

## Unfaltering Faith

Revelation 14:1-5

10/07/07

### Intro

For much of our study through Revelation John wrote of scenes of heaven. He described the One sitting on the throne of God having a scroll upon which was written the edicts and declarations of the events of the last days.

John also saw Jesus who was worthy to open the scroll and to break the seven seals with which it was sealed; each seal revealing awesome events of the Tribulation seven year period that is coming in the near future.

The seventh seal was broken and it revealed seven angels with seven trumpets, each revealing cataclysmic events that will destroy and devastate the earth as the wrath of God is poured out.

But here the scene is on the earth. In John's vision he saw Jesus standing on Mount Zion and with him were the 144,000 Jewish witnesses for Christ that we read about earlier in chapter 7. These 144,000 have been going through the Tribulation period and they are victorious through it.

What a contrast to our study last week where we studied the 'serpent of old,' Satan and how he deceives the nations and gets as many to falter as possible knowing that his time is short.

There is much to learn from these 144,000 who are truly overcomers. We can clearly see why because we have a powerful description of their character.

### **I. Victory Begins Where His Name is Written**

- Everyone will face difficulties in life, "In this world you will have many troubles," the Lord said. Some people rise in their faith and some falter. Here are some keys to increasing faith.

### A. Let Him Be Lord of Your Mind

- The 144,000 had the name of Jesus and the name of His Father written in their foreheads.
- This was a mark of ownership, but it also had symbolic importance that we can see far back in the Old Testament.

**Illus – Jordi's family each placed a mark on the items that they wanted to keep from the family estate. But in the Lord it's that and so much more.**

**We need to reserve not just our mind, but every aspect of our lives for Him.**

**Illus – I know many families that had all kinds of worldly things in their home before they came to Christ, but as a believer decided to pray over and anoint with oil each room of the house.**

**Deuteronomy 6:5-9, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

- Notice that in the context of loving God with their heart, He adds that they should bind them on their forehead.

- When your mind is the Lord's, the result is peace...

**Isaiah 26:3, The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You.**

**Psalm 19:7-11 Restoring the soul**

- Letting Him be Lord of your mind may mean that you're naïve of worldly things, but I would rather be naïve than an expert anyway.

B. There truly is power in praise

- John hears the voice of many waters, like the sound of harpists, and then they sang a new song which no one can learn except the 144,000.
- A new song in scripture is always good. It will be a declaration of praise and rejoicing.

**Psalm 98:1, O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him.**

**Revelation 5:7-10 The Four Living Beings and the 24 Elders sing a new song**

- One of the aspects of God's character is that He is joyful – in other words He's happy.

**Hebrews 1:9, "You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions."**

- One of most important expressions of joy is when there is a song in the heart.

**Illus – I was traveling with one of our elders, Greg, and we were driving down the road when out of the blue he said, "Quick, what song is in your head right now?" And I knew the answer immediately.**

**Illus – It doesn't mean that you're going through an easy time. When Paul and Silas were in Philippi, they found themselves in the inner dungeon after having been beaten with rods. But there was a song in their hearts.**

**Acts 16:25-26, But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.**

- Notice that they were not singing hymns of complaint, or hymns of whining.

## II. The Faithful Heart Brings Godly Fruit

- We are given a description of how they lived their lives and we see the holiness of their outward character in great detail.
- There are many things for us to apply to our lives as well.

A. Decide to follow wherever He goes

- There is mention here that these were chaste; meaning that they were never married and always pure. For that day of Tribulation, that would be wholly appropriate.

- There was group in the first century called the Essenes that practiced this, but for some strange reason, their sect died out (go figure).
- But there is great value in understanding the importance of being committed to following God's ways.
- That's how we can follow now, by following God's ways.

**App – though God's ways are not our ways, we know what they are and can change to be like Him. We also have the mind of Christ so we can also have His thoughts as well.**

**Isaiah 55:8-9, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."**

- His ways are grace, compassion, forgiveness, righteousness, patience, kindness, etc.

**I Corinthians 2:7-16 We have the mind of Christ.**

**Illus – one of the first praise songs that was written was one of the powerful, "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus." One of the most powerful lines in the song is, "the cross before me, the world behind me, no turning back, no turning back."**

**B. The fruit of our lips is key**

- Vs 5 - John wrote that the 144,000 did not speak lies, or in other words, there was no guile on their lips.
- Jesus taught that the fruit of our lives comes from what is in our hearts.

**Matthew 12:33-35, "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil."**

- The key is in understanding that the heart cannot be turned off and on – it's always on.
- Therefore what we must do is to speak no words of guile at home when no one else is listening.
- But in order to do that we must have the heart following after God and the words will follow as well.
- We also need to know that God's desire is that our words be sweet to the soul.

**Proverbs 16:24, Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.**

**Ephesians 4:29, Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for**

**edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.**

- C. The fruit that God desires is a changed life
  - John wrote that these 144,000 are the first fruits unto God – in other words, their lives are good and honoring to the Lord.
  - What is powerful about that is in understanding that they were living in the most difficult period that man will ever endure.

**App – The church in the first century was also going through a difficult period for the church and this would have been a great encouragement to their faith.**

**Illus – Fruit is one of the best things that God ever invented. It's good. The first fruit was considered the best!**

**There are two types of fruit in scripture that are considered bad; one is sour grapes – bitter. The other is fruit that are bad due to rottenness – sinful heart. They are fallen from the tree, no longer receiving nourishment from the tree.**

**John 15:4-5, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”**

- These 144,000 are wholly committed to the Lord and the result is holiness, a mind belonging to the Lord, a song of praise in their heart, flowing after the Lord, lips that are pure and fruit that is good.