

Lent, Day 24
Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Revelation 14:1–5

A few years ago I was at a cabin and while in the washroom I stepped onto the bathroom scale. I was dismayed to see that my weight was over 200 pounds. I looked up where my BMI should be for my age, gender, and height and learned it was in the range of 147 to 174 lbs; 160 lbs would be ideal. So I decided then and there that it was time for me to do something about my weight.

At one level this decision was about my own self-care, but there were other levels too. I realized that by indulging my bad eating habits over the years I had given permission to and taught my family to indulge in similar unhealthy habits. So, by establishing better eating habits, I hoped to influence their eating habits too. I also recognized, that as a pastor, I was asking my congregation to lead disciplined lives, yet I was living in undisciplined ways when it came to eating—and it showed! I realized I needed to model a disciplined lifestyle, not just spiritually, but holistically too.

We have met the 144,000 already in Revelation and we know that they are symbolic of a great multitude. The symbolism around them here is that they remain faithful even to death through persecution. What is significant for us to note is that they are described as the first fruit. There is more to come. More specifically, there is more to come because of the witness of these first fruit. Their faithfulness inspires faithfulness in others.

This is what living in community means. Our actions are at one level simply faithfulness to Jesus. However, there is a social dynamic. Our actions inspire actions in others. Unfaithfulness will lead to unfaithfulness; faithfulness to faithfulness. Part of our calling is to pay attention to how we are living so as to encourage and inspire others to live with no lie in their mouth and being blameless.

Prayer

Lord you are writing your name on us. We ask that you form us into a community of faithfulness. Help us to live in such a way that others are taught to follow after you without fear. Amen.