**Revelation 19**

Introduction to 2015

I. New Year’s Resolutions are in the air

II. What if our one resolution for New Year’s and all year round was to pursue a “sincere and pure devotion to Christ?”

2 Corinthians 11:2-3: I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

III. The difference between merely believing something and actually living as though it’s true

A. We all believe good diet and exercise will lead to a healthy life, but are we found living out that belief?

B. It’s possible to believe Christ is our savior and king in our heads but to not live that belief out in tangible ways in our daily lives

1. Who am I actually trying to please in my daily decisions?

2. Where am I actually looking for joy and satisfaction in my daily life?

3. On what or whom and I actually depending when challenges arise?

Introduction to Revelation

I. Revelation wasn’t written as a crystal ball to satisfy our curiosity about future events. It was written as a discipleship book calling us to remain faithful to Jesus Christ.

II. The main purpose of Revelation is essentially to call us to a “sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” In its original context, the persecution (and seduction) of the Roman empire was the main force tempting Christians away from their faithfulness to Christ.

III. Revelation 19: the wedding of the lamb

A. There is a great tone of celebration to this chapter (“Hallelujah” 4 x)

B. God is celebrated because of his judgment on the evil and faithlessness on earth (v. 2-3)

C. God is celebrated because of his salvation for the faithful (v. 6-9)

D. The image of the wedding

1. Jesus is our groom: on the day he returns, he will be full of joy and anticipation, beaming as he sees his bride (the church)

a. Jesus is regularly presented as a groom in scripture

b. examples: wedding at Cana, Revelation 2: “you have lost your first love, Revelation 3: “I stand at the door and knock”

2. We are his bride: on that day, we will be clothed in white, fully ready to meet our groom and celebrate with him forever

a. Jesus himself prepares us for that day

v. 8: “fine linen was given her to wear”

-see Eph 5:25-27

b. We prepare ourselves for that day

v. 7: “the bride has made herself ready”

v. 9: “fine linen stands for the righteous deeds of the saints”

-see Eph 2:10

3. What would it look like to live every day in light of that day?

IV. Conclusion

A. We belong to our groom. Jesus is not just a king who wants our allegiance; he is a groom who wants our hearts

B. How can we live as though we belong to him? How can we pursue a pure and simple devotion to him?

C. Make an honest assessment of your life

1. Lord, what’s getting in the way of a pure and simple devotion to you?

Ex: materialism, ambition, the need for others’ approval, busyness, theology

2. Lord, what would you have me do differently?

Ex: do I need to protect something, pursue something, or confront something in my life?

**Discussion Questions**

1. Do you have any personal resolutions or goals for this coming year that would be helpful to share with others?

2. Consider the basic call of a Christian to a sincere and pure devotion to Jesus. How does that idea intersect with your life at this time? At this time in your life, what is getting in the way of that, if anything (see the end of the outline for some examples)?

3. As you consider the call to a sincere and pure devotion to Jesus, is there something you want to do differently in this new year? For example, maybe there’s something you want to pursue more, or maybe there’s something you want to protect, or maybe there’s something you want to confront.

4. On Sunday the following statement was made: “Revelation wasn’t written as a crystal ball to satisfy our curiosity about future events. It was written as a discipleship book calling us to remain faithful to Jesus Christ.” How does that view agree with or confront your own past assumptions about Revelation?