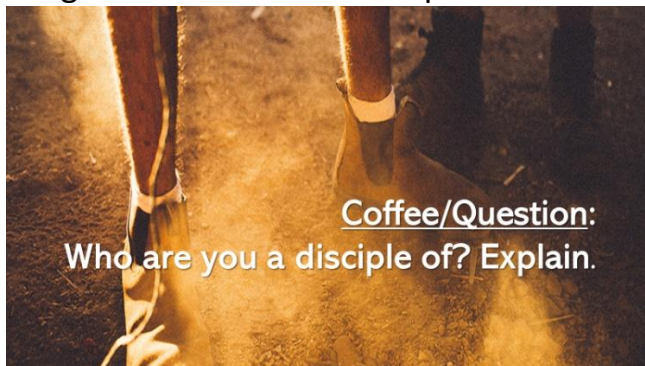




According to Darrell Johnson...

- Everyone lives with a deeply held set of pre-suppositions.
- Everyone embraces the values of some kingdom.
- Every human being is a disciple.
- Everyone gives their allegiance to someone or to some ideology.

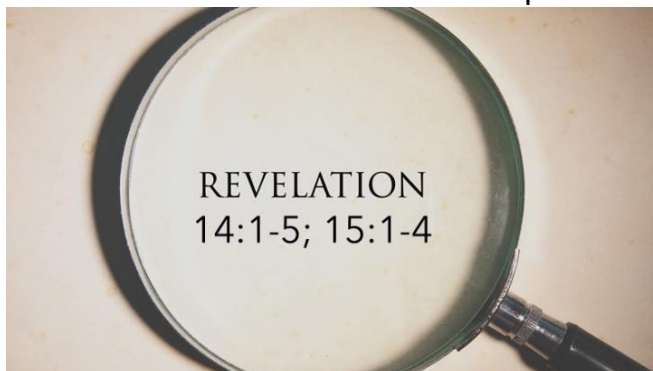
In light of this... our coffee question asks...



Western culture says there are many options from which to choose.

Revelation 12-13 reveals that from God's perspective there are but two.

1. To be a disciple of that which is completely incomplete – the gospel is both bad and good news....that which is a counterfeit – that which is influenced by the dragon and thereby worthless....
2. To be a disciple of the glorious Three-in-One who created all that is and who entered into human experience in order to rescue and save humanity.



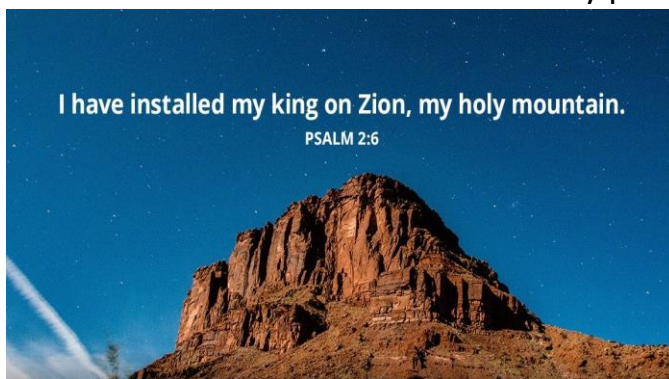
Prayer

Revelation 14

v.1 – this scene uses symbols pregnant with meaning for the follower of Jesus



- John saw... the Lamb...
...who is the resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ.
- John saw the Lamb... standing on Mount Zion...
...which would have immediately pointed the first readers to Psalm 2:6.



In this vision what John saw is what Philippians 2:9-11 describes –

Philippian 2:9-11
Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

...John saw Jesus... reigning from heaven with all authority and power over heaven and earth.

- John saw the Lamb standing... on Mount Zion... with 144,000...
In Revelation 7 we learned that this number is a symbol of the new Israel –

12x12
twelve tribes, twelve apostles

In Revelation 7 we learned the people of God come from every nation, tribe, people and language... that they are... in Darrell Johnson's words...

multi-cultural
multi-lingual
multi-racial
trans-national

DJ, p.270

In Revelation 7 we learned that....144,000...

12x12x10x10x10

– is a symbol to communicate the number of God's people ... a number which...
...as Revelation 7 says... "no one can count."

Our passage for today reminds the disciples of Jesus...

who
whose

...who... we are... because of whose... we are.

1. 14:3b,4b – the disciples of Jesus are...



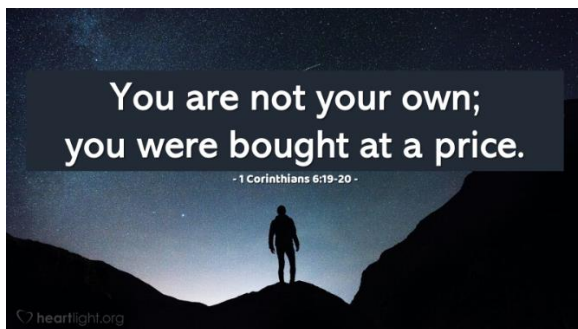
Followers of Jesus...we used to be slaves to sin and death.

We used to be unknowingly manipulated by the dragon to carry out his will upon the earth.

But all this changed when by grace through faith in Christ.... we were redeemed by the blood of Jesus; when we were purchased by God.

What does this remind us of?

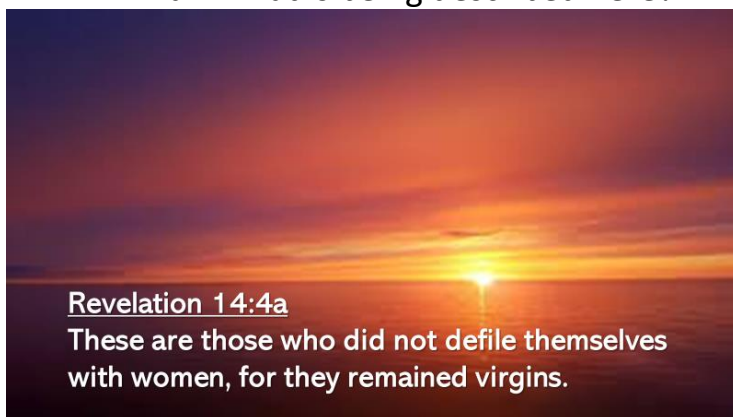
We are not our own.



Look again at v.1 – “...who had his name and his father’s name written on their foreheads...”

We belong to the triune God.

2. 14:4a – what is being described here?



- Is it saying that the disciple of Jesus is to be celibate?

Is it suggesting that sex defiles a person?

To read the text like this is to break with the rest of the NT, and particularly with Jesus who affirms and celebrates marriage as the good and right context for sexual intimacy.

- Some commentators suggest that the 144,000 are an elite spiritual commando squad of men who fight alongside of Jesus, who, as did OT soldiers, abstain from sexual relations when going into war.

This understanding does not fit with what Revelation 7 has already revealed about the 144,000 being the new Israel, the multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-racial, trans-national church comprised of both men and women.

- The third option is that this verse is a metaphor of the kind of relationship the church has with Jesus Christ.

Look at Ephesians 5:31-32:

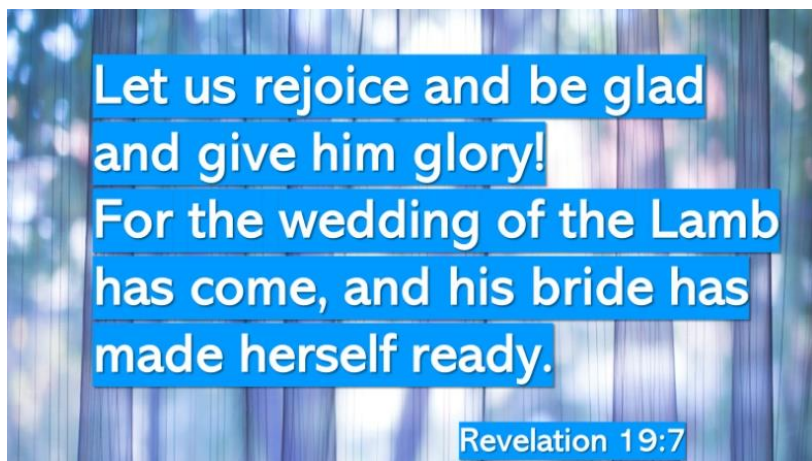
**AND THE TWO
SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH**

This mystery is great;

**but I am speaking with
reference to
Christ and the church
Ephesians 5:31-32**



Now look at Revelation 19:7.



The Revelation in chapter 14 and 19 uses the analogy of a marriage engagement to portray the kind of exclusive relationship the disciples of Jesus have entered into with Jesus; where we are faithfully committed to him, and he to us.

What is being communicated is that the disciple of Jesus does not give themselves to another god, and in doing so, commit spiritual adultery.

Jesus alone is the lover of our soul.

We have no other gods but him.

3. 14:4b – a disciple... follows Jesus wherever he goes.



Follower of Jesus...

- You are in Sooke because Jesus brought you here.
- You are in the neighborhood in which you live because Jesus led you there.
- You are in a particular vocation because Jesus guided you into that vocation on the basis of natural abilities and interests, and then training which he helped you to master.

We follow Jesus because we have learned over and over... that he is trustworthy.

Regarding the past 16 months... it was Jesus who led his church into an extended time of pandemic.

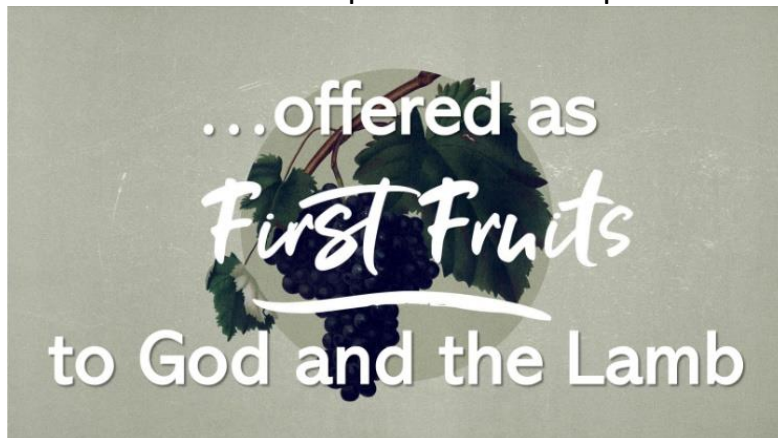
Is this not our common testimony?

That the Spirit of God has been active teaching us... to be still and know that he is God; to find our contentment in him; to re-order our priorities to reflect his pre-eminence in our lives.

Jesus... who led us into this season... will lead us out of it... and into the purposes he has for this local church and for his church in Canada and globally.

The disciples of Jesus follow him... going wherever he goes... in trust that he knows best how to spend our lives.

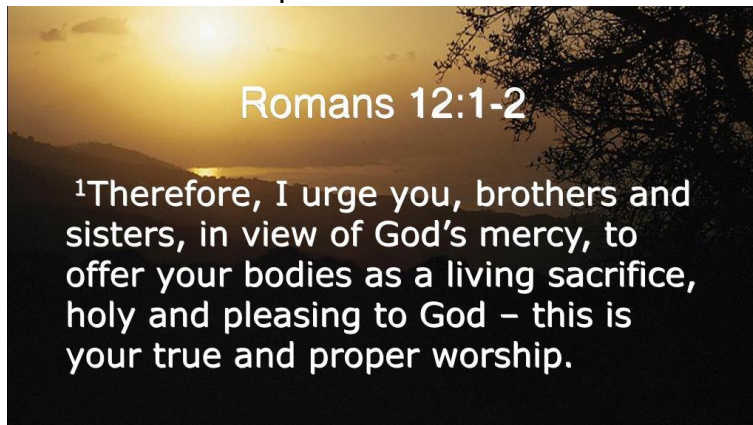
4. 14:4c – the disciples of Jesus are purchased and...



First-fruits in the OT were given to God... they were a sacrifice of gratitude and of faith for the harvest to follow.

The church of Jesus still offers “first fruits” in sacrifice but it is not from our gardens or fields or orchards.

Romans 12:1-2 explains the sacrifice now offered... we offer our bodies to God.

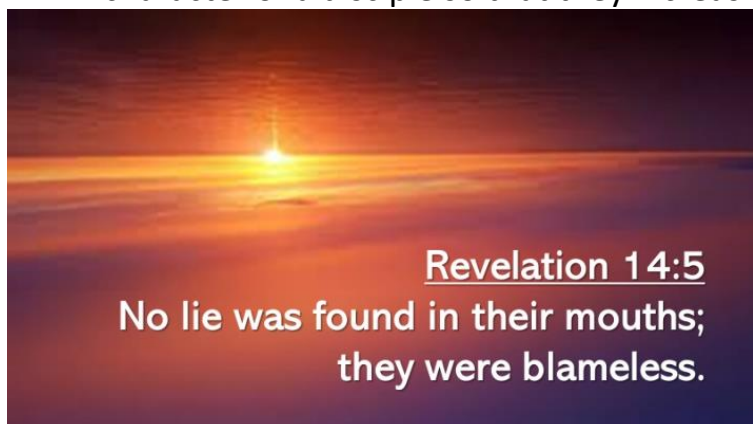


We do so because...



We offer ourselves to God... we lay down our lives in this present time... fully confident that a “much greater grace” is coming... the grace of God that will save us completely... body, soul and spirit.... and make everything in the earth new.

5. 14:5 – the work of the Holy Spirit in this present time is to transform the character of a disciple so that they increasingly become like Jesus.



Jesus said of himself...

“I am the way and **the truth** and the life.”

John 14:6

In his first letter, Peter quoted from the prophet Isaiah, saying of Jesus, 2:22:

1 Peter 2:22

“... **no deceit**
was found in his mouth.”

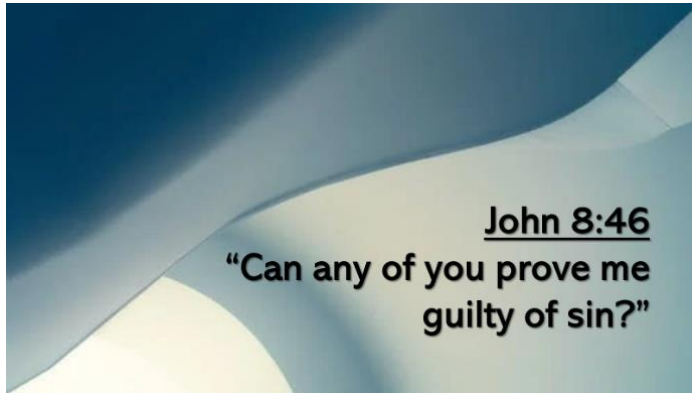
Like Jesus, the character of a disciple is being transformed so that they...



...as Ephesians 4:15 says, are those who “speak the truth in love.”

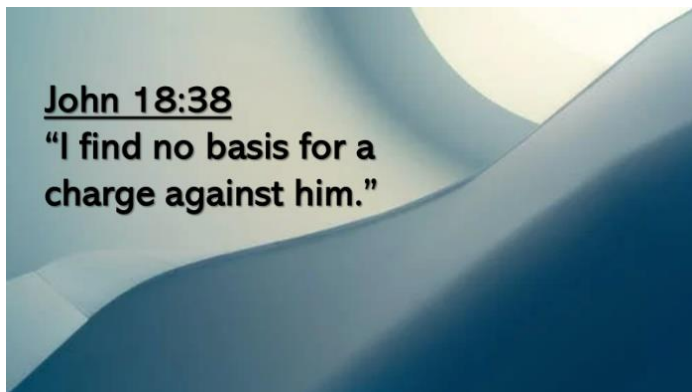
The second character quality mentioned about Jesus’ disciples is that they are blameless.

To a hostile audience Jesus once asked, John 8:46...

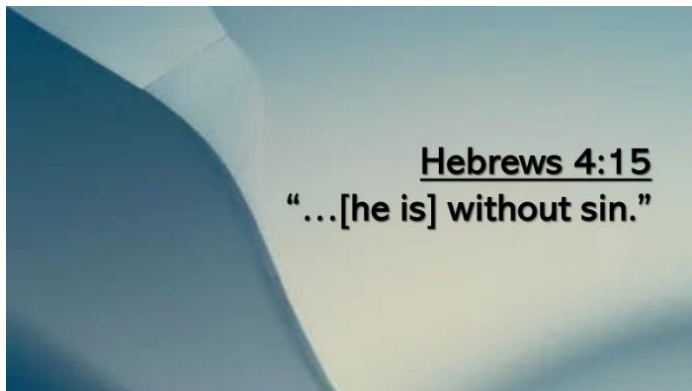


No one did.

Pilate said to those who wanted Jesus crucified...



The assessment of Jesus' character is best summed up in...



When verse 5 describes the disciple as being blameless... is this saying Jesus' followers are perfect?

Absolutely not.

But Jesus' disciples live blameless lives when they practice 1 John 1:6-10:

1 John 1:6-10

"If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

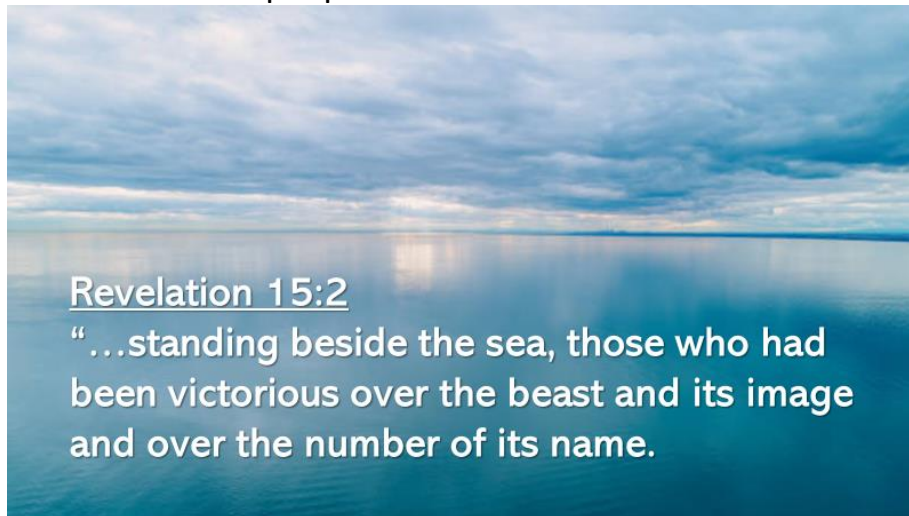
1 John 1:6-10

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and **purify us from all unrighteousness.**

If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us."

When a disciple confesses their sin, thereby putting it under the blood of Jesus, they appropriate the grace of God that forgives... and cleanses... their heart and mind.

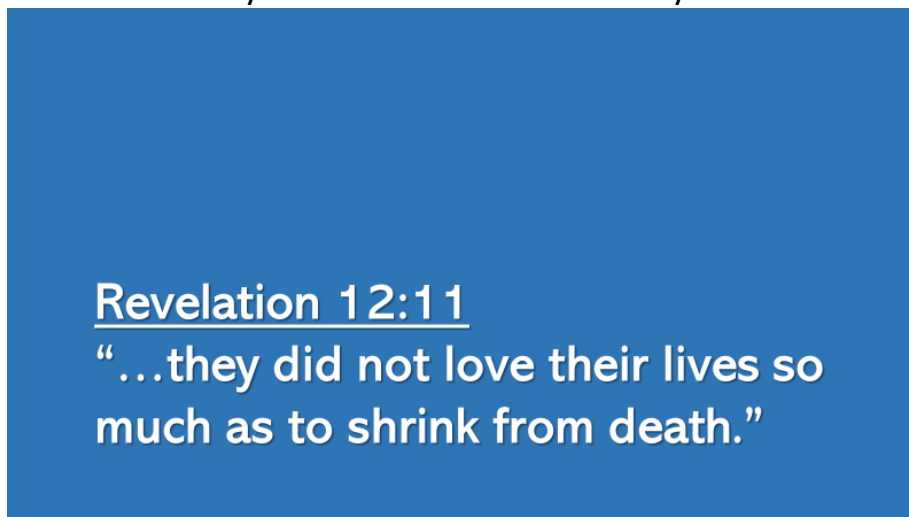
6. 15:2 - the people of God are overcomers.



God's people overcome the beast's efforts...

- to force them to compromise
- to sideline them
- to isolate them
- to impoverish them

Remember what Revelation 12:11 said of those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony –



But how do the people of God overcome?

Is it because they have a strong will? No.

It is because we trust in a strong Savior.... who is completely complete, completely sufficient; completely able.

7. 15:3-4 – the people of God sing...

Revelation 14:2

And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps.

And [those who had been redeemed from the earth] sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders.

...and our songs reveal the hope with which we live.



15:3 says the people of God sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. Moses' song celebrated the victory of God over Egypt, which pointed ahead to the greater victory to be won by the Lamb over sin, death and the devil.

Look again at the words of the song sung in verses 3-4.

God's people remember and praise his great and marvelous deeds!

God's people remember and praise him for his...

- Justice
- Holiness
- Worthiness

This song is saturated with Scripture taken from...

**Exodus 15, Deuteronomy 32:3;
1 Samuel 2:2; 1 Chronicles 16:9**

**Psalms 86:9-12; 92:5; 98:1-2; 99:3;
111:2, 9; 117:1-2; 139:14; 145:17**

**Isaiah 12:2; 66:19-21; Jeremiah
10:6-7; Micah 4:2-3; Malachi 1:11**

What is this saying to us?

We do not sing to God out of their own imagining.

Darrell Johnson writes, **“We sing out of God’s self-revelation.”** p.277

We sing of who God is and what he has done.

This is why it is so important that our songs...

... speak accurately of who God is and of his glorious acts....

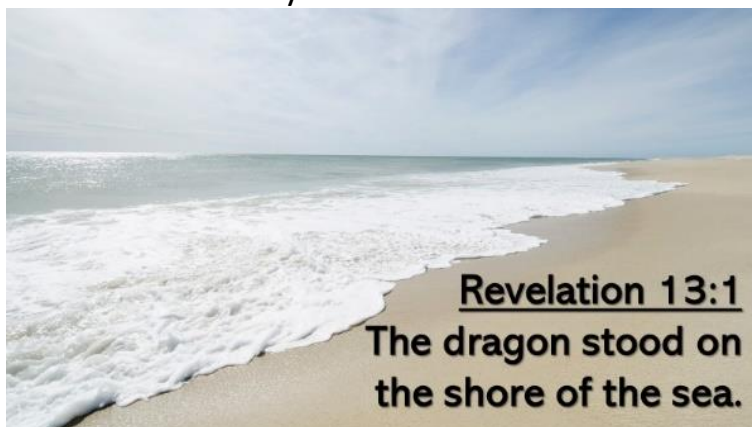
...and that they be...God focused and gospel saturated.

The other emphasis we need to see is where, according to the Revelation, the people of God sing.

We have already seen scenes from eternity that reveal we will be a singing people in the time of the new heaven and the earth.

But here in Revelation 15 we are reminded that in this present time, the followers of Jesus are also a singing people.

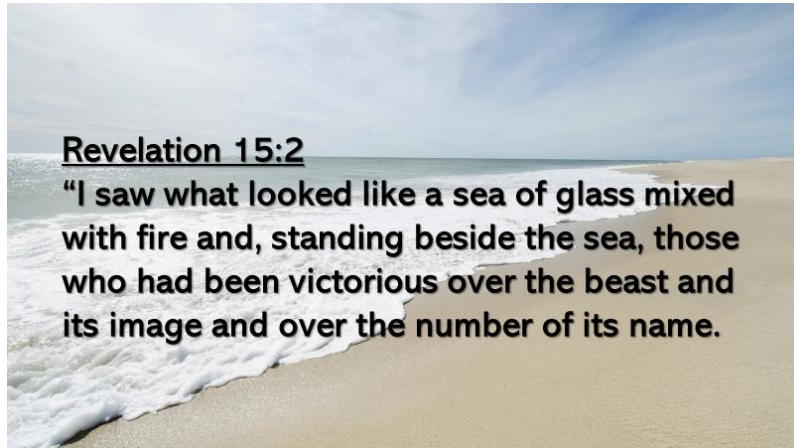
Revelation 13:1 says...



**Revelation 13:1
The dragon stood on
the shore of the sea.**

The dragon is active in this world, and in the lives of humanity because the human heart has been radicalized by sin.

Revelation 15:2 says...



The people of God no longer are a people whose hearts have been radicalized by sin and manipulated by the dragon.

- We are a people whose lives have been purchased with the blood of the Lamb and whose hearts have been radically transformed by the grace of God.
- We are the people of God who in response to such marvelous grace... willingly and gratefully offer our lives as a living sacrifice to God.
- We are the people of God, who in response to such great love... fiercely love our Savior... and will give ourselves to no other god.
- We are the people of God, who in response to Jesus who came into the world to save us... follow him wherever he leads us.
- And we are a people who sing...
 - ... in this present time...
 - ...and in every circumstance...
 - ... in the night and in the day.
 - ... in our disappointments and when hope is realized.
 - ... in our sorrows and in our joy.
 - ... in our pain and in our health.

This is who you and I are because of whose we are!

This morning we come to the Lord's Table with joy and gratitude to remember him who gave his life for us.

He was made sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

We praise God that his mercy is more; that his grace is greater than our sin!