

19.09.2020 A MESSAGE WORTH SHARING

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people — saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water’”
Revelation 14:6, 7

The good news of the gospel is that though all mankind is unrighteous and worthy only of the wages of sin, Christ has redeemed all mankind by His death. By His life, death and resurrection He has overcome sin and death and the Devil and provides forgiveness and righteousness for all. This is the gospel, the good news of God’s salvation. It is called the everlasting gospel, because it is eternal – the plan to save mankind was made in eternity past by the Trinity.

Genesis tells us Creation and the chaos caused by the Fall. The Gospels tell us the story of how Christ redeemed Mankind here on planet earth. Revelation tells us that the climax of salvation history is near.

Revelation is a wonderful book. In it we are assured that all that was lost in Eden will be more than recovered.

In Genesis there is the serpent; in Revelation he is condemned to eternal death (2:10).

In Genesis there is the curse; in Revelation there will be no more curse (22:3).

In Genesis there is sin and death; in Revelation there is no more sin and death (20:14)

In Genesis man loses access to the Tree of Life; in Revelation the Tree of Life will be in the midst of the City (22:2).

In Genesis God walked and talked with man; in Revelation God’s dwelling place will be with men (21:3).

But the reason for the recovery is Christ Jesus. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (the book of Revelation calls Him the Lamb 28 times, more than any other book in the Bible); He is the Risen LORD exalted to the right hand of God the Father; He is the great High Priest and He is the coming King.

Four times in the Book of Revelation, Christ states that He is the Alpha and Omega (1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:13). He is the Beginning and the End (1:8, 21:6, 22:13). He is the First and the Last (1:11, 17; 2:8; 22:13). He is Jehovah, the great I AM, for He calls Himself by that name in Revelation 1:8: *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,”* says the Lord, ***“who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”***

In Revelation, Jesus is returning to earth as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will finally overthrow the Enemy Satan, and the kingdoms of this earth where he has ruled; Christ will destroy sin and death and the grave which are the consequences of following Satan.

Having done this, Christ will bring in the universal reign of the Kingdom of God... *Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him; that God may be all in all. 1 Corinthians 15:28*

What is my destiny? What is the destiny of the church? What is the destiny of this world? All our answers are found in the finished work of Christ.

God’s people are called to proclaim this eternal gospel to the entire world (for Christ has redeemed the world and His offer of salvation is universal) so that the world will hear the gospel and be given a chance to respond to it before Christ comes in glory. This is the present truth we are called to proclaim.

Revelation’s End Time Focus

The focus of the book of Revelation is the second coming of Jesus in glory. It describes Christ’s triumphant return to earth and the events leading up to it. Throughout the book, we are also exhorted to be partakers of God’s kingdom, instead of following Satan and his unholy trinity.

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. Revelation 1:7

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" Revelation 11:15

And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." Revelation 19:6, 7

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." Revelation 22:7

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. Revelation 22:12

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. Revelation 22:17

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22:20

Revelation's End Time Message: Revelation 14:6-12

The mission of the church in these last days is encapsulated in the three angel's messages of Revelation 14:6-12.

1. A call to share the good news about God to mankind; He is not only their Creator, but because of man's rebellion, He is also their Redeemer. He has redeemed them from sin and death and destroyed the works of the Devil. Those who respond to God's grace will worship Him. They will be His witnesses in the hour of His judgment.
2. Because Jesus has destroyed the works of Satan (1 John 3:8), the destruction of Satan's Kingdom and its principle of self-glory, symbolised as Babylon, is certain. By warning mankind of the consequences of following the principles of Satan and this world, we are calling them yet again to choose God; to acknowledge Him as Creator, Redeemer and righteous Judge.
3. All who choose the gospel will live by the FAITH OF JESUS; His faith led Him to a total, unwavering commitment to the will of God and total dependence upon God to make that will real in His life. To do the will of God always is entirely the same as keeping the commandments of God.

The Wheat Harvest and the Grape Harvest (Revelation 14:14-20): The Consequences of our Choices

Once men and women have chosen who they will worship, there are 2 harvests. The first harvest of wheat (Rev 14:14-16) is reaped by the Son of Man. The second harvest (Rev 14:17-20) is reaped by an angel who casts this grape harvest into the winepress of the wrath of God.

This passage has language very similar to Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares found in Matthew 13:24-30. Here too, there are 2 harvests. The Master in the parable says:

He said unto them, An enemy has done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while you gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together all the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

In Revelation 14:14-16 we find the harvest of the wheat; those who have chosen to worship God and give Him glory. God will gather them 'into His barn'; they will be safe during the harvest of the grapes – the outpouring of God's wrath.

Revelation 14:17-20 describes the harvest of grapes – those who have refused to worship the true God; fearful is that harvest.

Jesus described it to His disciples thus:

*Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that sows the good seed is the Son of Man [which is Christ, the gospel]; The field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sows them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth: Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father. He who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matthew 13:36-40*

God's Final Appeal

In these last days, as the Day of the Lord draws near, there are '*multitude, multitudes in the valley of decision*' Joel 3:14. Like Elijah we are called to make the choice clear to all mankind "Will you worship God or worship Satan?" Their decision will have eternal consequences – eternal life to those who worship God and eternal death to those who worship Satan.

'The issue in the final crisis will be worship. Only God is worthy of worship (Rev. 14:7; 19:10; 22:8-9), and to worship anyone else is an affront to Him. The two groups in Revelation at the time of the end are identified as those who worship God versus those who worship the dragon and the beast. The final test will not be denial of worship, but rather who is worshipped.

Three groups of people exist today: those who love the gospel and are committed to God, those who hate the gospel and God, and the vast majority of people who are indifferent to or ignorant of the gospel. The last group is not necessarily against God, nor has it necessarily sided with Satan.

However, Revelation 13 makes it clear that as the end of time approaches, polarization will take place, and all will have to make a stand for either God or Satan. One group will worship and fear the true God (Rev. 11:1, 18; 14:7; 19:10), and the other will reject the gospel and worship the dragon and the beast (Rev. 13:4-15; 14:9-11; 16:2; 19:20). The key issue in the final crisis will be centred on the matter of proper worship. Christ's end-time followers will be characterised by their total commitment to God and their readiness to obey his commandments, including the one that points to the true day of worship to God, the Creator and Saviour (Rev. 14:7, 14).

Total commitment to God and love of the gospel is the secret of victory for God's end-time people in the closing days of this world's history.' *Ranko Stefanovic: Revelation.*

Conclusion:

The threefold message of the church in the end-time to a world that is under condemnation is the restoration of the true gospel – the good news that Christ has paid the penalty for sin, He has removed the guilt and condemnation of sin and He provides His righteousness as a gift both imputed and imparted. We are called to draw men to Jesus, by lifting Him up. We are called to demonstrate the power of the gospel by denying self and trusting God to reveal His righteousness through us (Romans 1:16, 17). Our Sabbath-keeping is the sign of the Holy Spirit's seal of righteousness by faith – we have trusted in God to accomplish all our salvation and we rest in His finished work. We are to warn the world of the consequences of rejecting so great a salvation, for the judgment is at hand. And we must search our own hearts, and ask God to reveal to us if (as individuals) we have any form of the spirit of Babylon within us.

"He (the Lamb) is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."
Revelation 17:14
