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We finished off our Sunday morning 'diversity' series at Magdalen Road Church by considering the vision that Paul has in Revelation 7 of a multitude of worshippers gathering around the throne of God. There is some disagreement between church 'practitioners' when talking about diversity in church as to how diverse a local church ought to be, for example is it 'okay' to have multiple churches full of the same kind of person in a locality? i.e. there is diversity in the wider body of Christ in a locality rather than in each church....? Whatever our thought, there is agreement though on the fact that Heaven will be full of all kinds of people. Perfect diversity will be seen in the New Creation.

As we looked at v9 to 17 we saw that this passage is a culmination of a number of different themes threading their way through scripture. We focused in on three:

It's a place...

... with a broad guest-list

We've seen in previous weeks that God's plan for his kingdom is that it would be full of all kinds of people. He chose a single small nation for himself, that the nations might hear of him through them. God is not only focussed on a certain people group, but is worthy of worship by all.

Here we see the conclusion of that truth as A great multitude from every nation tried people in language or standing before the throne. God's kingdom is more than just a little bit of which we are a part.

... with the same dress code

Despite the massive diversity of people gathered around the throne, they are

beautifully united by the fact that they are wearing the same clothing. White robes represent both a victory but also purity-they have washed the robes in the blood of Jesus. There is no other way to get these white robes, They cannot be bought or earned or acquired by another means they have to come from a trust in Christ and his finished work on the cross for them.

We spoke of how this is the conclusion of an idea that began near the beginning of the bible about shame and clothing. As Adam and Eve walk out on God so they are immediately ashamed and seek to cover themselves-here we see the final perfect covering for God's people.

...with the same future promise

The beautiful conclusion to this passage is that God's people are promised intimacy with God in a perfect creation. Here is the hope of the gospel a final future without suffering as the Lamb becomes a shepherd and a shepherd leads them to the water of life. The God who made us will be the one who will wipe every tear from their eyes of his people we have a certain hope because of Jesus.

Here are some possible questions to help your groups think about some of these things:

What has made you think or chew the most from this series?

Have a look over the entire passage are there any recurring themes ideas or words?

What is this a passage about? Why is it such good news?

Do these future realities in this passage shape your daily life? How do they or how should they?

What are some of the challenges and out-workings from this series?