

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Revelation 14:1-5.**
- B. Revelation is a book of the Bible that is made difficult to understand by men who insist on viewing the book superstitiously or by not applying sound hermeneutical principles.
- C. One such doctrine found in Revelation is often misapplied is that of the 144,000. Many have fancy and wild explanations as to who these people are and many times in these explanations ignore the context of what John wrote.
- D. This evening let us look at Rev. 14:1-5 and see who these 144,000 are.

I. SOME FALSE THEORIES ABOUT THE 144,000.

- A. Some think that only 144,000 people will be saved. The particular "church" who teaches this, is larger than 144,000 members which means they don't even believe everyone in their own group will be saved. How terrible that is! If this were true, one could really never know if they were saved.
- B. Some others think that the 144,000 will be caught up in the rapture, leaving the world as the true saints of God. The rest of the world will have opportunity to also go to heaven but the 144,000 by being the true saints will go first.
- C. Others believe that the 144,000 is figurative and does not mean that only 144,000 literal souls will enjoy the blessings described in chapters 7 and 14.
- D. And still others who hold that the 144,000 is a literal number of souls, will elsewhere in the book, speak of other such numberings as being figurative and thereby contradict themselves.

II. A SIX FOLD DESCRIPTION OF THE 144,000.

- A. To best understand who the 144,000 are--is to look at the context of Rev. 14 (and chap. 7) and see the descriptions given.
- B. First, **they are sealed servants of God.**
Christians are sealed in the HS (Rev. 7:3-4; 14:1; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 2Cor. 1:21-23; 5:5; Rom. 8:11). **(Rev 7:3-4)** saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads." **4** And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:
(Rev 14:1) Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb *was* standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
(Eph 1:13-14) In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, **14** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.
(Eph 4:30) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
(2Cor 1:21-23) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, **22** who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. **23** But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth.
(2Cor 5:5) Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.
(Rom 8:11) But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- C. Second, **those who have been purchased from the earth.**
All Xians have been purchased by God (Rev. 14:3; 5:9-10; 1Pet. 1:18-19; Ac. 20:28; Titus 2:11-14).
(Rev 14:3) And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.
(Rev 5:9-10) And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. **10** "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."
(1Pet 1:18-19) knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile

way of life inherited from your forefathers, **19** but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

(Ac 20:28) “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

(Ti 2:11-14) For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, **13** looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; **14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

D. Third, those not defiled.

The church is to be found holy and blameless by X (Rev. 14:4a; Eph. 5:25-26).

(Rev 14:4) These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These *are* the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

(Eph 5:25-26) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; **26** that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,...

E. Fourth, those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

To be a disciple we must learn to follow Jesus (Rev. 14:4b; Lk. 9:23; 1Pet. 2:20-21).

(Rev 14:4) These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These *are* the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

(Lk 9:23) And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

(1Pet 2:20-21) For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. **21** For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

F. Fifth, they are first fruits to God and the Lamb.

Christians are the first fruits unto God (Rev. 14:4c; Heb. 12:23; Jas. 1:18).

(Rev 14:4) These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These *are* the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

(Heb 12:23) to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,

(Jas 1:18) In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.

G. Sixth, no lie in their mouth, they are blameless.

Christians are to watch their speech closely (Rev. 14:5; Eph. 4:29, 31-32; 5:4; Col. 1:21-22).

(Rev 14:5) And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

(Eph 4:29, 31-32) 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, that it may give grace to those who hear. **31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

(Eph 5:4) and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

(Col 1:21-22) And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, **22** yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach--

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. Who are the 144,000? The answer is easy--they are Xians. They are:

1. ...the sealed servants of God.
2. ...who have been purchased from the earth.
3. ...who are not defiled.
4. ...who are blameless.
5. ...who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

6. ...who have no lie in their mouth, they are blameless.
- B. Since the 144,000 is a not a literal number, everyone who does the things characteristic of the 144,000 may be numbered as one of them.
 - C. To follow the Lamb means to do what He has commanded
 - D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.