of who was part of 144,000. Finally, they got so many Jehovah's Witnesses that they filled up all the slots. They thought they wouldn't have any problem because they said, "As soon as the 144,000 slots are filled, Jesus Christ is going to return." And as you know, if you were here at out Watch Night Party, you saw how often the Jehovah Witnesses have had to change their prophecies about the return of Christ. They had to change that one because they fill the slots and He didn't come. So, they said, "Oh, now we understand. We have a new life." That's the Jehovah's Witness term: "New light." "And our new light has revealed to us" (which is that they're bored in Brooklyn, New York – that's their new light source). They said, "We have a new light, and now we understand that the 144,000 (those slots) are filled. We will be the Masters, and all Jehovah's Witnesses who come in now will be the servants, serving the Masters." I wonder if they'd sell their place in the master.

This is wild, ignorant talk that has no basis in Scripture. We are talking about people who are believers who are going to heaven, but who live by the world's principles. There are plenty of Christians who are immoral, impure, covetous, and thus idolaters. They're not going to have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God: "Let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them. The sons of disobedience are unbelievers. God's wrath is going to come upon them for these very sins, and you as a Christian go out and do that? Don't be partakers with them in that: "But you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. So, walk as children of light, for the fruit of light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord." And you learn that through doctrine: "And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead, even expose them, for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed to the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, 'Awake sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you."

Come on, Christians, wake up. How many Christians need to wake up? How many Christians need to get out of their lethargic slumber and realize that the Lord is at hand? Now is the accepted time of salvation, and now is the accepted time of your investment in the things of your eternity. The Bible clearly condemns sexual relations outside of your own marriage, and whether you are a Christian or a non-Christian, God will discipline for that act. The Bible clearly condemns the fornication of unmarried people, and the adultery of those who are married.

I would add 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, which addresses this so explicitly: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? May it never be?" Or do you not know that there is a psychological principle involved here that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her, and has an effect upon your soul, a unity of soul that cannot be broken off again once this is done? For he says, "The two shall become one flesh. But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body." There is a variety of ways in which that is true, not the least of which is venereal diseases, and AIDS, and so on: "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own – immorality with a body in which God is present? For you have been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body."

American society today is a sewer of sexual sins which are being tolerated and justified. This is accepted now as the norm, and God is judging with death, and with emotional traumas, those who follow that course. A man who loves, esteems, and respects a woman will not defile her with violations of God's laws governing sexual relationships. Your personal sexual conduct will certainly reveal the quality of your own manhood, or the quality of your own womanhood. Marriage, by God's arrangement, sanctifies the sexual relations of a man and woman as an expression of genuine love. Outside of that, it's plain, pure, simple, unadulterated lust. It is defiling; it is degrading; and, it is destructive.

**Confession**

We would be remiss indeed, if having presented, just in a little way (and we've have a lot more to say about this next time concerning the code of sexual conduct), if we didn't say, "So what if you've already made the mistake?" I don't have to explain to this congregation the principle of 1 John 1:9. You understand that. You understand the confession. But I must stress to you that you have to do the other part as well. And that is to forget it. It would be a horrible insult to the grace of God for you to mull over; to meditate upon; to remember; and, certainly to have any guilt complexes over a sin once confessed. When it's confessed, it's gone. God has forgotten it, and He expects you to do the same. Do not insult Him by repeatedly coming back to it. It's in the past. It's done. That's how grace works.

Next time, we have to go into more details that give us a little better picture of understanding what it will be that these 144,000 men face in this horrible time of the tribulation, and the Word of God that they will fall back upon, that we must fall back upon. Please tell your friends that the next session will be an X-rated sermon, and that they should not attend. Thank you for being with us. We are dismissed.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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