

## Revelation 14 The 144,000 and Being Found Faultless

**Re 14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.**

Brief Idea: The big question we should ask about the 144,000 is “how may I be part of this group?” Other questions (related to the inclusion of deceased persons and/or the literalness of the number) can not compare to this one.

The idea of men being found “faultless” when Christ returns is a thoroughly scriptural idea. This brief study is an abridgment and modification of a larger article available at [www.bibledoc.org](http://www.bibledoc.org) entitled “Perfection in the Last Generation.”

The reader will be delighted to find that final-generation character development is not an obscure doctrine or a strained one, but a plainly taught and oft repeated truth.

That the last generation will be “wholly” sanctified, blameless, without spot, holy, and will even attain “perfection” can not well be disputed biblically.

### Summary

Abundant evidence in the New Testament affirms the truth that the last generation will reach a condition akin to the ripening of a harvest field. This condition is described in such detail in the several passages that it is possible to say several things about it with confidence.

First, it is the expressed hope of Peter, Paul, Jude, James, and John that the last generation will be like Jesus in ways no other generation of believers has been.

Second, this condition is associated with an end of the judgment in the heavenly sanctuary and will, when reached, conclude the continued need for that judgment.

Third, the Spirit of Prophecy and the gifts were given to the church in the last generation specifically to bring this condition to the church.

More than these, the Bible distinguishes between our part and God's part in the process of "wholly" sanctifying the church. God's part is to finish the work, to do it thoroughly, and to patiently wait for it to be accomplished. His responsibilities free us from concern regarding the timing of the close of probation.

The various prophets used a variety of terms to express the character of the last generation. These include:

- "spotless"; "without spot"
- "wholly" sanctified
- "no guile"
- "blameless"; "without blame"; "unblameable"
- "without wrinkle"
- "perfect as pertaining to the conscience"
- "shall do no iniquity"
- "shall be like Him"

"ripe"  
"perfecting holiness"\*  
"faultless"; "without fault"  
"a perfect man"  
"the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"  
"without rebuke" "irreprovable" "unrebukable"  
"mystery of God shall be finished"

These terms are used in conjunction with references to Christ's coming. Sometimes they are used in ways that show that God's people will experience a time of testing of their ripened condition just prior to the Advent. The following phrases, **showing the relative timing** of this ripened experience, are taken from the passages. They answer the questions, "When will men be found blameless?" "When will the harvest of the ripe persons be?" "When will spiritual stability be paramount?"

"the harvest is the end of the world"  
"stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"  
"the day of the Lord"; "the coming of the day of God"  
"waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ"  
"blameless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ"  
"in the days of the 7<sup>th</sup> angel, when he shall begin to sound"  
"be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus."  
"stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness. . .at the coming of our Lord"  
"to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."  
"keep the commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing"  
"keep you from falling and present you faultless before the [his] presence"  
"the remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity"  
The 144,000 "are without fault before the throne of God."

Finally, the "acknowledgment" of these realities, that the last generation will experience the completion of the mystery of godliness, is a key point on which Laodicea is urged to unite. Col. 2:1-2.

Indeed, the message to her includes a hint that those among her that "overcome" will in a special manner share in Christ's privileges because, as He says, they have overcome "even as I have overcome." Revelation 3:21.

We are far from even the acknowledgment of this.

### **The Pioneer's Question**

While our Lord Jesus Christ has always been the Sinless One, the Holy One, His return to earth is heralded in Hebrews as being particularly "without sin," in relation to His bearing of the sins of the world.

**So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9:28**

These sins have been either laid to the charge of those that would not accept Deliverance, or blotted out for those that have accepted it, and Jesus returns as a King bearing them no longer.

An understanding of the rites pointing to this truth led early Adventists to question to what extent the Remnant would be ripened prior to Christ's coming. Sins that would be committed during the final scenes of earth's history presented a problem in the types and shadows.

How could they be blotted out when the work of judgment was completed, probation closed, and Christ was descending in the clouds of glory? They found that the Bible indicates that a special work of purification will prepare the church for this crisis.

**The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Zephaniah 3:13**

The language reminds us of the 144,000.

**These are they that follow the Lamb wherever He goes. . . And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. Revelation 14:3-5**

Consider the parallels.

Remnant	144,000
No deceit in mouth	No guile in mouth
feed and lie down safely	follow the <i>Lamb</i> wherever
Shall do no iniquity	Without Fault

What does it mean to be "without fault" before the throne? Whatever it does mean, the phrase and others like it *are used repeatedly in reference to the last generation.*

Last day men are to be "diligent to be found...without spot and blameless," 2 Peter 3:14. God's part is to wait while we do due diligence. 2 Peter 3:15, 9.

The class who are searching their souls for defilement, the very ones most inclined to be discouraged with what they find in their souls, they are the ones for whom Christ waits. It is for them that He has delayed his Coming.

And while Peter once mentions that the final generation are to be found "without spot and blameless," he also says that Paul addresses these end-time facts "in all his epistles."

**2Pe 3:16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.**

### **All Paul's Epistles**

The idea that the last generation will be found "blameless" or will be completely ripened or sanctified, can be found in the following passages:

- 1 Corinthians 1:4-7
- 2 Corinthians 7:1
- Ephesians 4:12-15
- Philippians 2:14-15

Colosians 1:20-28

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13; 5:23-24

1 Timothy 6:14

His other epistles (See Romans 16:25-27; Galatians 3:3, 2 Thessalonians 3:16-17, etc.) address the means of sanctification, the importance of endurance, and other aspects of what we find in 2 Peter 3.

## The Passages

**I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation [margin] of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:4-7.**

If we work backwards through this long sentence, we find that we are called to an experience “in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It consists in being “blameless” in that day. To give us that experience, we have been given a continuing confirmation right down to the end of time.

That confirmation is a “gift” given specifically to those that are “waiting for the revelation” of Christ in the end of time. That gift is otherwise known as the “testimony of [Jesus] Christ.” It was given to the church of Corinth, and enriched them in all knowledge and speaking.

The “Testimony of Jesus [Christ]” is indeed a spiritual gift.

What is the purpose of this end-time granting of the prophetic office? The living testimony was granted that the church may be found “blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**2 Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

**7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

After listing the various gifts of the Spirit Paul explains their purpose in the church.

**For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: Ephesians 4:12, 13**

In other words, the “rain” of the Spirit that expresses itself in the gift of prophecy (see Joel 2) will fall until the harvest field of the church is ready for harvest. That is the purpose of the gifts, and the specific reason they are revived in the time of the judgement.

This ripening is manifest in the settling into the truth so that one can not be moved.

**That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but [on the contrary] speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow into him in all things.” v. 14-15.**

These passages parallel well the following testimony:

Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads--it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved--just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming. *Maranatha* p. 200

### **Our Part and His**

**And *the Lord* make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end *he may stablish your hearts* unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**

This growing love is the condition of being found “unblameable in holiness before God...at the coming of our Lord Jesus.” And who is the active agent in these verses? “The Lord” is “he” that “may stablish your hearts.”

It is we, however, that are to labor to love the classes of people that are especially prone to be weaned from our affection. They include those, our authorities, who “admonish” us. They take in the “unruly” and the easily discouraged. Those that injure us are to receive good at our hand as all others do.

**And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves.**

**Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

**Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.**

**And the *very God of peace sanctify you wholly*; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, *who also will do it*. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24.**

We are given to rejoice, pray, thank continuously. The passage expands our source of directives to include modern day prophets, though they must be thoroughly tested. Those that prove true are to be held too stiffly, as if there would be a movement to undermine their authority. Finally we are to be careful of appearances. Like Daniel, we are to repel the temptation to withdraw from public faithfulness.

But then the passage changes *abruptly*. While we have our little tasks to do, it is God that will sanctify us “wholly.”

We will be brought to a state of being “blameless” sometime just before Christ’s coming. The prayer of Paul is that God may *preserve* that state until the end, something only possible if it is achieved before that time.

God's work will be to preserve the ripened grain through the troublous time. He is the one that will not let the smallest grain (See Amos 9:9) slip through the sieve in the sifting process.

**And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. . . . to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:**

The work is done by virtue of Christ's death, and is connected with the sealing process. Under what condition can we expect to be presented "holy and unblameable and unreprouable" when He appears?

**If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard . . . . Whereof I am made a minister, . . . to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Col. 1:20-28.**

The message preached is both a "warning" and a "teaching" to "every man" that God intends for him to be presented "perfect in Christ Jesus." When? When the mystery is finished, just prior to the end of the world. It is prior to the end, for it is finished "in the days . . . . when he shall *begin* to sound." (Revelation 10:7)

If the mystery is to be finished then, prior to the greatest time of trouble, then those that are "finished" will stand through that time. ***We are little surprised that the completion of the work is everywhere connected with being grounded and settled.***

**"But thou, man of God, flee these things [the love of money, foolish and hurtful lusts and] fight the good fight of faith. . . . Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 1 Timothy 6:14**

What kind of sound doctrine will church members not endure in the last days? The Laodicea of Paul's day needed to acknowledge the reality of character perfection, the mystery of God. He wished "that"

**their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; Col 2:2.**<sup>1</sup>

## Other Passages

### *Jude*

**Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Jude 21-24**

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<sup>1</sup> See verse one where this is addressed to Laodicea.

We are to be presented “faultless” at the “presence of his glory.” But for that, we must be kept “from falling” during the most trying time of earth’s history. The promise is that God is able to keep us during that time. Then are we saved by our steadfastness? No, the credit goes entirely to “the mercy of our Lord Jesus.”

And what is our part in preparing for this crisis? We are to “keep” ourselves “in the love of God, looking for the mercy.” Our focus on Christ’s character will have the desired effect on our own. Our growing love will make us steadfast.

### **Hebrews**

Perfection is a theme of the book of Hebrews. Paul faulted the ceremonial rituals as ineffective in “that [they] could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.” Hebrews 9:9.

The rites were symbols of a truly effective service that could, on the contrary, “purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” (v. 14) by the ministration of the blood of Jesus. This perfection was not that justification experienced by the Patriarchs, for they had not received this perfection when they died, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Hebrews 11:40.

The perfection offered in Hebrews 9 was the type of perfection that would have made the continuing sacrifices meaningless.

**For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then they would have ceased to be offered because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. Hebrews 10:1-2, margin.**

Once the cleansing process is finished, the worshippers will have no more, as it were, lambs to slay. Symbols could never clean a heart, and so the first tabernacle was to repeat its lessons over and over. The gospel has power, on the other hand, to bring a man to the state of being “wholly sanctified.”

As God had purposed “before the foundation of the world” that the image of God should be restored in man after his fall, we will be “holy and without blame *before Him* in love.” Ephesians 1:4.

Then will be proclaimed the final sentence:

**He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Revelation 22:11**

Some have used this passage as evidence that not all true Christians will have reached the state of “holiness” at probation’s close. Their argument separates the class of the “righteous” from those that are “holy.” Can this argument be used backwards? Are there unjust men who are not filthy?

Such a thought is common in the world where it is said “he is a good man.” But it is offensive to God. “You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, ‘Wherein have we wearied Him?’ When you say ‘everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord.’” Mal. 2:17.

Without Jesus there is no man that is not both unjust and entirely filthy. And the scriptures we have examined so far give us no ground for expecting a translated man to be unready for the trials that precede his translation.

## 1 John

**No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. . . Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have *boldness in the Day of Judgment*: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:12, 17, 18. See 1 John 2:5.**

“Through obedience comes sanctification of body, soul, and spirit. This sanctification is a progressive work, and an advance from one stage of perfection to another.” *My Life Today*, p. 250

**Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 1 John 3:2-3**

When, according to these passages, will we be like Him? When He appears. Does that level of development find expression in the church in the time of John? No, it does not yet appear. What is the fruit of this belief in those that have it? They purify themselves. What end are they seeking? To be pure “even as He is pure.”

**But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. Revelation 10:7.**

**For a good summary of what we have learned so far...go back and read the first page again.**

**-- The End.**