

WAKE-UP CALL

Revelation 14:6, 7

1) Why Are We Still Here?

- a) Something doesn't seem right about centennial celebrations in the Adventist Church...
- b) "The Lord is not slack" (2 Pet. 3:9-12)
- c) "This gospel... must be preached..." (Mt. 24:14)
 - i) WHAT gospel?
 - (1) In Rev. 14:6-12, we witness Jesus' prediction about the gospel message coming to pass under the direction of 3 angels. In other words, THIS is the message Jesus was referring to when He said the gospel must be preached.

(2) In light of this, consider the following statements –

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. {9T 19.1}

(3) And Ellen White, quoting her angel guide, wrote

The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The **destiny of souls hangs** upon the manner in which they are received. {EW 258}

All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is **essential to salvation**. {Ev 196.1}

The light that Christ revealed to His servant the prophet is for us. In His revelation are given the three angels' messages, and a description of the angel that was to come down from heaven with great power, lightening the earth with his glory. In it are warnings against the wickedness that would exist in the last days, and against the mark of the beast. We are not only to read and understand this message, but to proclaim it with no uncertain sound to the world. By presenting these

things revealed to John, we shall be able to stir the people. The usual subjects on which the ministers of nearly all other denominations dwell will not move them. We must proclaim our God-given message to them. The world is to be warned by the proclamation of this message. If we blanket it, if we hide our light under a bushel, if we so circumscribe ourselves that we cannot reach the people, we are answerable to God for our failure to warn the world. {19MR 41.2}

- d) I will tell you that I believe many of you will not realize the future you are preparing for here; you will, however, face that future that will see you standing before the kings and queens of this earth to bear testimony for Jesus Christ.
- e) It is imperative, then, that we know and understand what these messages mean to us. In our few days together, we will seek to gain a better understanding of these messages, their impact on our personal spiritual lives, and our mission to proclaim them to the world.

2) The First Angel (Rev. 14:6-7)

- a) The first angel's message was first proclaimed by the great second advent movement in the years immediately preceding 1844 (cf. 2SM 104; GC 611.1).
- b) They preached "the hour of His judgment had come." Today that brings to mind Christ's final work of redemption in the heavenly sanctuary. However, that was not the case BEFORE the disappointment of Oct. 22, 1844. The Advent Movement believed that it referred to the second coming of Christ, "with flaming fire taking vengeance..."

As early as 1826 the advent message began to be preached in England... **the great truth of Christ's soon coming in power and glory was extensively proclaimed.** {GC 362}

[America] became the center of the great advent movement. It was here that **the prophecy of the first angel's message** had its most direct fulfillment.... *the glad tidings of Christ's speedy return....* {GC 368.1}

- c) At the time of the preaching of the first angel's message, the people had been only recently making their way out of the teachings of the dark ages.

The Protestant world "fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel—the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. {GC 382.3}

- d) Fear God... Give Glory... Worship... Judgment

- i) This is often referred to as the “judgment hour message.” Judgment means accountability and implies law as a standard of judgment.

(1) And this is what we see when the sanctuary in heaven is opened

- e) So then, the message was to them primarily a message about getting ready to meet Jesus.

- i) Have you ever been followed by a squad car?

- ii) This message was designed by God to be a divine wake-up call.

The first angel’s message of Revelation 14, announcing the hour of God’s judgment and calling upon men to fear and worship Him, was **designed to separate the professed people of God from the corrupting influences of the world** and to **arouse them** to see their true condition of **worldliness** and **backsliding**. {GC 379}

3) The Law and the Gospel

- a) The law brings a knowledge of sin and shows us our need of Christ.

The law and the gospel, revealed in the Word, are to be preached to the people; for the law and the gospel, blended, will convict of sin. God's law, while condemning sin, points to the gospel, revealing Jesus Christ... Thus both the law and the gospel are blended. In no discourse are they to be divorced.-- Manuscript 21, 1891. {Ev 231.3}

- b) King Josiah finding the Book of the Law

- i) Josiah was a good king who yet needed reform

- ii) “If I bear witness of myself, My testimony is not true” (Jn. 5:31, ESV)

- c) John the Baptist - the forerunner (Is. 40:3f; Lk. 3:4-6)

- i) There’s a reason John preached a baptism of repentance; there’s a reason Jesus began his public ministry with “Repent...”; there’s a reason that Peter preached “Jesus... whom YOU CRUCIFIED...”

- ii) When the Rich Young Ruler approached Jesus, He pointed out the young man’s sin; when Jesus addressed the woman at the well, He brought up her live-in situation.

The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin, is the very first condition of acceptance with God. {COL 152.1}

(1) “The axe is laid at the root of the tree” (Mt. 3:10)

(2) When you come to Jesus, He will point out your sin, too!

The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes... This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you. No deep-seated love for Jesus can dwell in the heart that does not realize its own sinfulness... but if we do not see our own moral deformity, it is unmistakable evidence that we have not had a view of the beauty and excellence of Christ. {SC 65.1}

d) Those who rejected John rejected Christ (Lk. 7:29-30)

4) Cultural Adventism and the Mixed Multitude

a) "All... all... all... all... all... but with most..." (1 Cor. 10:1f)

During the bondage in Egypt many of the Israelites had, to a great extent, lost the knowledge of God's law, and had mingled its precepts with heathen customs and traditions. God brought them to Sinai, and there with His own voice declared His law. {PP 334.3}

"Conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world; it never converts the world to Christ." {GC 509}

b) The snare of Cultural Adventism

i) Cultural Adventism is not religious; it is not spiritual; it is not based on personal conviction – it is based on what everyone else in the Adventist microcosm is doing. Truth is weighed by status quo and personal preference.

(1) "I don't want to go to that school because all the girls wear dresses" or "they serve vegan food" or "you can't drink coffee" or whatever.

ii) The cultural Adventist would never think to study anything out to see whether there's any merit to it.

iii) Cultural Adventism is "a form of godliness" that denies the power.

(1) And the formalism leads to apostasy.

(a) Sound of Music, Disney, Barry Manilow & Carpenters to anything goes.

(i) Eagles and Hotel California

"Through those that have a form of godliness but know not the power, we can gain many who would otherwise do us great harm. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God will be our most effective helpers. Those of this class who are apt and intelligent will serve as decoys to draw others into our snares. Many will not fear their influence, because they profess the same faith. We will thus lead them to conclude that

the requirements of Christ are less strict than they once believed, and that by conformity to the world they would exert a greater influence with worldlings. Thus they will separate from Christ; then they will have no strength to resist our power, and ere long they will be ready to ridicule their former zeal and devotion. {4SP 339.3}

5) Our Wake-up Call

- a) The first angel's message was designed to prepare the hearts of the people to receive Christ. Just as those who rejected John's message also rejected Christ, so those who resist the convicting power of the Holy Spirit in the First Angel's Message are prepared to reject Christ in the other two.

Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second... And by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message... {EW 260.1}

The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth. {2SM 104.3}

Our work is to proclaim the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12), is the warning to be given to the world. It is a warning to us individually. We are called upon to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. There is a work for you... to do, to yoke up with Christ. Make sure that your building is on the rock. Do not risk eternity on a probability. You may not live to participate in the perilous scenes on which we are now entering. The life of no one of us is assured for any given time. Should you not watch every moment? Should you not closely examine your own self, and inquire, What will eternity be to me?

~~The great burden of every soul should be, Is my heart renewed? Is my soul transformed? Are my sins pardoned through faith in Christ? Have I been born again? Am I complying with the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28)?... Do you count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? And do you feel it your duty to believe every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? Manuscript 32, 1896. {2SM 117.1} [1906]~~