

All Things New: The Sealed People of God – Revelation 7

1. “How are we all doing?” (*High, Low & Buffalo*)

- i. High – What was a high point in your week? What was good or went well?
- ii. Low – What was a low point in your week? What was a challenge, disappointment, or struggle?
- iii. Buffalo – What was something else that happened this week? It can be anything – interesting, random, weird, surprising, or completely normal!

2. “We’ve been trying to avoid fear and speculation in our Revelation journey. Instead, we’ve been focusing on seeing Jesus, discovering connections to the Old Testament, and being transformed in what we do, say, and believe. Which of these has been most helpful? Which has been most difficult?”

3. “Thanks for sharing! Let’s dive in. The book of Revelation was meant to be read out loud. Can one or two people read Revelation 7? Try to read a little *slower* than usual. As we listen, try to imagine what John saw.”

4. “How do we feel about what we read? What does reading this passage bring up for you?”

5. “Revelation is closely connected to the Old Testament. Can someone read Ezekiel 9:3? Then, can someone else read Zechariah 3:3-5? Finally, can someone read Isaiah 1:18?

What similarities and differences do we notice between these verses and Revelation 7?”

6. “As you can imagine, there are loads of opinions of the 144,000. Let’s talk about one possibility: the 144,000 are the redeemed people of God. In chapter 5, John ‘hears’ about the lion and then ‘sees’ the lamb, but the lion and lamb were the same. In John 7, John *hears* that there are 144,000 people (12 tribes x 12 apostles x 1000, which is a really, really big number = 144,000) and then *sees* the crowd from every nation, tribe, people, and language. What if the 144,000 is the same as the great crowd?

If you’ve never thought about the 144,000 before, how does this help you understand this chapter?

If you've thought a lot about the 144,000, how different is this possibility from what you've heard?

7. “Chapters 2 and 3 describe the churches that Revelation was written to. They were given specific things to know and do. Can someone read Revelation 3:4-6 and 3:17-18.

How would these churches see themselves in Revelation 7?

How could these verses change what we do, say, and believe?”

Optional: Break into smaller groups for this section

8. Revelation 7 shows those who have been ‘sealed’ by the Holy Spirit¹ have also come out of the great tribulation. ‘Tribulation’ is the same word John uses for ‘suffering’ in Revelation 1:9.

- a. *How do we wrestle with God’s sealed people experiencing tribulation or suffering?*
- b. *How have you experienced suffering?*
- c. *The churches in Revelation 2 & 3 are all encouraged to ‘overcome.’ What does ‘overcoming’ look like when experiencing suffering in your own life?*

9. The redeemed people of God have come through the tribulation without compromising. Where are you tempted to compromise, especially when experiencing pressure?

10. Re-read Revelation 7:15-17. Where does hope shine most brightly for you?

11. “Thanks for sharing _____. Can I pray for you?” Take time to pray for each other.

12. “Thanks everyone! Same time next week? Who will lead / host / bring snack / etc.?”

¹ Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:20-22