

# FOR GOD'S SAKE GROW UP

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## CONNECT BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING

- When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- Have you ever had a hobby that required a lot of practice to learn?
- What is the best gift you have ever received?

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## TRUTH UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING

The past eight weeks have probably felt a bit like boot camp. We've leaned heavily on the practical wisdom of the Bible to understand what it means to mature in Christ. We've focused a lot on the "how," so now we're going to cap it off with the "why." Why is it worth it to go through the often uncomfortable fight to grow up in Christ? We're going to find our answer in the culmination point of the story of the Bible.

### WHERE FOLLOWING JESUS LEADS US

**READ:** Revelation 7:9-12

**DISCUSS:** What do these verses say about the future hope of those who follow Jesus in God's coming Kingdom?

This passage is giving us a picture of what it will look like to join together in God's Kingdom with others at the end of time. The image depicts people of every ethnicity and culture gathered together in glory worshipping Jesus as King. What's more, these worshipers stand alongside the angels and elders in Heaven, indicating the eternal dignity of those in Heaven.

### HOW WE GET THERE

**READ:** Revelation 7:13-15

**DISCUSS:** How do these verses depict the means by which we all come to stand in God's presence praising him?

The depiction of those standing before God in white robes tells us that they have come out of the tribulation, and that they have washed their robes in the blood of the slain lamb. While we don't necessarily know exactly what the tribulation is, as a result of their trial, they stand before God's throne serving and worshipping him for all eternity in robes washed white in Christ's blood. In God's holy temple, he has promised that his mighty presence will keep and protect them forever.

## WHY IT'S WORTH IT

**READ:** Revelation 7:16-17

**DISCUSS:** How do we know that what God has promised in these verses is worth the fight for faithfulness and maturity?

God has promised to those who would fight hard to follow him, a future without the searing pain of sin. In being made finally and eternally right with God, we are also reconciled to ourselves, one another, and all creation. The future depicted is one in which all experience is characterized by the joy of God's comfort, provision, and care—he will truly "...wipe away every tear from their eyes."

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## GRACE

 SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS

In earlier chapters of the book of Revelation, Jesus is depicted as the slain lamb who enters into the enthroned presence of God, and it is he alone who is worthy to take authority from God's right hand, specifically because he has been sacrificed on our behalf (read: Revelation 5). Here, our attention is turned to the future vision of all Christians worshiping God, and God himself in his temple. But, it is by the blood of the lamb alone that we are able to stand in God's presence for all eternity. By his blood shed for us, we are reconciled to one another in love and peace, and to God in holiness—thus our white robes, cleansed by his blood of all stains and impurity. Apart from Christ, we have no future with God, and the promises of an eternity apart from pain and suffering become nothing more than a wish.

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## CHANGE

 APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS

- How does the vision of our future in Christ inform why we should want to more faithfully follow Jesus?
- When has it been particularly difficult to persevere in your pursuit of God?
- Which of the promises made by God in these verses means the most to you as you seek to follow him?

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## PRAYER

 RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER

- Pray that God would teach us to persevere in faith and obedience.
- Pray for wisdom to always keep the vision of God's promised future in our hearts and minds.