

Intro. How many of you as parents ever gave your child a responsibility & because they didn't do it, you were gracious enough to give them a warning? Aren't you glad you got some warnings when you were growing up? As we continue our series in Revelation 12-14 on “When All of Hell Breaks Loose on Earth,” we look at Revelation 14 & “Hope for the Nations during the Tribulation” as a final warning from God.

Theme: Heaven & hell

Background: John receives this revelation from Jesus Christ concerning primarily what will take place in the end. I believe there are several series of the end-times from different angles. Each new series adds a few more details than the previous series. Chapters 12-14 are a series focused on the work of the Antichrist & the mark of the beast, but chapter 14 tells us God still protects Israel & has a concern for the Gentiles (nations) before Christ comes to judge.

➤ Let me take you through the text and conclude with 4 ways to carry out this text in your life.

Explanation of the Text:

I. The message of the 1st angel represents the final, worldwide call to believe the gospel (14:6-7)

- This message goes to “those who dwell on the earth” (14:6)—a phrase used in Revelation for unbelievers
- That the message is the “eternal gospel” shows God's grace in these final days, for He provides one more chance for unbelievers to trust Him
- Just as God is concerned with Israel (7:1-8; 14:1-5), so He, too, is concerned for Gentiles from every nation, tribe, language & people (7:9-17; 14:6-7)
- The call to “fear God & give Him glory” (14:7) means to show God reverence & praise & confess the truth (see Joshua 7:19; John 9:24; Revelation 15:4; 16:9; 19:5, 7)
- The reason for trusting the Lord now is because the hour of judgment has come for the Creator of the world to judge unbelievers (see the imminent judgment for sinners, 6:16; judging the dead, 11:18; the judgment has come, 14:15-16; the great day of God's wrath, 16:17-21; the Rider coming to judge, 19:11-21; & the final judgment, 20:11-15)

II. The message of the 2nd angel represents the collapse of the government under the Antichrist (14:8)

- “fallen, fallen”—repeated for emphasis (like underlining or italics)
- The angel speaks of the future, but speaks of it as it has passed—the fall is certain & sure
- “Babylon”—see also chapters 17-18; taken from Isaiah 21:9; Daniel 4:30 (Babylon fell to the Assyrians in 689 BC & to the Persians in 539 BC)
- In regards to the reference to Babylon here, some believe it refers to literal Babylon (but there isn't much there today); others see it as a metaphor for Rome (1 Peter 5:13) &/or the Roman Empire; others believe it represents spiritual evil & a world set against God & His people (like the government of the Antichrist)
- She made representatives from all nations get drunk on the wine of the passion (wrath) of her sexual immorality—immorality & idolatry are often synonymous in the OT & probably refers to leading people away from the truth & the One True God

Illus: I've never had a drop of alcohol, so I don't know what it feels like to be drunk, but the deacons tell me about it all the time. Getting drunk will cause you to do things you wouldn't normally do (being drunk will lead you astray) & so does the Antichrist & his government

III. The message of the 3rd angel represents the eternal judgment of those who worship the Antichrist (14:9-11)

- Whoever worships the Antichrist (beast) & receives his mark will be judged (I misspoke a couple of weeks ago when I said we had a dog with a microchip in its paw. Our resident vet told me the chip goes between the shoulder blades)
- The judgment is the wine of God's wrath—much greater than the wrath of the Antichrist

Illus: God poured out His wrath against sin on Jesus, for Jesus asked, “Let this cup pass from Me, but not as I will, but as You will”—if you don’t repent & believe in Jesus, you will face the full fury of God’s wrath against your sin

- The judgment is described metaphorically as fire & sulfur (first mentioned in Genesis 19:24 when God judged Sodom & Gomorrah for their sin of homosexuality—it doesn’t matter if the world calls it right, if God says it is sinful, then it is sinful)
- The judgment is eternal, for the smoke of their torment goes up forever & they have no rest

IV. Believers are called to endure in faith & obedience to Christ, even to the point of death (14:12-13)

- Christians must endure in the days of the Antichrist & we must endure by obeying God & trusting Jesus—even obeying God when the world runs contrary to the truth
- The implication is many Christians will die during this time, because a blessing is pronounced on those who die in the Lord (14:13)—persevere until death

Illus: Christians around the world are dying for their faith, because they will not bow the knee to false gods & their faith & martyrdom should stir us to greater faithfulness

Application of the Text:

I. Help spread the message of hope in Christ to all the nations (14:6-7)

- You cannot reach all the nations, but you can reach your neighbors & co-workers & family & friends & people in your everyday routine & when we do it together, it has a multiplying, web-holding effect, making our efforts stronger together than apart

Illus: Offerings to Lottie Moon at Christmas time & Annie Armstrong at Easter & Operation Christmas Child Shoebox are all ways we help fund the spreading of the gospel to the nations

II. Beware of the Antichrist’s plan to pull you away from following Christ (14:8)

- The devil is deceptive & cunning & will take what is good & twist it so that you begin worshiping it or letting it pull you away from the faith—it may be a relationship, video games, selling Amway products, weekend baseball tournaments, liberal thinking in the public schools & the list goes on—many things are not wrong in & of themselves but they suck us in

III. Realize the eternal torment facing unbelievers (14:9-11)

Illus: How many of you really believe unbelievers will go to hell? How many of you really believe hell is eternal? Then based on your own beliefs rooted in the Scriptures, do whatever you can to warn unbelievers about the reality of eternal torment

IV. Endure in the Christian faith by obeying the Lord until death (14:12-13)

- As a pastor, I get the privilege of hearing many people’s stories. Some of those stories include difficulties in a marriage. Sometimes it leads to divorce but other times they work on it & endure & become stronger in the long run & keep their commitment until death to they part—one of the great things about the Christian faith is we are called to keep it until death, but things get far better for the Christian once they die—an eternal home of joy with the Lord

Conc. I’ll never forget the first week of October 1995. My parents & grandmother & great aunt came to visit me from Indiana while I was at school in Graceville, Florida, 1 hour north of Panama City Beach. They used their timeshare & had a nice condo on the beach. After only being there a few days, however, they were told to leave, because Hurricane Opal was heading for the panhandle. We had never known what a hurricane was like, for all we knew were tornadoes & you just stayed low & waited them out & they were over in a few minutes. Little did we know the vastness of a hurricane. As I went to stay with a friend an hour to the east, they drove north & couldn’t find a vacancy until they were north of Birmingham. They heeded the warning, but after living in Panama City Beach for 5 years, I know of plenty of people who never heeded the warnings of a hurricane or double-red flags & people died. Just as people don’t know the power of a hurricane or the force of an under-current, so some people don’t understand the effects of their sin & the reality of hell, but such ignorance doesn’t change the truth. Only Jesus saves, so repent & trust in Him today—heed the warning before it’s too late.