

Revelation 14: 6 and 7; “The Everlasting Gospel”, Sermon # 104 in the series – “The Faithful and True Witness”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on September 5th, 2010, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

It says in our text, “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach....” I don’t know if you have noticed it or not, but there are many angels in the book of Revelation. And I hope that you will understand that when the word “angel” is used in this book, it is not always referring to the spiritual angels that you normally would think of, when you think of angels. Sometimes it is, and sometimes it is not. Angels are, as you might remember, those “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation,” it says in Hebrews 1: 14. In the verse right before that in Hebrews 1, it says, “To which of the angels has God ever said, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool?” The writer is drawing a distinction between Christ and the angels. Angels are the constant attendants upon God. They reside in His very presence and they perform His every word. And yet we find in other places of the Bible that the Lord Jesus Christ is the real “Angel” of God’s presence. We find Him spoken of as “the Angel of the Lord” in many places in the Bible. In Isaiah 63, verses 9 and 10 it says, “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and Angel of His presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.” “But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; so He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.” God did turn and fight against His people in the days after He delivered them from Egypt because of their rebellion against His good purposes. But He preserved and kept a remnant for Himself during that whole dispensation of the Old Covenant era until Christ came in the flesh. The “another angel” of verse 3 of chapter 8 of Revelation is the Lord Jesus Christ, because he is pictured there as involved in His holy work of being the “only Mediator between God and man.

We have also found, as we studied in Revelation Chapter 10, verse 1, that Christ was there called “a mighty angel”. He was clothed with a cloud, and had a rainbow on His head; His face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. He was standing on the sea and the land and he was holding a little book in his hand which John was commanded to eat. This little book was the overview of what would happen to the Church of Jesus Christ during the 1260 days (or years) prophecy; the days of the Church’s Babylonian Captivity, the days of the reign of Antichrist over the 10 kingdoms of Europe and over the whole world toward the later part of those days. The angels who sounded their trumpets in Chapters 8, 9, and 10, I tried to show you, are real spirit angels. And the reason that I told you that I believed that they were real spirit angels was because they had judgments to render upon the visible apostate Church all during the 1260 years prophecy. The 7 angels of Chapter 8, verse 2 are portrayed as “standing before God” when they were given their 7 trumpets. They

would be the ones who would, in a perfectly holy and righteous way, bring the Lord's judgments upon nations and kingdoms and peoples; and yes, even upon the visible Church of Christ, so that those who served idols would come to know the bitterness of not worshiping and serving the Lord our God in truth and righteousness. We will find these same seven angels pouring out the bowls of God's wrath, the seven last plaques upon the Antichristian system in Chapters 15 and 16 of this book.

But sometimes, in our study of this book, we have seen that the pastors of Christ's churches are also called "angels". They are called that because they, like spirit angels, are messengers. They do the bidding of the Lord Jesus Christ in preaching the Everlasting gospel. This is what these 3 angels of verses 6-11 represent. They represent preachers of the Everlasting gospel. Chapters 2 and 3 showed us that when a message was given by Christ to one of the churches of that day, that it was addressed to the "angel" of that Church. What we want to do this afternoon is to ask three questions. 1st – What does it mean when it says that this angel is flying in the midst of heaven? 2nd- Who is this angel preaching to? And 3rdly – What is the Everlasting gospel which this angel preaches? Let us pray to be able to apply these great truths to ourselves and our own church, to become better witnesses to the truth of God's Word.

1st – What does it mean when it says that this angel is flying in the midst of heaven?

(Verse 6)

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth. Let us keep our metaphors in mind. An angel here is a referring to men who preach the gospel. Not only one man who has preached the gospel in the past, like Martin Luther. Many people have believed that he is the angel being referred to. And I will speak more of Him in a few moments. But this angel represents all those pastors and preachers who preach and proclaim the gospel in the midst of Christ's Church all during this difficult time period of Antichrist's dominion of 1260 years. There have been many men in this time period who were bold to teach and preach the truth. They have flown like angels through the sky in their preaching; having a word from God, a word from heaven for souls that were sitting in Antichristian darkness. Christ's Church is what is being referred to here prophetically as "heaven". No real spirit angel needs to go flying through the midst of the heaven of the heavens where God dwells, telling those there to preach the everlasting gospel. There is no need for conversion work to be done in heaven. It is true, however, that after Christ was born that an angel came down (It says this in Luke 2, verse 9) and stood before certain poor shepherds and spoke to them the Everlasting gospel. And after he had given them the good tidings of Christ's having been born and directions on where they could find him, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'" Perhaps they were even flying in the midst of the physical sky above them when they spoke

and sang to them. But this is not the usual thing, or normal thing, or what God has ordained be done; that spirit angels preach the gospel. It is men, who are called by God to preach, who have been given this glorious work. There is conversion work which needs to be done in the Church of Jesus Christ upon this earth. There are many professed churches of Jesus Christ which have needed more of the everlasting gospel to straighten out their conception of how to be saved and how to live the Christian life. There are the false churches of Roman Catholicism and liberal Protestantism who very much need to hear the truth of the gospel and be saved. There are people who dwell on the earth, from every nation, tribe, tongue, and people who have never heard the good news of the gospel; never have known the means of grace so that they might be saved.

Let us think for a few moments of the history of the Church. During this 3rd time period of Church history, the gospel, for many hundreds of years, from the year 800 until the Reformation in 1500 was largely lost to both the churches of Christ and to the greater world outside of the 10 kingdoms of the beast, because of the false doctrines of Roman Catholicism. It is true that there were some people who were truly saved and many of them attempted to separate themselves from the Roman Catholic church and to live out a pure doctrinal and experiential Christianity. But they were heavily persecuted and many had to flee to the valleys and mountains to worship the true and living God. In the Roman Church, idols were worshiped, and the saints prayed to, and the Pope's edicts redefined the truth of the Bible so that the true gospel became obscured from the minds of men. The picture that we have here in verse 6 is particularly applicable to the dawning of the Reformation. God Himself began to do a great and mighty work to take men who were priests in the Church of Rome and to reveal to them the glory of Christ and the truth of the Scriptures. Luther and Melancthon in Germany; Calvin and Farel in Geneva; Zwingle and Bullinger in Zurich; and many other notable preachers of that blessed time period, brought the gospel to light again. The doctrine of Justification by Faith alone was preached again and many people came to saving faith in Jesus Christ. The authority of the Pope to be called the head of the church or the vicar of Christ was successfully challenged, and many of these great theologians and pastors successfully organized Biblical churches and faithfully ministered the Word to God to many, even as an angel sent from heaven. They wrote and preached and attempted to set forth the doctrines of the Bible correctly. Martin Luther's stand for liberty of conscience at the Diet of Worms set the stage for the later developments of religious liberty. He said, when on April 18th, 1521, he was brought before the Emperor, Charles the Fifth, and asked whether he would recant of things which he had written concerning Rome's errors – "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. Here I

stand; I can do no other. May God help me. Amen.” This was clearly a turning point in the history of the Church, and it dealt a real blow to the Antichristian system of adding to the Word of God things which were not commanded by God, that men should do in their worship and service of God. This principle of Sola Scriptura is the basis of the preaching of the everlasting gospel. When it is preached by men, they will see the truth of the Word of God lived out in their worship of God, and they will be living to God’s glory from a true and sincere faith. The angel was flying in the midst of heaven.

Now Secondly – We should ask this afternoon; Who is this Everlasting Gospel being preached to?

It is being preached to “those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.” It is not just the “earth” of the Antichristian kingdoms that is being spoken about here. It is the whole earth composed of all people that is being spoken of. The everlasting gospel is to go forth to all the nations of the earth and every tribe of the earth. The Bible and the gospel are to be translated into every language and tongue of the whole earth. And the glory of the Lord is to be made known to all people through the preaching of the gospel in every place. “All people that on earth do dwell; sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell; come ye before Him and rejoice.” Preach the gospel to every creature was Jesus’ command. But during the time before the Reformation there was not much going on in missions. But once the truth of the Bible came increasingly to light, then missions began to take place. John Calvin, unbeknownst to many people, was a man who promoted missions. I want to read to you from an article that I found on the Founder’s Ministries website; the Founders Journal. This article was written by Ray Van Neste. He says – “Perhaps the best evidence of Calvin's concern for missions is the mission activity of the Genevan church under his leadership.” “Under Calvin's leadership, Geneva became "the hub of a vast missionary enterprise" and "a dynamic center or nucleus from which the vital missionary energy it generated radiated out into the world beyond.” “Protestant refugees from all over Europe fled to Geneva; they came not merely for safety but also to learn from Calvin the doctrines of the Reformation so they could return home to spread the true gospel.” “Philip Hughes notes that Geneva became a "school of missions" which had as one of its purposes – “to send out witnesses who would spread the teaching of the Reformation far and wide” “It [Geneva] was a dynamic centre of missionary concern and activity, an axis from which the light of the Good News radiated forth through the testimony of those who, after thorough preparation in this school, were sent forth in the service of Jesus Christ.” “Thus was Calvin's missionary concern reflected in the church he served and the students he taught.” “The pastors of Geneva, including Calvin himself, met regularly and kept sporadic notes of their actions in a register, which became the greatest source of information on the missionary activity in Geneva. In April 1555 the *Register of the Company of Pastors* for the first time listed men who were sent out from Geneva to

"evangelize Foreign Parts." "The entry that mentioned these men stated that they had been sent out prior to April 1555, and they were already ministering in the Piedmont valleys." "More ministers may have been sent out before this time without being recorded in the *Register* because the notes were not complete and it was often dangerous to record the names of missionaries." "By 1557 it was a normal part of business for the Genevan pastors to send missionaries into France." "Robert M. Kingdon called it a "concentrated missionary effort." "By 1562, religious wars had broken out in France, and it was no longer safe to record the names of missionaries. However, between 1555 and 1562 the *Register* records 88 men by name who were sent out from Geneva to different places as "bearers of the gospel." In reality many more than 88 were sent." "In one year, 1561, though the *Register* mentions only twelve missionaries, other sources indicate that at least 142 missionaries were sent!" "Hundreds of men were sent out, reaching Italy, Germany, Scotland, England, and practically covering France." "From all over Europe requests came to Geneva for ministers of the gospel and the Genevan Company of Pastors filled as many as possible." "At times even their own churches were deprived of pastors in order to meet the needs of struggling groups abroad." "Thus, Geneva, under Calvin's direction, served as the heart of the Reformation in Europe, pumping out the lifeblood of trained ministers into all areas." "In addition to the extensive work in Europe, one group of Genevan missionaries was sent to Brazil. The *Register* simply states that on Tuesday, August 25, 1556, M. Pierre Richier and M. Guillaume were sent as ministers to Brazil." "These two were subsequently commended to the care of the Lord and sent off with a letter from this church." "The ministers were sent in response to a request from Admiral Coligny, a Huguenot leader." "They were to serve as chaplains for a group of Protestants who were going to Brazil to establish a colony, and they would have opportunity to instruct the natives in the gospel." "One man who went on the trip wrote that, upon receiving the request, the church of Geneva at once gave thanks to God for the extension of the reign of Jesus Christ in a country so distant and likewise so foreign and among a nation entirely without knowledge of the true God." "Sadly, the mission was not successful because the leader of the group betrayed the Protestants." "Some were killed, and others were sent back to Europe." "Though the mission failed, it remains "a striking testimony to the far reaching missionary vision of Calvin and his Genevan colleagues."

Thirdly, We should ask ourselves – What is the Everlasting Gospel?

It says in verse 7 that this "angel" said 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." This is the Everlasting Gospel – To fear God and to give glory to Him." To fear God is to regard Him, and not the idols which men make to worship and put in His place. Let Rome put away the worship of images and statues and Mary and the saints. To fear God is to regard His Word as more important to pay attention to, than all the opinions and observations of men who would deny it, or contradict it. Let Rome put away the the false teaching of their

traditions which impose upon the Word of God, those traditions which lead to craven fear, and superstition, and lack of assurance. Let them put away the Mass and preach faith in Christ. To fear God is to turn away from evil and error and live your life in accordance with the Scriptures. To give glory to Him means to praise Him for His power in the creation. He made all things; heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water for His good pleasure. Let us praise God for the gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; through whom the world was made, and for whom the world was made. We praise Him that all the times are in His hands and that the hour of His judgment against the Antichristian powers began to come at the Reformation and that Christ will build His church in such a way that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Let us praise Him, not only for physical springs of water, but for spiritual springs of water that He gives to revive the hearts of His people; those rivers of living water which spring up to everlasting life. Only God can create these. Only God can give these. Isaiah 35: 6 and 7 says, "The waters shall burst forth in the wilderness." "And streams in the desert." "The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." Let us pray that God would do this for us in our days, through the grace of our Lord Jesus.