

Now

by Paris Reidhead

God's sovereignty and redemption are demonstrated through the eternal now, and the Church plays a crucial role in mediating God's plan of salvation.

Duration: 44:53

Scripture: John 6:26-27, Revelation 13:1, Revelation 14:1-5

Topics: "End Times"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the contrast between the terrifying beast from the sea in chapter 13 and the glimpse of hope in chapter 14. The 14th chapter describes a lamb standing on Mount Zion with 144,000 individuals who have their father's name written on their foreheads. These individuals sing a new song that only they can learn, as they have been redeemed from the earth and are not defiled. The preacher emphasizes that material possessions and wealth do not bring true happiness, and that God's grace is abundant enough to redeem countless worlds. The sermon concludes with a question about how this redeemed company will reach God.

Transcript

We're only seeing five verses of this fourteenth chapter tonight. I believe that the picture is in great contrast to what we've seen, the vile, terrifying beast coming up out of the sea in chapter thirteen, Satan in all of his governmental power and his purpose to destroy, and then in the little beast, this one that had the horns like a lamb but spoke the message of the dragon, subtle, clever, destructive, defiling and destroying, fulfilling this purpose of humanism as we saw in the number 666, this which is completely contrary to everything that's of God. Well, it's been somewhat depressing, perhaps, to see the tremendous inroads that God is allowing Satan to make, but this fourteenth chapter is like the glimpse of the sunrise after a terrifying night of storm.

Listen to the words as I read them. And I looked, and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder.

And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders. And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.

These are they which were not defiled with women for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God. In the midst of this vision of the end times, or the times it should be from the time of the vision to the end, where it was given to John to see all of Satan's strategy and apparent success, here in the midst of the book, God raises the shade after showing what this night of sin will be, and gives that glimpse through the window that's going to reveal the time of victory of our wonderful Lord Jesus. And I looked and lo a Lamb stood on Mount Zion with him and hundred and forty four thousand having his father's name written in their forehead.

We've heard a great deal in the past, and perhaps you've read a great deal about the hundred and forty four thousand. Well, let's think of it and break it down. Twelve times twelve times ten times ten times ten.

And I would suggest to you, though I don't want to appear to dogmatize, somebody else may be equally right. Many of these things are like diamonds and will have more than one facet. But from where I'm viewing it in this study, I would like to suggest to you that this number one hundred and forty four thousand speaks of all of the redeemed of all ages.

The first twelve back to the twelve tribes of Israel. These that looked ahead to the one that was to come, the Lamb that was to be slain, pictured by all of the sacrifices in the tabernacle. Then the other twelve, speaking of that company under the ministry of the twelve apostles, who looked back to this focal point of history, to the cross, to the Lamb that was slain.

And ten, the number has been variously interpreted, but it seems like grace fulfilling all of its wonderful purposes. All of God's glorious design is fulfilled here. And so it is to us, at least in this study tonight, that this number, one hundred and forty four thousand, speaks of all of the redeemed, the whole company, the entire number.

Now known unto God are his works from before the foundation of the world. We've been seeing in these nights past that this is no accident, that when the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, he came for a definite purpose. The Father had given to him a people.

He said, all that the Father gives me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. And then again he said that other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them also I must bring. We understand, of course, that the gospel has gone out with this glorious, inclusive whosoever, whosoever will may come.

And we know that God is absolutely sincere in saying this, for God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But we also know that God knows the exact number and the exact individuals of those who will respond to the message of grace. We do not know who they are.

When we go into a new tribe, we don't know the ones that are going to come, but God does. How marvelous it is to find that he's prepared some hearts, that he's actually prepared hearts. I think it was some time ago that I related to you the experience of my dear friend, Dr. R. M. Thompson, going into Ethiopia as one of the first missionaries returning there.

And because the country was in great need, the mission allowed him to assist the emperor, Haile Selassie, as commandant of the non-existent Ethiopian Air Force. His job was to scour the Far East to get it. And in the course of this time, one day he came to the new air force, airport building, and as he walked in, this young soldier smartly saluted and then came to his superior officer and said, I must see that man.

When he came in and sat down in Bob Thompson's office, he said, I was sick, a Somali boy, and in my sickness when I was unconscious, a person appeared to me twice. He asked me both times, would you like to know who I am? The first time I said no. The second time I said yes.

He said, my name is Jesus. And then he said a man appeared next to him, the one in the dream or in the vision pointed and said, when you see this man, he'll tell you about me. And as he sat there, stood there in Robert Thompson's office, he said, and you are the man whose picture I saw.

Can you tell me about Jesus? Now this occasion when Bob Thompson was shown by Jesus to a Somali boy who was a Muslim, Bob Thompson was in the Canadian Air Force and had absolutely no intention of going to the mission field. But you see, there was someone that knew about Bob Thompson. And there was someone that knew that he'd be in Ethiopia and that the need would be such that the emperor would call on him because he was a pilot and would make him the temporary commandant.

And so when Haile Selassie came back, he said to the loyal father of this young man, what can I do to reward you for your faithfulness? He said, take my son to Addis Ababa and train him to be a soldier. And so here he was, his first assignment as a new soldier guarding the airport when the man whose picture had been shown to him by Jesus got out of the little jeep and walked in. And that day he had the joy of pointing him to Christ.

You see, known unto God are his works from before the foundation of the world. This God that we serve is a sovereign God. Oh, I trust that this rejoices your heart, that he sits upon the throne and he orders all things after the counsel of his own will.

Aren't you glad that he has all power? You know, if God just had great power, he'd frighten us. If he just had immense power, tremendous power, we'd be afraid of him. Because if he had limited but tremendous power, he might also have limited but tremendous wisdom and limited but great wrath.

But you see, since he has all wisdom and all justice and all holiness and all power, you have, you can put yourself, as it were, on the shoulder of this God. He would frighten us, he would terrorize us if he were just immense. But because he's infinite, we can worship him and adore him and love him.

And this God has anticipated everything that's ever going to be. You see, just as Christ was the lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, and all the details were put into the scripture, all the details, there in Psalm 22, David writing just the expression of his own heart, uses the very words that Christ is to use from the cross. The details are perfect.

Well, now how could it be that Isaiah described that which would happen to Christ and David and the prophets? Well, you see, God lives in only one time element, now. Now. Everything is now to God.

With you, because you're a creature that's bound by time and space with me, we live in now also. But our now is this little thin knife edge between yesterday and tomorrow. And it's, as it were, like paper that you would see here in the Times building as it speeds through the immense presses.

And if you put a knife edge there and the paper were to rush past this point, well, we live in this little point called now. It's just a fleeting passing thing, and the moment that you say, now, it's over. To us, the present is just this little speeding thing.

But with God, there isn't a great roll of yesterday and a dwindling roll of tomorrow, because the whole paper, as it were, is spread out before him. And his now reaches out to all that has ever been, and he sees it in the immediate. And it reaches out to all that will ever be, and he sees that in the immediate.

And so God lives in the constant environment of the eternal now. And thus David could speak of him in this capacity, saying, Thou hast beset me behind and before. Thou wast in my future, and Thou art in my past.

There's not a word in my tongue hasn't come out yet. There's not a word in my tongue, but lo, Thou, Lord, knowest it altogether. And so, here is the God, the eternal God.

And thus, before there was a speck of dust in the universe, God had seen his Son to the cross, and he had also sovereignly chosen the means by which the sacrifice of his Son should be made effective in the lives of men and women. That means was by prayer, and by witness and preaching, by the communication of the truth. God would furnish power, but the power that would accompany the preaching of the gospel would be a power that men could resist.

It would be the gentle wave of God's truth to the mind, and other men could resist this. My spirit will not always plead with man. Why do you resist the Holy Ghost? These are words that are used.

He pleads. Well, now you know well that if God used the same power in dealing with men that he used in creating the world, no man could resist such power. But the power that he uses is the power of love and the power of grace accompanying the word.

And men can seal their hearts against the Spirit of God and harden their hearts. He that being often reproved hardens his neck shall suddenly be destroyed in that without remedy. Now back there before the foundation of the world, God decided how people were going to be saved.

Christ would come and Christ would die and be raised from the dead, and the message would be preached in this loving, gracious power. Message sufficient that all who would could yield, but those who wouldn't could steal their hearts against it. And those to whom the word would be made effective by the means God chose were that number that he saw as the elect.

And when God set upon how men were to be saved, he determined who was to be saved. Do you see? When God determined how, he determined who. Perhaps if he had said that angels were to preach by skywriting, an entirely different company of people would have been saved.

Or if he had said the people would be saved by some great trembling that would seize upon them, an entirely different company of people would be saved. But he said it would be truth that should be brought to the mind and to the heart, and truth that could be resisted. In the day that God said man shall be saved thus, by the heirs of salvation proclaiming the truth of salvation, God determined who would be saved, because these means could by the means that God would use be effectual in these lives.

And this company is the company that the scripture calls the elect, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Now we do not know who they are. We only know this, that when the Lord Jesus

came, he was given a message to preach.

Had he preached any other message, he would have gotten an entirely different company. For instance, you recall in John the sixth chapter, on one day he made bread and fed five thousand people. And they said, why, this is wonderful.

You are our Lord. We are going to follow you and be your disciples. Well, that was all right, and the next day, however, they came back and they found that he wasn't there, and they saw the boats were gone, so they followed him and finally located him.

And they said, now, listen, yesterday we said we were going to be your disciples, but, you know, we got to thinking about it last night, and we really think you ought to do the works of a prophet. You ought to do something to prove you're the Messiah. Well, he said, I fed you with bread.

Oh, but that's the kind of bread we've been eating all along, just good, wholesome Galilean bread. Now, do what Moses did. Moses made bread come down from heaven.

Now that was something. That was something. All you did yesterday was just break the bread.

Oh, we know you only had two or three loaves, but after all, that's just the bread we've been eating. So you do something like Moses did. And then our Lord Jesus said, well, I am the bread.

He that eateth of me, except you shall eat my flesh and drink my blood, said he, you have no life in you. And when he said that this salvation consisted of a supernatural and personal impartation of Christ, a partaking of Christ, and that Christ had to become a joy unto them the same way that eating bread and drinking wine causes the bread and the wine to disappear as such and appear as strength and as health. So our Lord Jesus said that he would have to become flesh of their flesh and life of their life.

And they went away and forsook him. Finally he turned to the disciples and said, will you go away? They said, to whom can we go? Thou only hast the words of eternal life. But now this was how the Lord located those that were redeemable.

This is how he found his own, by giving the message to suit the crowd, he would have had an entirely different company than the company that the Father had given him. And so he had to be content with those that would respond to the truth that he was entitled and authorized to give. Because the Father said, now, if you'll preach this word, you'll get your people.

Preach any other word, you get somebody else's people. And therefore, our Lord preached only, he says, I only speak of myself. I speak as I receive commandment of the Father.

I do nothing of myself. He said, I've been given a message and this message I must proclaim. And the proclaiming of this message is going to be the means of securing my own.

They said, we won't come to you. And our Lord says, but all the Father gives me will come to me. You may not, but the ones he's given me will come.

Because he told me if I preached this, that those that he'd given to me would come to me. Well, now, what do we see? Our Lord Jesus has come knowing that there would be a people. And he is saying in his high priestly prayer, Father, all that thou has given me, I have kept, except this son of perdition.

And then he speaks of those that the Father has given him will come to him. Now, our Lord has gone to the cross. He suffered and died.

And his wounded side has provided salvation for a sufficient number that if every person that has lived represented a world of men as large as this, the death of Christ would have been sufficient. Don't ever make any mistake about this, dear friend. There is sufficient outpouring of God's grace and God's love in the death of Jesus Christ that ten million worlds like ours could have been redeemed by the sacrifice of God's dear son.

Oh, there's no want, there's no want in God's grace. And he can stand with outstretched arms saying, whosoever will may come. But having said that, we know that he has provided full and free and complete and perfect and eternal salvation.

But what is his plan, then? How is this company that we've read about in 14 going to get to him? You recall that dream that's been reported in so many ways, and probably mine is just as far from the original as the others. But as the Lord was ascending, an angel escorting him said, well, now, Lord, that you're coming back, how are you going to make known your death? Are we going to go, we who sang at your birth, are we now going to go and tell men about your death? No. Well, are you creating another order of beings to do it? No.

Well, how are you going to learn? Well, that little company that you saw there, they're going to tell them, well, Lord, what if they fail you? Have you any other plan? And in the dream the Lord says, no, they fail, I have no other plan. And so all that God did in Christ in reconciling the world to himself was committed to the Church. I think this is the reason why the Word says, I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me out of the world.

Our Lord isn't praying for the unsaved, he's praying for the saved. The saved are to pray for the world, but before you're going to pray for the world, the Lord has to have his prayer for you answered. And thus his prayer for you is that he might live in you with the same freedom and liberty that the Father lived in him.

You see, this is the glorious genius of the new thing of the Church. This is the wonder of our faith, that Jesus Christ by his death and burial and resurrection and ascension now is free to come into every one that he's redeemed by the Holy Ghost and live his life over again in them. And no wonder he's praying for the Church.

Can you imagine what will happen? Well, of course you can imagine what will happen, you don't even have to imagine it. Go back and read the Acts of the Apostles and you will see what happens when Jesus Christ gets the people in whom he can live his life over again. And this is why he's praying for you, that you will come to the place where you delight and desire and demand that the Lord Jesus live his life in you.

And this is the normal Christian life, where Christ has taken up his lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith and you've been filled into all of the fullness of God. And it's no longer you but it's Christ living in you and the doxology is appropriate when we hear Paul say as he gets this glimpse and vision of what it is in this full revelation and he cries now unto him that's able to do exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. What is this power that works in us? The resurrection life of Jesus Christ poured through you.

And this is what he's praying for because this is the means by which what he accomplished at the cross is to be mediated. Then you see is fulfilled his word which said after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ye shall receive power and ye shall be witnesses. Now the thing about this portion in Revelation 14 is this.

Everyone that's seen here is one that has been redeemed. And there's only one means of redemption and that's the preaching of the gospel and faith, repentance and faith. And so when you get this picture of Revelation 14 in these first five verses of this entire company that are seen by John is in the presence of the Lord, then you know that every one of them has come to Christ on a basis similar to your own coming.

Someone loved you and prayed for you and witnessed to you and on the basis of what you heard and saw and felt you bowed and repented and received Christ. All right? Here they are. Here they are.

This company that he has redeemed out of every kindred tribe and tongue and nation and people. And he's doing it tonight. He's doing it today.

Out in the Baleen Valley the gospel's been being preached. And some headhunter, some savage, some cannibal with human flesh still stuck between his teeth sits there picking them with the straw he's broken in the grass beside his cannibal feast and listens as the missionary or the Christian declares to him the fact that Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead. And into that heart wafted by the Holy Ghost comes this revelation of guilt and of sin and of need.

And some headhunter in the Baleen Valley today opened the doors of his heart and invited Christ in. And he's been born of God. And one day when you get home to heaven it will be discovered that on April 16, 1961, because someone had gone to the heart of New Guinea and someone was sitting down beside a jungle path talking to some headhunters that had been feasting on flesh of men, their brethren, that Jesus Christ came into their heart.

This is what's happening. This is what's going on. And we get discouraged because we see over us the dragon.

And there are these immense legs and these horrible claws. And he looks like a leopard and has claws like a bear and roars like a lion. And he controls governments and controls the whole society and atmosphere.

This terrifying beast of Revelation 13. And then the one with horns like a lamb. This subtle quiet one, the master of propaganda that has been working so steadfastly to destroy men.

So we see the satanic powers and all their wrath and the philosophies that are permeating and penetrating and capturing. We begin to say, is God still on the throne? Can God be doing anything? But yet, here's what John saw right there in the midst of it. This is what he saw.

A lamb on the mountain. A lamb on the mountain. And gathered around him were the redeemed of all the ages.

They'd come from every kindred, tribe, and tongue and nation. And with harps and with songs, they were singing that which no one could sing unless he had been redeemed. Only those who were redeemed could sing this song.

The song of Moses and the lamb. Unto him who loved us and who washed us in his blood. This is the song.

This is the song that no one has learned and no one can sing unless they've experienced. Oh, they can mouth the words. I suppose that there'll be multitudes in hell at some service somewhere saying, what can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

It wasn't that they couldn't say the words to tune or music, but they couldn't say them as the expression of their heart because they'd never known the joy that our salvation brings. Now notice this description of the redeemed in verse four. These are they which were not defiled with women for their virgins.

These are they which follow the lamb with us whoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Let's begin with that last clause for just a moment. They are without fault before the throne of God. Why someone might say, look here, here's a perfect generation.

Here's a race of people that have come into the world that finally have reached that apex of development where there isn't sin any longer. Is that it? No. Who are these people? Who are these that John saw? Well, you know, I think they were people just such as we are here tonight.

The off scouring of all things, the vilest of the vile, the lowest of the low, and the worst there are. For you know no one is a candidate for grace until he's been stripped and broken. You remember the other day we were talking to you about Leviticus 13 and this picture there of the healing of the leper that went from the top of his head to the sole of his feet.

There isn't any clean spot on him. He was pronounced clean. Then he was taken down and the water and the blood mingled with the dove slain, stained the wings of the little living dove.

The strings were cut and the dove now scarlet with the blood of his mate. The wings begin to beat and drop the blood and water upon the leper. When the wings no longer drop the blood, the little dove is released and he flies back into the sky.

What a glorious picture it is of the one whose blood and water gushed from his wounded side and who died just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. And we who were lepers, for this is God's picture of us, defiled within and without by this terrifying thing called sin. We were there, couldn't find a place on us that was clean, and we came, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

And then we saw the wounded lamb, his hands pierced, his side open, his life poured out. And we who were dead and trespassed in sins cast ourselves upon him and found that the blood and the water availed to wash away our sin. And we were cleansed.

Oh, the marvel of it. Oh, the wonder of it. All of our sin laid upon Jesus Christ.

Think of it. Christ died for our sins. Christ died for our sins according to the scripture.

Christ died for the ungodly. If I'm speaking to a wicked man tonight, a fallen wicked man or woman, I say to you that Christ died for the ungodly, died for sinners. He died to save the lost.

And you see him as he there takes you to himself and stands before the Father with all your sin laid upon him and dies under the load of your guilt. Your sin counted to Christ. But what's the other thing? When you come in repentance and faith and brokenness and helplessness and receive Christ, the other side of the same glorious coin, all the righteousness of Christ counted to you.

Listen to it. For they are without fault before the throne of God. Oh, how my heart aches for those poor hearts that in the delusion that Satan brings, say, I think I'll make it.

I think I'll get by. I'm doing the best I can. I hope my good works will outnumber my bad works.

You heard of the man who kept this little black book, his account, his daily ledger, one side his sins and the other side his benevolences and kind acts. And they were there. And when he was dying, he was sent for his son and said, will you go to my drawer and bring me my black book? For in it is my consolation.

And the boy came back and said, Father, your black book has been eaten up by worms and it's illegible. And this is exactly what happens when people trust in their own works, in their own righteousness. It's eaten up by the worms of God's wrath and there's nothing left in which to trust.

But the redeemed are those people that have seen themselves lost and fallen and unworthy and wicked and have stood hating their sin as candidates for grace before Jesus Christ. God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and save me for Jesus' sake. All their sin laid on Christ and the righteousness of Christ laid upon them and they are without fault before the throne of God, accepted in the beloved.

Oh, the wonder of it, the glory of it. But something else, because this has happened, these were redeemed from among men being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. You know the firstfruits is holy the Lord's and the redeemed are holy the Lord's.

And if you've been redeemed, you're not your own anymore. You've been bought with a price. You've been presented to the Son.

You're there. And just as when the Israelite would go to his field and cut the choicest of the heads of grain and bind them together and bring them as the first offering of firstfruits, so you were presented to the Lord Jesus Christ. And you're not your own.

You've been bought with a price and therefore you're to glorify God in your body and in your spirits which are God's. You're holy his. And this marks the redeemed.

Not only is their standing glorious without fault before the throne, but something has happened in their character. Something has happened in their hearts. Something has happened in their attitudes and they aren't their own anymore.

They belong to Jesus Christ. Notice also, these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever they goeth. You see the, those that aren't redeemed followed their own whim and their own fancy.

They were gods in their own right and their own name. They did what they wanted to do. But that which characterizes the redeemed is that they follow the Lamb.

You see they've confessed with the mouth Jesus to be Lord. They've renounced their right to rule and choose and govern longer. And they've said, Lord, thy will be done.

They follow the Lamb. And this characterizes the redeemed. Do you follow the Lamb? Is it in your heart to follow the Lamb? Is this the purpose of your life? The redeemed do.

And if you're redeemed, then before God, the one deep desire of your heart and longing of your spirit is that you should be able by his grace to follow the Lamb. And then we notice these are they which are not defiled with women for their virgin. This carries us back to that testimony of James who said, ye adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that friendship with the world is enmity toward God? For, said John, all that is in the world is the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

Any man loves the world, the love of the Father isn't in him. All that's in the world is going to pass away. And so here are a people that have not committed this horrible adultery, as it's called, with the God of this world, having loved the things of time and sense.

Oh, how subtle, how subtle is this appeal of the enemy, this terrifying appeal of Satan, who gets us to say that things have meaning of themselves apart from the purpose that they serve. That things are an end in the means of achieving and becoming and satisfying. But it isn't so.

It isn't so. This past week, as you know, I've been with my mother and family down in West Palm Beach, Florida, living there near, driving. We'd seen these pictures of opulence, these tremendous castles built along the Palm Beach area, and all of these enormous expenditures that produce these grandiose structures with everything that marks them.

But you know something about the people in them? They're just like you are. They have the same boredom, the same unhappiness, the same misery, the same... They're just people. It doesn't make any difference whether they live in a castle or a cottage.

But Satan's argument is, you know, sell your soul and sell your spirit to get this, because somehow if you have 40 rooms, you'll be so much happier, 40 times happier than if you have four rooms. It isn't true. It isn't true.

It doesn't work that way. But this is that lying, enticing thing which would have the human spirit prostituted for clay and mud and bricks that will return to the dust from which they've come. And then the enemy is trying to seduce men by saying, well, look, it's experience, it's sensual experience.

That's the thing, the lust of the flesh. And so we find our nation is a nation that's been wholly given over, it seems, to the idolatry. Not the worship of an image of Diana or of Juno or something else, but given over to the worship of sensual experience.

It seems to characterize the atmosphere. Most of the writing that's being done in the twentieth century has this as its theme. Well, what is it? It's that great effort of this little beast to seduce, saying it's experience that fulfills human personality.

This, of course, is a vile prostitution. The only thing that can possibly satisfy the human spirit is God. We're made to experience God.

We're made with an infinite or a capacity to know the infinite God. And we are this company of the redeemed or those that haven't sold their souls on this level of sensualism. They haven't succumbed to the blandishments of this lying little beast that says that the only thing that can satisfy is the lust of the flesh.

Then, of course, Satan's grand strategy is to get people that are surfeited with things and with sensual experience to say, well, what really, really meets the need is power. Power over one's fellows, position, influence. When people look up to you, oh, then you're happy.

But, of course, we know this too is another of his wicked lies. It doesn't meet the need because regardless of how much power you have and how big the kingdom you control, there's one that's over you. When the Messiah was finally played in London and Queen Victoria was there, and it came to the Hallelujah Chorus, there the queen took off the diadem that she was, the little coronet she was wearing, and stood in the presence of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

And thus every time now the Messiah is played, because a queen set the pattern, you'll know the audience will stand. Because a queen had discovered that being queen of a vast domain couldn't meet the need of the human spirit, that this didn't satisfy. It wasn't enough.

Something else was needed. And so we find here that they're described as those which are not defiled with women for their virgins. They've committed themselves to the Lord, and though they've lived constantly in an atmosphere that was totally assailing and constantly assaulting them, they didn't succumb to it.

They didn't give in to it. And oh my, the pressure that comes upon the redeemed as they walk in that very world that's controlled by Satan. And around every corner and every step are the enticements to somehow turn aside and go in the detour.

And oh, the barrenness that comes to the child of God, when for a few moments he allows himself, perhaps for a few days or weeks, oh, the barrenness that comes when one allows himself to go this way. It just has nothing in it to satisfy. And so we find that the redeemed were a people which had not committed this terrible adultery of friendship with the world that hated Jesus Christ.

They'd seen him. They followed the lamb whithersoever he went, and they just couldn't be drawn aside. Does that happen to you? Have you been redeemed? Are these evidences of redemption wrought out in your life? Look at them again.

See them again. No guile found in their mouth. Has your God done something to your mouth in taking out of it the desire to speak with guile? And they followed the lamb whithersoever he goeth, and they hadn't succumbed to the blandishments of this evil, siren-like world that entices men to sell their souls for a mess of pottage.

Have you been redeemed? Has the lamb come to the throne of your heart? Do you know if the lamb has come to the throne of your heart, you can go to the throne of his house and be there with that company? What can wash away my sin, for I speak to someone tonight that's come in with a load of guilt? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh, precious is the flow that makes me white as snow.

No other fount I know. Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Tired of sin, tired of guilt, its defilements, warping, twisting, destroying, come to Christ.

Come broken. Come helpless. Come at the end of yourself.

Come to take cleansing. Take purifying. Take redeeming, for he has it for you.

He loved you and gave himself for you. Let us pray. Father, one day soon heaven's silence shall be broken, and with a trump the archangel, with a shout the Lord Jesus shall descend.

The dead in Christ shall rise, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Father, if the magnet of thy presence were to sweep across this hall tonight, who would be left? Who would be left? Who would rise and who would stay? For in their heart there's nothing to which the magnet of his love draws.

Perhaps some even have a name to live, but have all but Christ. Christ, only Christ. Grant, Lord, tonight that some heart will be opened and someone will invite Christ our wonderful Lord to come in to save and to cleanse, to seal, to make whole.

With our eyes closed and our heads bowed, would you, if you are in need, make known that need to the Lord and to your own heart and to me by raising your hand and say, by raising it I need prayer, I need cleansing, I need forgiveness, I need Christ. Would you put your hand up and take it down again? We'll not embarrass you. We'll just pray for you.

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