

DON'T DRINK THE KOOL-AID

Revelation 14:8

1) Review

- a) The first angel's message a wake-up call
 - i) Last night we talked about the first angel's message and how it was first proclaimed in the Great Second Advent Movement of 1840-1844. As they didn't yet understand the subject of the heavenly sanctuary, the "judgment hour" was to them a message of Christ's soon coming and the need to be ready. It led them to examine their personal relationships with Christ and make full and total commitments to Him.
 - ii) This is in harmony with the "afflicting" of the soul that was part of the antitypical Day of Atonement, and is also characteristic of how we should be living today. "What manner of persons ought you to be...?" (2 Pet. 3:11).
 - iii) This message was designed to lead God's people to see their true condition and return to true worship of "Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water" (Rev. 14:7).

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}

2) Don't Drink the Kool-Aid

- a) Jim Jones was a charismatic founder of the People's Temple Church, a church that focused on the community's social needs and race relations. He was praised by the Urban League and the NAACP, as well as finding support from the Carter Administration.
- b) In 1977, Jones relocated to Jonestown, Guyana, to what was called the "People's Temple Agricultural Project." On November 18, 1978, Jones led his more-than-900-member congregation to commit mass suicide by drinking cyanide-laced Flavor Aid. This was the greatest single loss of American civilian life in a deliberate act until the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

- c) The phrase “Don’t drink the Kool-Aid” has come to refer to a warning not to hold an unquestioned belief, argument, or philosophy without critical examination. Of course, the obvious danger was that the Kool-Aid itself was harmless, and by virtue of its harmlessness hid something deadly inside.

3) “Babylon is Fallen” (Rev. 14:8)

- a) The second angel’s message refers to “Babylon” as a “city” who made the nations drink “her” wine. Not much else is said in this chapter about Babylon, but chapter 17 fills in some details.
- b) A study of Revelation 17 has led many scholars to understand without equivocation that Babylon refers to the church of Rome who compromised her faith with the world – the “kings of the earth” – and as a result had her teachings tainted, which she then gave the world to “drink”.
- c) The name Babylon means “confusion by mixing,” pointing to the mixture of truth and error that resulted from the church mingling with the philosophies of the world. When the Protestant churches, breaking off from Rome, yet retained her tainted teachings, they became the “daughters” of the harlot mother.

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) The second angel’s message identifies Babylon’s teachings as *error* and points back to the first angel’s call to worship God in spirit and truth.

4) The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

- a) The concoction of truth mixed with error is as dangerous a drink today as it has ever been. Note that Adam and Eve weren’t tempted at the Tree of Knowledge of Evil, but the Tree of Knowledge of *Good and Evil*.
- b) The devil will always be more successful with truth and error mixed. He uses the truth to make the error palatable, and the error to weaken and replace the foundation of truth.
 - i) “If you can slip a tablet into someone’s coffee, it avoids an awful lot of mess.”
- c) As the predator grooms his victim, so the devil is working feverishly on grooming God’s people.

It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. It is thus that Satan still seeks to compass the ruin of the soul. A long preparatory process, unknown to the world, goes on in the heart before the Christian commits open sin. The mind does not come down at once from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him. {PP 459.1}

- i) Did you know that in ancient China, the people desired security from the barbaric hordes to the north; so they built the great Chinese wall. It was so high they knew no one could climb over it and so thick that nothing could break it down. They settled back to enjoy their security. During the first hundred years of the wall's existence, China was invaded three times. Not once did the barbaric hordes break down the wall or climb over the top. Each time they bribed a gatekeeper and then marched right through the gates.

5) The Paradigm of Truth (Mt. 6:22-3)

- a) A paradigm is a **“worldview”** (*New Oxford American Dictionary*), **“The framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual interprets the world and interacts with it.”**
- b) We are building that paradigm by the things we accept as reality. Everything we learn; all that we are exposed to or expose ourselves to shape that paradigm. Everyone has one. No one is neutral.
 - i) Engineer Destin Sandlin, author of the video series *Smarter Every Day*, tells of his experience with the “backwards bicycle” (Google it)...
- c) Your paradigm becomes your baseline to test all other “truth” by. If that baseline is error, truth will appear erroneous to you! **(Mt. 6:22-3). The “light” in you has become “darkness.”**
 - i) For instance, if a person accepts a materialistic view of the universe, they have predisposed themselves to rejecting the existence of God.
 - (1) Harvard evolutionary biologist Richard Lewontin wrote
 - (a) "Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs,

in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door." – "Billions and Billions of Demons," *The New York Review of Books* [review of *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* by Carl Sagan], vol. 44, number 1, January 9, 1997.

d) What's worse, when you've accepted an erroneous paradigm, error actually makes more sense to you than truth. This is what it means to be "drunk" with Babylon's "wine".

i) "the old is better" (Lk. 5:39).

As error is most in accordance with the natural heart, it is taken for granted to be clear. {1T 624.2}

Were it not that the world is hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, multitudes would be convicted and converted by the plan, cutting truths of the word of God.... The sin of the world's impenitence lies at the door of the church." {GC 388}

6) Building on the Rock

a) "He who hears these sayings of Mine and does them..." (Mt. 7:24-27)

i) "**Sanctify them** by Your truth..." (Jn. 17:17)

(1) truth is not a theory

Truth is not truth to those who do not practice it. Truth is only truth to you when you live it in the daily life, showing the world what those people must be who are at last saved. {GCB, April 3, 1901 par. 10}

b) Building on Inspiration

It is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by erroneous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and

truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light. {GC 597.2}

c) The storm is coming. What are you building on?

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, **they are prepared** to choose the easy, popular side. {GC 608}