

Revelation 7 Who can stand?

Warm Up

Play a couple of rounds of **"last one standing."** Everyone stands up, then ask each person to name a City in the UK without the letter A. If you fail you sit down. Last one standing wins. Repeat with Tom Cruise films, food items without an E, or anything else you fancy!

Background and context

Revelation 7 is an interlude between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals. After the terrifying events of chapter 6, there is a question, "who can stand?" Chapter 7 answers this question, God's chosen, God's people. As always with Revelation, scholars have different views about the 144000 who were sealed. Some suggest it is literal, those saved from Israel alone. The issue here is that the tribe of Dan is missing, replaced by Manasseh. Theories abound about this—from idolatry to the antichrist coming from Dan. Others think that the number is symbolic. 12 meaning God's people. 12x12 meaning completeness and 1000 meaning vastness. For others, the 144000 and the great multitude are the same thing, described in different ways. Whatever it is, these are those who are saved by the grace of God. Those who recognise the Lamb as King and Messiah and worship Him.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Revelation 7. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. **Read v1-3.** What do you think is happening in this section? Why do you think it is happening?
2. A seal was a mark of ownership, authority and protection. What does it mean to you that God has "sealed" His people? What does it teach about God's character? **cf: Ezekiel 9:4-6, Ephesians 1:13 and 2 Timothy 2:19**
3. **Read v9-12.** How does the vision of the great multitude encourage you when life is difficult?
4. What does **"Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."** mean?
5. What is the symbolism of the white robes and the palm branches? What can we learn from them?
6. **Read v13-17.** What does the phrase **"washed...in the blood of the Lamb"** teach about salvation?
7. What does the great tribulation mean to you? Is it now as we are in the 'last days/ church age' or is it still to come?
8. **Read v15-17.** What blessings and promises will God's people receive? Which one gives you most hope?

Discipleship and Application

9. Which verse in this chapter seems to be the key to the whole gospel message and vision for God's Kingdom? Why do you think so?

Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.