

SERMON 8

(Homecoming Sabbath)

The True Gospel

(Revelation 14:6-12)

INTRODUCTION

The story goes that on one occasion the great evangelist Billy Graham was preparing to get on an elevator; being a recognized public figure it was very common for people to identify him with some ease. This occasion was no exception and a man who was also waiting for the elevator recognized him, so he asked:

“You’re Billy Graham, right?”

“Yes,” Graham replied.

“Well,” said the man, “you are truly a great man.”



“No, I’m not a great man,” Graham replied. “I just have one great message.”

Dear young people, we too have a great message. The book of Revelation presents God’s last invitation given for these days. This message is known as the triple invitation of the gospel or, as it is commonly called, “The Messages of the Three Angels.”

DEVELOPMENT

I invite you, on this occasion, to read together in Revelation, chapter 14,

verses 6 through 12 and consider God's last warning to mankind:

Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

A second angel followed and said, “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,’ which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.”

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.

Before addressing the elements that make up the message of the three angels it is necessary to underline some important aspects that we must know:

First, let’s notice what the content is. The message of the three angels is the eternal *gospel*. Do you know what

the term *gospel* means? It means “good news,” and it is used in the Bible to designate the good news from God, that in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus man finds the only means of salvation.

The *gospel* is what God did, is doing, and will do through Christ for the salvation of everyone who believes. Dear young people, the *gospel* is Jesus! In his person the whole *gospel* is summarized, for *“there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we can be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Second, to whom it is addressed.

The message of the three angels is of a *worldwide character*. The eternal *gospel* must reach *“those who live on the earth – to every nation, tribe, language, and people”* (Revelation 14:6). All human beings, regardless of nationality, language or social position, must be confronted with the truth. Everyone must decide for or against the *gospel*!

Finally, the way it is to be preached.

The message of the three angels must be proclaimed with a *loud voice*. Dear young people, the expression used here in Greek –the original language in which Revelation was written– is *megafone*. Sound familiar? Hence the word “megaphone”; this is a device that

serves to increase the volume of sound and diffuse it. The message must be proclaimed with power!

With these clarifications in mind, we are ready to study the meaning and importance of each of the messages of the three angels.

1. FIRST MESSAGE: A CALL TO WORSHIP

The first message reads as follows: *“Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”* (Revelation 14:7).

This first message can be summed up by three verbs: “Fear God... give him glory... and worship.” This sums up the response that must be given to the gospel: a response based on love and gratitude to God for what He has done for us in Christ.

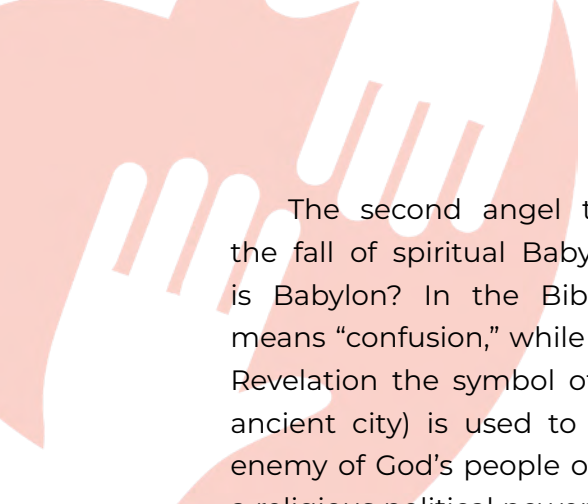
But what does it mean to fear God? You may think that it is to be afraid of God but let me tell you that to fear God is not to be afraid of him. So, what is it? According to the Bible, it is to live in obedience to his commands. *“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

We are commanded to give *glory*. We glorify God with our lives and good works. *“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”* (John 15:8). *“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16). It is important that you understand, dear young people, that your good works are not meant to save you, but to glorify the God who has saved you!

Finally, we are commanded to *“worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the spring of water”* (Revelation 14:7). God is the creator and is the only one who deserves our worship. The final struggle between good and evil will revolve around worship. Who will we worship: God or the dragon? Dear young people, we must be clear that God is the creator and the only one who deserves our worship.

2. SECOND MESSAGE: A CALL TO THE DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH

The second message says, “Babylon, the great city, has fallen, for it has made all the nations drink of the wine of the fury of their fornication” (Revelation 14:8).



The second angel tells us about the fall of spiritual Babylon, but what is Babylon? In the Bible that name means “confusion,” while in the book of Revelation the symbol of Babylon (the ancient city) is used to designate the enemy of God’s people of the last days: a religious political power that attempts to dominate the entire world before the Lord’s return.

This power is intended to “deceive” the world with the teaching of false doctrines. Dear young people, the message of the second angel calls us to stand firm in biblical convictions and to defend them. Therefore, it is important that you stand firm in God’s truth!

3. THIRD MESSAGE: A CALL TO FIDELITY

The last Gospel message reveals:

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or hand, he too will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which has been emptied pure into the chalice of his wrath; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and the Lamb; and the smoke of his torment rises for ever and ever. And those who worship the beast and its image, and no one who receives the mark of its name, have rest day or night. Here is the patience of the saints, those who keep the

commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:9-12).

The third message is a warning from God, which clearly specifies the consequences of joining the forces of evil. Punctually, three different facts are forbidden: worshipping the beast, worshipping the image of the beast, and receiving the mark of the beast. This is the most solemn message found in the Bible and the last to be announced before the coming of Christ. If I had to sum up the third angel’s message in one expression it would be: Remain faithful!

Yes, dear young people, the message of the three angels is a call to adoration, to the defense of truth and to fidelity. It is the eternal gospel of God’s grace manifested in Jesus Christ, which must reach with power all the inhabitants of the earth.

CONCLUSION

During this week we were studying God’s message as presented in the book of Revelation. We live in a time when deception is the order of the day! However, in this time God has called *you to proclaim* the eternal gospel *with power*.

You may feel that you do not have the necessary preparation or that you

do not have enough talents to preach; however, I assure you that more than your *ability*, God is interested in your *availability*. Remember Moses? He did not have the ability to accomplish the work God had entrusted to him, he even told God that he did not know how to speak! But Moses surrendered his will and God used him with power!

Remember Jeremiah? When God called him, he felt afraid and said he was just a child, but he trusted that God would be by his side and fulfilled the command entrusted to him!

Remember Peter? He was a simple fisherman who had not studied in the great universities of his time, but he gave himself completely to Jesus and the Holy Spirit used him with power!

Young people, today God desires to use you as a tool to proclaim the eternal gospel with a loud voice. Ask God to use you as his instrument! Ask God for his holy spirit! Ask God to use you to proclaim the true gospel with power!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of God's last message to mankind?
2. What is the content of this message?
3. How many people should listen to it?
4. How should this message be preached?
5. Summarize the message of the three angels and share it with your friends.



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