Sent to the Nations

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9–14).

What a joy to share a devotion with the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, women who have God's own mission heart beating within them. Over the years I have been privileged to work with the LWML in various capacities, and what I have learned is if you want to get something done, give it to the women of the LWML. Their passion for mission is an example to the Church of the calling God has placed on all of us as His sent ones.

In our text, we have this beautiful picture painted for us by the Apostle John showing the multicultural nature of God's love for the whole world. We know it well: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). He loved the whole world! That includes everyone! Here, in our text, God is gathering His family. People from every tribe and every nation are coming together to worship the Risen Jesus! It was beyond John's ability to even count them all. What a vivid reminder of God's call and desire for His chosen people to reach out to people of every tribe and nation, to reach all people with the Good News of salvation through Jesus. This reflects the heart of God, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Now we find God's heart for the world beats through people just like you and me.

It does not take much research to discover that almost every part of the United States has experienced population growth over the last decade, and the growth is projected to continue as new people come to our country from all over the world. It is also no surprise that in many places the growing population is made up of people from all tribes and nations. Friends, this simply reminds us that all around us the fields are wide open for harvest and God is sending each of us to reach out in the name of Jesus, the very Lamb of God.



Jesus sends us into the world with such a powerful message of hope. It reflects the words in our text: "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Revelation 7:10b). As we hear it, this is a proclamation. In our text, though, it is the affirmation of the truth of God's Word. In John's setting no one needs to be convinced or converted. They are all gathered because someone told them about Jesus, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We get to share this message with a world mired in darkness and despair.	
The text goes on: Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:13–14). The elder knew who these people were! They were those made clean through the blood of Jesus. This includes each of us! But it is more than just us. It is all who have believed the promises of God, who have received His grace and forgiveness, and who have faith in Jesus and all He accomplished for us on the cross.	
This great multitude of believers is gathered around God's throne because someone took the time to share the love and forgiveness of Jesus with them. Somebody took the time to go in the name of Jesus and share the hope we have in Him. In John's vision, this awesome congregation of believers, gathered in unity of heart and mind, focused on Jesus. Is it any wonder they were rejoicing? As we live as missionary people, as we live as Lutheran missionary people, He fills us with His Spirit and with His joy. He gives greater purpose to our lives as we are inspired and enriched by His Word to connect people to Jesus and to build His Kingdom. This is the true work of the Church. It is all about Jesus.	
What joy one day to be part of that multitude gathered around the throne of the Lamb worshiping Jesus together! Who in your family, your neighborhood, your workplace, your school, your grocery store, or who, dare I say it, even in your church, needs to know Jesus and His salvation? He is sending you! I pray you can answer His call with joy.	
Prayer: Dear Jesus, by grace You have made us part of the multitude which will one day gather at Your throne. Help us be responsive to Your Spirit as You send us into the world to share Your love, hope, and joy! We pray this in Your name. Amen.	_
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