

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

This morning I'd like to begin by thanking those of you that support Gospel Workers Ministry; we absolutely could not accomplish what we do without your help. Besides the CDs we send out every month, we also have a website where people can listen to sermons and access various other materials we have to offer. In fact, in the month of January we've had more people download sermons to listen to than we've ever had before. People from many different countries around the world are listening; and so I'm literally preaching to hundreds of people every month on the Internet, and I thank God for a congregation like that to preach to. I don't know them personally, but I am looking forward to meeting them someday soon as we occupy our places in the New Jerusalem and the earth made new.

If you haven't visited our website lately, we've made a few changes; like Bible studies for children based on the book *Christ Our Saviour* with activities and valuable lessons for them to learn. So if you have children or grandchildren of grade school age, you might want to check it out. Also we're beginning to make books available for you to link to that will expose the devil's agenda. The first two are *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome* by Charles Chiniquy, and *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, and as we find more we'll be adding to the list as time goes on. Just go to gospel-workers.com and click on publications.

Because of your help, the present truth for this time is literally circulating all around the world, and when you multiply that with what other ministries are also doing, because we certainly don't think we're going to finish the work all by ourselves, you can see that the gospel is going out to the whole world. The truth for this time is available to everyone that has access to the Internet, and if a person doesn't have Internet available at home, most libraries have it available free of charge, and for those who don't have access, they have other ways to hear God's word through radio, television, the printed page, and personal contacts that are being made. And so, there's never been a time when there has been more access to the gospel than today.

Jesus said, "*When this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, then shall the end come*", and I believe in large part this is now accomplished because of all the technology that's available today. Jesus didn't say when the whole world accepts the truth, then I'm coming; He said when all nations have had the gospel preached to them; when they've all had an opportunity to hear the gospel,

then He will come.

And so, whether people take advantage of it or not is not the question; it's whether or not they've had the opportunity. If people don't care to listen, that's their choice, but the opportunity is what counts, and God will make sure that every person will have that opportunity, because the Bible says, "the true Light" (or the truth that Jesus came to bring) "lights every man that comes into the world." You can read that in the first chapter of the gospel of John.

And so, what I'm getting at this morning is that the end could come very quickly! Everything is now in place for Jesus' words to be fulfilled; all He's waiting for is a people that are ready to be sealed. So what's the hold up? We're not ready, are we? We're just not ready! Why can I say that with such certainty? Because ***Christ's Object Lessons, page 69*** says, "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." Obviously that has not yet happened, because we're still here. And so, the question is, am I the one holding things up? That's the question each one of us need to ask ourselves rather than looking elsewhere for reasons for the delay. And so, we need to get personal with ourselves.

You may have never considered this before, but someone will be the last living person to be sealed; someone will be the last one to perfectly reproduce Christ's character. I don't know about you, but I really don't want to be that last person. I would rather that Jesus accomplish this work in me sometime before that last person, wouldn't you?

Now I realize that it would be far better to be the last person than to miss out on heaven and the earth made new; but why would we want to drag our feet when it comes to cooperating with God in developing a Christlike character? Why would we want to be saved by the skin of our teeth? As Christians we should want to hasten, or accelerate the day of Christ return as it says in **2 Peter 3:12**, not delay it.

1 Corinthians 3:15 says, there will be some that will be saved, "*as by fire*", or like someone barely escaping from a fire; and the Spirit of Prophecy says, "Many will find that the work that has occupied their time and attention has perished with the using, and that they themselves have barely been saved, as by fire." You can read that in **Bible Commentary, volume 6, page 1087**. I don't want to be saved like that, do you? I want to have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God.

I remember reading about an ocean voyage Ellen White took to get back home from

wherever she was, and the waters were rough, and she got terribly seasick, and she said her breakfast fed the fishes, and she longed to see something that would stand still, and all she could think of was getting home.

And you know, isn't that the kind of attitude we should all have toward lingering here in this sin-sick world? We should have it in our minds to just get to our heavenly home. If we all felt that way, don't you think it would make a difference? Just put aside our petty differences and focus on getting home! But as it is right now, I don't think most of us are sick enough of what this sin cursed earth has to offer. What other reason could there be for our procrastination and lack of preparation?

The apostle Paul said, "*Examine yourselves to see if you be in the faith*", and the reason we're to do that is so our character defects can be corrected before it's too late, because it's only those that allow God to prune the braches of their character tree that will be ready for liftoff when Jesus returns.

One of the things delaying the Lord's return is the lack of unity among God's professed people, don't you think? It seems to me that just about every little group, and every home church, and every ministry has a focus or a teaching that is at odds with the others, and it seems that most have the "one-idea man" mentality. Not all, but most!

Some are promoting the feast days; some the sacred name, and if you don't know what I mean by that, I won't burden you with it now; some are promoting various theories about the Godhead; some are fanatical in dress or diet; some have strange interpretations of Bible prophecy, and still others are proclaiming themselves to be prophets. And whatever they think is their special mission, that's what becomes all consuming. And the sad thing is, people are falling for these various teachings, and you have to wonder sometimes if there's any spiritual discernment left with many of these folks; and how in the world is God ever going to have a group of people He can trust and use to finish the work.

I don't mention these things to discourage you; I tell you these things because we've been warned ahead of time that this would be the case just before the close of human probation. And so, this is yet another sign that we are nearing the end, and that we better be doing the things necessary to be ready for the marvelous working of Satan in the events of these last days.

We need to see unity among us badly, but how and when is it ever going to happen?

When are we going to see the pressing together that has to happen before Jesus descends the skies? When are we going to speak the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, as Paul says in **1 Corinthians 1:10**? I believe we're given some clues in the following two inspired quotes.

The first one is in **Testimonies volume 6, pages 400, 401** where it says, "When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold (**that is, from the body of Christ, not some denomination**) will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. **(Do you think this could be one of our problems, especially among the various ministries?)** No one of the true believers will say: 'I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas.' The testimony of one and all will be: 'I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour.' Thus will the truth be brought into practical life, and thus will be answered the prayer of Christ, uttered just before His humiliation and death: 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.' John 17:21. The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. **Then** will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."

Now, if this is true; if the people of God are not going to draw together and present to the enemy a united front until "the storm of persecution really breaks upon us", then I have another question; why are we not experiencing the kind of persecution we just read about? Not that we'll enjoy it, but why has this "storm of persecution" not yet broken upon us?

The Great Controversy, page 48 says, "The apostle Paul declares that 'all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' 2 Timothy 3:12. Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason (**notice; there's not a multitude of reasons**) is that the church has conformed to the world's standard and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths

of the word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled."

We need to think about these things and search our own hearts to see if I am one of those that are compromising with sin, or if I'm being indifferent to the great truths of the word of God.

We hear a lot about the last days today, don't we? But friends, we need to realize that it's not just the last days, but the last of the last days! According to Bible prophecy, the time of the end began in 1798 with the imprisonment of the pope at the end of the "Dark Ages", and that was over 200 years ago. And so, are we living on borrowed time? I would say yes; it is indeed the last of the last days.

In ***Testimonies volume 8, page 80*** it says, "The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing."

Surely those days that were "fast approaching" when these things were written are now here!

We're also told that some of the same errors and fanaticisms that the pioneers of our faith had to meet well over a hundred years ago will be repeated just before the Lord comes. [**Letter 358, 1908**]

And so, none of these things should discourage us or catch us by surprise, because we've been warned, and these things show us conclusively that the time is at hand for Jesus to come!

Do you remember reading what the servant of the Lord said in ***Testimonies volume 5, page 451*** about our Constitution being repudiated just before the end? And in ***Testimonies volume 9, page 13*** about an economic crisis that would develop for which the leaders of the country would not be able to solve? And about a labor crisis in ***Last Day Events, page 116*** that would help bring on a time of trouble? Friends, it's very plain that these things are all in the process of being fulfilled as we speak. What more do we need to know before we get serious about character preparation and the proclamation

of the special truth we've been given?

Did you know that there is **one** specific message we've been given to bear to the world, and it's not any one of the various things I mentioned a moment ago that people are getting all caught up with. If we're going to be "one-idea" men and women, let it be the one message we were raised up to give. Let me read it to you from ***Testimonies volume 9, pages 19, 20:***

"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. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them."

Are you "absorbed" with other things than what is outlined for us here in this statement? Now this doesn't mean that we can't talk about anything but the three angel's messages, but we shouldn't allow other things to crowd it out. We shouldn't allow other things to consume us. I have people all the time trying to get me to become absorbed with what they're absorbed with, but it's not what I'm supposed to be absorbed with. There are those that have been harping for years on what they think is all important, but you rarely, if ever, hear them talk about the three angel's messages and what they mean. Is this a problem? I think it is.

We're not to be like a sponge that soaks up everything but what we should be soaking up; because what happens to a sponge that become saturated with liquid? Once it becomes saturated there's no room for anything else, is there? Well, it's the same way with what we allow ourselves to become absorbed with. We can get so absorbed with certain teachings that that's all we can talk about, because there's no room for anything else. I think some of us need to be squeezed out so we can absorb the messages God wants us to give, don't you?

And so, if we are to become absorbed with the three angels' messages, we better know what they're all about. We better understand something about these messages so we

can be one of those that are "set in the world as watchmen and light-bearers"; and not that we should just know about them, but that we experience them in our lives.

Let me read you another short quote that goes along with these thoughts:

Early Writings 124, 125 "I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. **(The word "imbibing" means to "absorb or drink in.")** I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. **(Why? because when we are "imbibing" error, we can't be absorbing truth)** The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness. I saw that we have no time to throw away in listening to fables. Our minds should not be thus diverted, but should be occupied **(or absorbed)** with the present truth **(which is what? The proclamation of the three angels' messages)**, and seeking wisdom that we may obtain a more thorough knowledge of our position, that with meekness we may be able to give a reason of our hope from the Scriptures. While false doctrines and dangerous errors are pressed upon the mind, **(notice)** While false doctrines and dangerous errors are pressed upon the mind, it cannot be dwelling upon the truth which is to fit and prepare the house of Israel to stand in the day of the Lord."

Now let me ask you; could it be a "dangerous error" or a fatal mistake to be consumed with something that may be true, but not what we're supposed to be absorbed with? If we are caught up with something that's not wrong in itself, but occupies our time and talent to the neglect of what we should be dwelling upon, could that be a dangerous error, or a dangerous mistake? If I am absorbed with something, even if it's true, that is doing nothing to help me form a righteous character, would that be something to avoid? If we are spending the majority of our time absorbed with proclaiming a message, be it true or false, that has nothing to do with the three angels' messages, is that a dangerous

thing to do?

I would say that if whatever we're dwelling upon is not fitting us and preparing us "to stand in the day of the Lord", then that would qualify as a dangerous error, because the truth which is to fit and prepare us in these last days is best understood in the three angels' messages. These three messages are perfectly calculated to do the fitting and the preparing, and to be absorbed with something else is absolutely dangerous; not only for us, but also for those that should be hearing the right message from us.

So what are the three angels' messages all about? What is this "last warning to a perishing world" that we have been entrusted with? If a lack of knowledge about the three angels' messages are what will cause the world to perish, then what other message could be more important? And could it be the same message at its core that the Apostle Paul said he was absorbed with?

In **1 Corinthians 2:2** Paul wrote, *"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."* If the apostle Paul was totally absorbed with Jesus Christ and Him crucified, could that be what the three angels' messages are all about?

When you read what Paul wrote, it's undeniable that he was truly a "one-idea man", but it was alright, because it was the right idea! He had tried to go toe-to-toe with the Greek philosophers in Athens and gotten no where, and so he "determined"; he made a calculated decision to become absorbed with one thought, one subject, one idea; and that one idea was to know Jesus Christ and what His death upon the cross signified, because that is what constitutes the sum of the Gospel, and it's also what the three angels' messages are all about.

Notice what else Paul wrote in **Galatians 6:14**, *"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."*

In **Acts of the Apostles, page 207** it says, "Paul and his fellow workers proclaimed the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. They presented Christ as the one who, seeing the helpless condition of the fallen race, came to redeem men and women by living a life of obedience to God's law and by paying the penalty of disobedience."

So, if Paul and his fellow workers proclaimed the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ so people could be empowered to obey the law like Jesus did, and they were determined not to know anything else, then the three angels' messages must present the same all absorbing message, because "the everlasting gospel" has never changed.

When the apostle Paul said that the world was crucified unto him, and he to the world, he was saying that his interest in worldly things, and in side issues, no longer attracted him. He was attracted to them about as much as a corpse. He wasn't going to allow anything but the cross, and what it meant, to absorb his attention. By the cross his relationship to the world and its relationship to him had been crucified. In other words, his love relationship with the world and to philosophize with those of differing opinions came to an end when he understood the meaning and power of the cross, and he became totally consumed with how he could help every person he met to understand and experience how they too could become righteous by faith in what Jesus did for them by sacrificing His life on Calvary. And isn't that what the three angel's messages of **Revelation 14:6-12** are all about?

Let's read **verses 6 and 7** *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."*

Now let's think for a minute about the message of the first angel. It speaks of "the everlasting gospel" to the world, doesn't it? That's the same gospel Jesus said must go to the world before He comes. And I would submit to you that "the everlasting gospel" is the main point, and that to "fear God and give glory to Him" is part of that gospel. And the part about the judgment hour and the worship of the Creator is calling people back to that "everlasting gospel" they forgot about, or suffer the consequences. And by the way, it's not a coincidence that the language in the last part of **verse 7** sounds a lot like **Exodus 20:11** where it's dealing with the fourth commandment.

Then **Revelation 14: 8** says, *"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of*

her fornication."

Babylon, which represents the papacy and her harlot daughters, or the papacy and apostate Protestantism, has given the whole world the intoxicating drink of her false doctrines, which is a form of spiritual adultery that will cause those that accept her wine, to experience God's wrath.

But what is it that Babylon is really guilty of? She's guilty of perverting "the everlasting gospel." That's why there's a warning that follows the second angel's message in **verses 9-12**. Let's read on:

*"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: **(it simply means that it's not retrievable, there's no way back to salvation)** and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."*

The third angel gives this warning by speaking of receiving the mark of the beast, which involves the Sabbath/Sunday issue, and what's going to happen to those that honor a man-made unholy day instead of a God-made holy day, and then it ends with a divine formula for being made righteous by faith, which is what "the everlasting gospel" is all about.

"The everlasting gospel" is not only the gospel that Jesus said must be preached in all the world, but it's also the same gospel that was given to Adam and Eve in Eden when God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."

This very first prophecy in the Bible contained the promise of redemption. Part of it was a sentence pronounced upon the serpent, and part was a promise to our first parents that the power of our great adversary would finally be broken. This enmity, or this

hatred toward sin, was something supernatural that God put in their hearts, because after they sinned their natures became evil and in harmony with Satan who was also fallen.

In other words, after sin entered, there was no enmity between Satan and Adam and Eve. But when Satan heard that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, he knew that though he had succeeded in depraving human nature, and assimilating it to his own, yet by some mysterious process God would restore to man his lost power and enable him to resist and overcome the powers of darkness.

And so, it 's God's grace, implanted in the soul, that creates enmity against Satan. Without this grace, there would be no hope of ever being set free from Satan's power over us. This new principle of enmity in the soul creates conflict with the prince of darkness where before there was peace. If you learn to hate sin instead of loving it, you can be sure that you have been a partaker of God's grace.

In other words, if we have not come to hate sin, God's grace has not yet done its work upon our hearts. And the thing is, it has to do its work every day, or we will be overcome. There is enmity between fallen human beings and Satan only as we continually place ourselves on God's side and yield obedience to His law, just like Jesus did. That's why the third angel's message says we must *"have the faith of Jesus."* That's how we can *"keep the commandments of God."*

When Satan heard the words, *"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed,"* it was the first gospel sermon ever preached to fallen man, and Adam and Eve, as well as the devil, were informed at that point that sinful human beings would be given power to resist temptation, and that's what the *"everlasting gospel"* will do for every person that will receive it by faith.

And so once again, this enmity on earth between man and Satan is supernaturally put there when one accepts Jesus as Lord and Master. There's no way you can have the power and desire to stop sinning until you make a full surrender to Jesus. This is what the *"everlasting gospel"* is all about. Everlasting means it has never changed; it's always been the same; and it always will be; and like the third angel says, it has something to do with keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Nearly the whole world has forgotten the one commandment God specifically said to remember, hasn't it? And so, I have a few questions for you. Did Adam and Eve keep the seventh-day Sabbath? Yes they did! Did Jesus keep the seventh-day Sabbath? Yes He did! According to **Revelation 14:12**, will God's people in the last days keep the Seventh-day Sabbath? Yes they will! Why? Because "*the everlasting gospel*" has never changed; and what's more, it never will, because **Isaiah 66:22, 23** says we'll keep the Sabbath in the new earth. And so, it doesn't make a bit of sense that Christians are supposed to keep Sunday from the time of Christ's crucifixion till His second coming, only to go back to worshipping on the Sabbath once we get to heaven, does it?

Now, I realize there's a whole lot more that could be said about the three angels' messages, and perhaps we'll study further into it at a future time, but here they are in a nutshell: the first angel starts out making mention of "*the everlasting gospel*", and the last part of the third angel's message explains what that gospel is and how we can obtain the benefits of it through the faith of Jesus, and nearly everything in between is either an encouragement not to procrastinate, or a warning to those that choose to reject this everlasting gospel. That's about as simple as it gets, and I like simple! The first and second angels' messages are united and made complete in the third, and together they constitute "*the everlasting gospel.*"

In ***Selected Messages, book 2, page 111*** it says, "The messages of Revelation 14 are those by which the world is to be tested; they (all three) are the everlasting gospel and are to be sounded everywhere."

Also in ***The Great Controversy, page 453*** it says, "These truths, as presented in Revelation 14, in connection with the 'everlasting gospel,' will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of his appearing. For as the result of the threefold message it is announced, 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' And this message is the last to be given before the coming of the Lord. Immediately following its proclamation, the Son of man is seen by the prophet, coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth."

I want to be one of those harvested out of this sin cursed earth, don't you? In closing I'd like to reread the quote from ***Testimonies, volume 9, pages 19, 20***, but I want to change

it just a little bit by personalizing it, and I hope you'll take it to heart.

"In a special sense **I** have been set in the world as a watchmen and light-bearer. To **me** has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On **me** is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. **I** 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. **I** am to allow nothing else to absorb **my** attention. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given **me** to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be **my** work. The world is to be warned, and **I** am to be true to the trust committed to **me**."

By God's grace, my earnest desire this new year is to become "absorbed" with the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, because it constitutes the sum of "the everlasting gospel", and is the main object of the three angels' messages. I don't want to argue with people about things that don't amount to a hill of beans. I don't want to become absorbed with teachings that draw me away from what the sacrifice of Christ on my behalf will accomplish for my character.

In **Romans 1:16, 17** Paul said he was "*Not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it (the everlasting gospel) is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes...For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.*"

This is the gospel that Jesus said must go to the whole world; the gospel that was delivered to Adam and Eve, the gospel Paul was absorbed with, and the same as "the everlasting gospel" of the three angels' messages.

And if it's your desire to experience and share **this gospel** and not another, I invite you to kneel with me as we pray and ask the Lord to help us stay focused on the one thing that really matters.