

The Binding Off Message

The title to the sermon this morning is, "The Binding Off Message." Now what message do you suppose that is? It's the third angel's message! It's the most important, the most fearful, and yet the most wonderful message in all the Bible for the times in which we live. When God sends a last day warning so important that it's represented as flying in the midst of heaven, He expects every person with reasoning powers to heed that message, don't you think? And we need to fly ourselves as we have opportunity to relay the message just as quickly before probation closes, and as we do, hopefully the fearful judgments pronounced against the worship of the beast and his image will lead every sincere seeker of truth to study the prophecies for themselves so they can avoid receiving the dreadful curse that's coming very soon now.

In *Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, page 98* it says, "To us, as God's servants, has been entrusted the third angel's message, the binding-off message, that is to prepare a people for the coming of the King."

What could be more important than that? Is there anything more important than being prepared for the coming of King Jesus? I can't think of anything. Remember what Jesus said? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose your own soul?" Your job, your school, your friends, your family, even your spouse is not as important as being prepared for the coming of the King. In fact, being prepared yourself is the best thing you can do to be an example to those at your work place, your school, to your friends and family and to your wife or husband. And so, right now at this time in earth's history there is no other message that is more important than the third angel's message.

Here is another statement that identifies the third angel's message as the binding-off message. And by the way, what does it mean to bind something off? It means to finish it, right? It means you're done with whatever you're doing, and that also means that pretty soon God's work for the salvation of souls will be done, and it's the third angel's message that will accomplish that very thing. That's how important it is.

In *Early Writings, page 118* it says, "I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, 'Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention.'"

Does the third angel's message engross your whole mind and attention? Or do other things crowd it out? Nothing else should absorb our attention at this time we're told. That doesn't mean we can't think or study about other things, but it does mean that we should not become so absorbed or captivated or engrossed with other things to the neglect of this binding off message. You do understand that the third angel's message is not a message given by a literal angel, don't you? I think some may be confused about this.

In *Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, page 77* Ellen White says, “I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning.”

If you have received this message, then it means that you are to trumpet the message of the third angel, and that message will separate the wheat from the tares! But we need to understand one very important thing, it isn't the messenger himself that does the selecting and separating, it's the message! Our job is just to give the message, that's the easy part, and then the Holy Spirit can do His part by bringing conviction to the heart. And since the acceptance or rejection of it is what will determine the eternal destiny of the one to whom it is given, it's vitally important that we understand this message and that we deliver it in such a way that will be most inviting of acceptance, because once someone gets turned off to the truth, they rarely get turned on again. And so it's a solemn responsibility, isn't it? But God will help us if we are truly absorbed with the message and especially absorbed with the One who asks us to give it.

Let's turn to **Revelation 14** and read about this most solemn binding off message. We're not going to go into great detail here, because you should already have a basic understanding of the symbols represented in **verses 9-12**, and so we're just going to hit the highlights as we go along.

Revelation 14:9-12, “And the third angel followed them **(the other two)**, saying **(with what kind of a voice?)** a loud voice, **(not a mousy voice or a timid voice or an apologetic voice, but a loud voice)** if any man worship the beast **(the papacy)** and his image **(apostate Protestantism)**, and receive his mark **(Sunday sacredness)** in his forehead, or in his hand **(and we'll talk about what that means in a minute)**, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God **(the 7 last plagues)**, which is poured out without mixture **(or without mercy because human probation is closed)** 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 **(this simply means that the smoke is irretrievable. Of the wicked Psalm 37:20 says “into smoke shall they consume away”)** and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. **(No rest because of a guilty conscience. You can read that in *The Desire of Ages, page 223*. And then these closing words)** Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

Now tell me, what's significant about the forehead? The forehead contains the prefrontal lobe of the brain where our deep thinking and planning and reasoning take place. In other words, those who receive the mark of the beast will have formed a character like their father the devil, and those who receive the seal of God will have become like Christ in character.

As I was studying what information I could find about the frontal lobe of the brain, I found that this is where thoughts of tenderness, love, sympathy, and compassion take place, and that made me think about the physical description of Satan given in *Early Writings, page 152*. Notice what it says there, “His forehead commenced from his eyes to recede. I saw that he had so long bent himself to evil that every good quality was debased, and every evil trait was developed.” That's

kind of scary, isn't it? So don't feel sorry for Satan, or think he will do anything good, because he is beyond help.

In the text we just read it says the mark of the beast will be placed in the forehead, which means that every person who receives that mark will also, in the end, have so bent themselves to evil that every good quality has become debased and every evil trait developed. In other words, the whole world will be filled with people that have become like the devil in character, and because of that they will follow the commandments of men rather than the commandments of God when Sunday worship is enforced by law, and when no one will be able to buy or sell except those who have the mark. In order to save their selfish lives, they will do whatever it takes to keep from being killed when the decree goes forth, and I don't think it's way down the road for this to happen.

From what I see happening in America right now, it looks like people are getting tired of where the woke cancel culture liberal socialist agenda is taking us and the pendulum is already beginning to swing to the conservative right, and that could be a good thing compared to the liberal left, but the problem is, if it swings too far to the right just like it has swung too far to the left, then that's a perfect recipe for religious persecution to begin for those who are proclaiming and living the binding off message. And if the Sunday law doesn't come that way, perhaps it will come through "The Green New Deal" and the environmental global warming evolutionists who believe the earth is billions of years old and are trying to preserve it for billions more. Their trying to save a planet that's soon going to burn, because they don't believe the promise God gave to Noah in **Genesis 8:22**, and I'll let you read that for yourself so you can have something to think about this afternoon. **Genesis 8:22**.

Now, what about receiving the mark in the right hand? What's significant about that? I'd like to allow James White to answer this question, because he makes a lot of sense to me. You'll find this in the ***Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, March 28, 1854***. James writes, "An individual, we will say, is out of provision; his clothes are worn out; what is he to do? He ought to trust firmly in God, who is able to send ravens to feed him. Instead of that he begins to doubt: starvation stares him in the face: he concludes he will keep Sunday, (receive the mark,) not because his intellect has been convinced that it is right, but to secure the privilege of buying and selling. He goes to the merchant to procure some provision. Says the merchant, Why! you are one of those Sabbath-keepers, you have no right to buy. He answers, I have made up my mind to keep it no more, not but that I think it is right, but my family will starve. Merchant: Well, take your oath in regard to the same, and we will sell to you. Sabbath-keeper: I believe it is wrong to swear. Merchant: Well, lift up your hand and affirm. To affirm with uplifted hand is ancient swearing. He does it and has the privilege of buying and selling."

James has a lot more to say about this that we don't have time to read right now, but it makes sense to me that receiving the mark in your forehead means that you really believe that Sunday is God's special day of worship and receiving it in your right hand is for the purpose of being able to buy and sell so you can eat and carry on with life even though you know better. But in either case these people are going to have a rude awakening when the seven last plagues begin to fall.

Only after it's too late to save themselves from the wrath of God they will see that they formed the wrong kind of character.

Within the four verses of **Revelation 14:9-12** God gives the warning and the penalty of following the papacy and apostate Protestantism, but He also gives the solution, or the way out of such a dreadful curse, and what is the way out according to **verse 12**? We must be saints! **Verse 12** doesn't say, "Here is the patience of the sinners", does it? According to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, there is a big difference between saints and sinners, and we are all one or the other, and it's impossible to be both at the same time. We can have a fallen nature and still be a saint, but we can't yield to the temptations of that fallen nature and still be a saint. Does that make sense? There are many texts in the Bible that indicate that sinners are in a lost condition, so guess what? If you have ongoing sin in your life, you are currently lost and must repent and confess your sin before you can be registered as a saint in God's book.

Let's take a look at about a half dozen of those texts. I know this may be elementary for most of us, but perhaps there's someone who doesn't understand that you cannot be a saint and a sinner at the same time. We'll just go through these quickly, so you might want to write them down.

Isaiah 1:28, "And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed." And so, it's clear that sinners are going to be consumed by the fire that comes down from God out of heaven.

Psalms 51:12, 13, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." If a person is a sinner, they need to be restored and converted in order to have "the joy of salvation."

Ezekiel 18:4, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall (**what?**) die." Eternally, because the soul is not immortal.

Matthew 9:13, Here in this verse Jesus says, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Without repentance sinners can't be forgiven, and if they're not forgiven their feet will not leave the ground when Jesus comes.

Luke 15:7, Jesus speaking again, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." So we see here that there are those who need no repentance, they would be the saints, and those who do, which would be the sinners.

John 9:31, Here in this verse we have the blind man Jesus healed, and he says, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." This former blind man's theology is right on, because **Psalms 66:18** says the same thing, God does not hear sinners, unless it's a plea for forgiveness, that He always hears, and the one who worships God and obeys His will He hears. And so, saints He hears, and sinners He doesn't, unless they repent.

So, if you are a sinner, you are guilty of violating the 10 commandments, because **1 John 3:4** says, “sin is the transgression of the law.” In other words, a sinner is one who sins! Plain and simple! That shouldn’t be so difficult to see, but still many people just don’t get it, and perhaps the reason they don’t, is because it’s easier to believe they’re saved in sin, but to believe that is a fatal mistake. A sinner is one who is associated with sin, because that’s what the suffix “ER” on the end of the word means. A sinner is one who is involved with sin, but what about those who have confessed and forsaken their sins and have accepted Jesus as their Saviour? Are they still sinners? NO, because they are no longer guilty, but pardoned or justified, and thus no longer associated or involved with sin, unless like the dog they return to their own vomit again, or like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. We’re going to have this fallen human nature until our change comes, and we’re always free to follow its promptings if we so choose, but as soon as we do, we are registered in the books of heaven as a sinner, and those sins will never be blotted out unless there is true sorrow for sin and a turning away from it.

So, as long as we abide in Christ we will not sin, because Jesus does not sin. Jesus and the devil have nothing in common. As soon as we choose to sin, Jesus has to step outside again and knock at the heart’s door, because when we sin knowingly we then become possessed by another power. The moment we choose not to abide, sin is going to happen, because that’s our nature, and that’s why we need to partake of the divine nature and follow it rather than our fallen nature. We won’t take the time to read it, but **1 John 3:1-10** is very clear that those who abide in Christ do not sin, and those who do are children of the devil, and those kind of children will not be saved.

In **Manuscript 46, May 18, 1904**, notice what Sister White says about the false idea that God is in the sinner. “In *Living Temple* (**that’s Doctor Kellogg’s book on pantheism**) “In *Living Temple* the assertion is made that God is in the flower, in the leaf, in the sinner. (**Now notice what she says**) But God does not live in the sinner; it is the enemy who abides there.” So, if God does not live in the sinner, then the sinner is lost, plain and simple. We’ve got to get with Christ and stay with Christ, because that is our only hope.

Let me share two more quotes with you, because it’s important we understand this. I’ve shared these with you before, but I think we need to fix these things in our minds and never be confused about the difference between saints and sinners and their final reward.

Manuscript Releases, Volume 21, page 35, “No one can . . . occupy middle ground. Men and women are either saints or sinners, (**you see, you can’t be both**) Men and women are either saints or sinners, either entitled to a glorious life of eternity, or doomed to eternal death.”

And the second is from **Signs of the Times, August 22, 1900**, “The sinner must freely surrender his own will to God, and accept Christ as his substitute and surety. He must rely upon Him as the only one who can change a sinner to a saint.”

When **Revelation 14:12** says, “Here is the patience of the saints”, it has great significance, because the word “saint” and “holy” are the same Greek word. Again, I’m going to repeat

myself, because I've shared this with you before, but in Strong's Concordance the word "saint" means to be "Physically pure, morally blameless and ceremonially consecrated."

If we are saints, we will be physically pure, we will observe the health laws we've been given in Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, why? because our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, and these vessels God has given us must be a fit place for Him to dwell. Now, it's true that some have been blessed more than others with good health and strong bodies, because much of it has to do with what we've inherited from our parents, but God expects us to do the best we can with what we have, and He will accept nothing less.

If we are saints, we will be morally blameless. Since the ten Commandments make up the moral law, to be morally blameless is to confess and forsake all known sin and through the power of the Holy Spirit obey what's written in that law. And we're not just talking outward obedience here, we're talking about the fact that the law is spiritual, and we must be spiritual in order to obey from the heart, and that's the only kind of obedience that will help us form the right kind of character. Remember what Jesus said about the law? He said if we hate our brother, we are guilty of murder, and if a married man lusts after another woman it's the same as committing adultery with her. And so, we must be partakers of the divine nature, because our fallen nature does not have the ability to make us spiritually minded.

If we are saints, we will be ceremonially consecrated. That means we will have a daily routine that includes Bible study and prayer. It means we will dedicate ourselves to God anew each morning. It means we will ask for the Holy Spirit to alert us to temptation throughout the day, and when it comes, as it surely will, we must take the way of escape by submitting to God rather than yielding to temptation. This is what it means to be a saint, and knowing these things gives us a way to examine our own hearts to see if we be in the faith.

So, when we are without Christ, we are sinners, but when we are crucified with Christ, we are saints, because Jesus lives out His life within the saint. Dying to self is the greatest battle that was ever fought, we're told, and remaining dead after we die is a part of that greatest battle. Conversion is a daily experience and not some flight of feeling that comes over a person once in a lifetime. Dying to self is the choice of causing your fallen human nature to suffer rather than gratifying it, and this is exactly what Jesus experienced throughout His earthly life?

Notice what Paul writes in **Hebrews 2:10**, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through **(what?)** sufferings." **(Now skip down to verses 16-18)**, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. **(Now listen, because here's the punch line)** For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour **(assist)** them that are tempted."

Now, there are sufferings of all kinds, isn't there? There is mental suffering and physical suffering and many different headings under these, but when Jesus "suffered being tempted" it

was a type of suffering most Christians don't think about, but it's a suffering we must all experience if we would be ready to meet Jesus in peace when He comes.

The apostle Paul said Jesus suffered being tempted! What does that mean? It means that every time Jesus was tempted, and **Hebrews 4:15** makes it clear that He was tempted in all points such as we are, every time Jesus was tempted He chose to cause His fallen human nature to suffer rather than appeasing it. You see, our fallen nature loves to sin, and it's not happy unless it's sinning, and it's never satisfied, and the more we feed it the bigger its appetite becomes. Jesus never fed it, and we will not continue to feed it if we are saints that have "the faith of Jesus."

Let's look at another text in **1 Peter 4:1**, because it relates to what Paul wrote. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh (**fallen flesh**) hath (**what?**) ceased from sin."

Do you get it? If we are not causing our fallen flesh to suffer, we are yielding to sin, and if we are yielding to sin, we are lost. However, if you find yourself in this condition, I've got good news! **1 John 2:1** says "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Jesus Christ the Holy One, Jesus Christ the King of saints, not of sinners.

Well you say, "What does all this have to do with the third angel's message?" Friends, it has everything to do with it! We've known for a long time, most of us, that the beast is the papacy, right? and that the image is apostate Protestantism, and that the mark is Sunday sacredness, and that the seal of God is the seventh day Sabbath. We know also that those who worship the beast and his image will suffer the 7 last plagues, and that they will finally burn to ashes and never wake up. But what we haven't understood and proclaimed as we should is "the patience of the saints."

To remain steadfast is going to require something in these last remnants of time; it's going to require "patience", or cheerful endurance in the face of great apostasy. That's what the word "patience" means. If we don't have it, we're going to abandon the faith and join the ranks of the opposition and think we're doing God's service as we betray the saints who truly do "keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus." We can understand all these things, but if we don't have the "patience of the saints", if we don't possess it, what good is it? If we teach people all these things but don't teach them how to be saints, what good is it? Never forget it, it's through suffering that we develop a Christlike character; it's through causing our sinful nature to suffer that we prepare ourselves for the return of our Lord.

During the late 1880s, because the subject of justification by faith was being widely agitated through the preaching of Elders Waggoner and Jones, many people were writing to Ellen White and asking, "Is justification by faith the third angel's message? Are they the same thing?" And so, she wrote an article in the **Review and Herald, April 1, 1890**, and said, "Justification by faith is the third angel's message in verity." In other words, justification by faith equals the third angel's message. You see, the fact that justification by faith is the third angel's message is not just true, but very true. This is actually what it is! The third angel's message is much more than a warning

against receiving the mark of the beast. It's an invitation to become a saint. That's how we avoid the mark! Only saints can truly keep the commandments of God, and only saints have the same kind of faith that Jesus had.

And so, which of the four verses describing the third angel's message deals with justification by faith? Only **verse 12**! Justification by faith is the really important part of the third angel's message, it's the positive side of the message. Giving only the warning is not giving the message unless it is accompanied, or follows up by the answer of how to avoid the consequences the warning gives. We can spend thousands of dollars on billboard campaigns and by putting full page ads in national newspapers exposing the papacy as the man of sin, and Sunday sacredness as the counterfeit Sabbath, or by putting this kind of content on YouTube or Facebook and other social media sites, and I'm not saying it's wrong to do that, but if that's all we do, we're not giving the third angel's message. If that's all we do, we're just scaring the people without bringing them peace. We're just arousing them without satisfying the hearts' desire. We're just startling them, but not calming their fears. Do you see?

Evangelism, pages 184, 185 says, "The third angel's message calls for the presentation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and this truth must be brought before the world; but the great Center of attraction, Jesus Christ, must not be left out of the third angel's message. . . The sinner must ever look toward Calvary; and with the simple faith of a little child, he must rest in the merits of Christ, accepting His righteousness and believing in His mercy. Laborers in the cause of truth should present the righteousness of Christ."

During a campmeeting many years ago a minister asked Ellen White "what is faith?", and she responded back to him with the following question. "Do you believe what your Father tells you? Of course I do" he said, and then she said, "that's faith." In the **1888 Materials page 818** it says, "Faith is rendering to God the intellectual powers, abandonment of the mind and will to God, making Christ the only door to enter into the kingdom of heaven."

This means we can't buy it, we can't manufacture it, and we can't give it to someone else, but we can cultivate it, and we must! **Romans 12:3** says everyone born into this world has been given a measure of faith, and according to **Romans 10:17** it will strengthen as you listen to what God has to say in His word, that's a promise.

If justification by faith is the third angel's message, then what is it in simple terms? It is coming to Jesus just as you are for forgiveness and cleansing. It is exchanging your sins for His righteousness. It is forgiveness for sins that are past. It is becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. It means that the chains of sinful habit have been broken in your life. It's new desires, new purposes and new goals in life and requires full and complete surrender of the heart. It's being a partaker of the divine nature. Justification by faith is being able to stand before God JUST – IF – I'D never sinned, isn't that wonderful? That's the good news! But you know what? As wonderful as justification by faith is, it has absolutely no power to keep us from falling back into our old way of life. Justification means that we have hold on eternal life now, but in order to continue to hold on, we need an ongoing experience, an ongoing power.

Selected Messages, book 1, page 397 says, “It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.” This is a perfect description of what sanctification is; it’s a transmission of power enabling us to surrender continually, and be obedient continually. It’s what enables us to remain free from sin once we have become free; to remain a saint once we’ve become one. Sanctification is holiness, we’re told, and holiness is wholeness for God, continually.

And so, sanctification is important to the equation, isn’t it? Without it we cannot remain just once we have become just. Sanctification, we are told, is the work of a lifetime. A lifetime of trying to get rid of sin? NO! Justification gets rid of sin and sanctification keeps us rid of it, and they both come from Christ the Author and Finisher of our faith.

And so, sanctification is not an instantaneous work, is it? No! It’s a lifelong work. It is continually dying to self every moment of every day for the rest of your life. That’s what God can accomplish through the power of the Holy Spirit. But what about justification? Is it instantaneous? Yes! How long does it take for God to forgive you when you ask? How long does it take to be converted? To be born again? To be baptized with the Holy Spirit? Justification is immediate! The work that leads to justification, the wooing of the Holy Spirit, may be a long protracted process, but justification itself is immediate.

I still remember as if it were yesterday when I gave my heart to Jesus and accepted Him as my personal Saviour from sin. I walked into a church and heard for the first time in my life what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary for me, and when the call was made to come forward and acknowledge His sacrifice in my behalf, I was changed, instantly! The Holy Spirit created within me a new heart and when I walked out of the church that day I was different than when I came in, and life for me would never be the same. Praise God! And He will do the same for anyone, regardless of what sins they’ve committed in the past if they’re willing to surrender all to Jesus. What a wonderful God we serve, amen?

And so, the warning of the third angel must be given, yes! but in order for it to have any saving good, a call to be saints must be the icing on the cake, because only holy beings can keep a holy law, and to be holy beings the righteousness of Christ must become our righteousness by faith.

In ***The Review and Herald, December 23, 1890***, it says, in the end “One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other, – Christ our righteousness.” Justification by faith is the burden of the third angel’s message. Unless we are found to be saints, under one pretext or another, we will be found to be worshippers of the beast and his image. I will admit, there’s incentive in the warning to become saints. But through faith there is power in the blood to actually become. As we begin to wind down, I’d like to read a statement that will help bring a balance to the message today.

This statement is found in ***Last day Events, page 200*** and it says, “The Lord in his great mercy sent a most precious message to his people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to

receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of his Spirit in a large measure."

This has reference to the latter rain and the loud cry, does it not? Do you know what constitutes the loud cry? It's the third and fourth angels' messages combined. You can read that in **Early Writings, page 277**. But I want you to notice something. The loud cry is the loud cry of the third angel, not the fourth. The fourth angel joins the third and gives power and force to his message, which we've already determined is the message of justification by faith. The reason the fourth angel's message is a message of separation from corporate sin rather than personal sin, is because we are to come out of her so we don't partake of "her sins", not our own, but "her sins", meaning Babylon, which is every false or apostate religion, and this is what will give power and force to the third angel's message of justification by faith. Now let me explain why that is.

In **Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, page 265** it says, ". . . when His (**God's**) people are found in sin they should at once take decided measures to put that sin from them, that His frown may not rest upon them all. But if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins." That's corporate accountability, that's the fourth angel's message.

Then again on **page 269** she writes, "God holds His people, as a body, responsible for the sins existing in individuals among them."

So, as people see that God holds them personally responsible for corporate sin, or the sins of others whom they are a part of, they begin to realize that they cannot be free from personal sin unless they are also free from corporate sin. Does that make sense? This is how the fourth angel gives power and force to the message of the third angel. Let me give you just one example, of which there are many in the Bible.

Even though Lot was justified by faith, and he was, because **2 Peter 2:8** says he was a righteous man, which means he was justified. Even though Lot was separate from personal sin, corporate sin would have destroyed him if he had refused to leave Sodom when he was told to leave, isn't that right? In **The Great Controversy, page 343** it says, "God's principles and dealings with men are ever the same." Also, **Malachi 3:8** says God never changes, and **Hebrews 13:8** says He is "the same yesterday today and forever." So if we don't separate from corporate sin when God says to separate, even though we are a righteous person and justified by faith like Lot was, how can we expect a different outcome than Lot's wife? The only conclusion we can come to is, if we don't do what God tells us to do when He tells us to do it, we lose our justification, because to not do what God says to do is a violation of the first commandment of having another God before Him. So is the fourth angel's message important to our salvation? Yes it is.

Justification by faith has always been the emphasis of the everlasting gospel, even though the third angel's message wasn't really understood and proclaimed until it was given to our Advent

pioneers in the 1840s, nevertheless it has been true from the earliest times. The book of Job is thought by most Bible scholars to be the oldest book of the Bible, and the entire theme of Job seems to be echoed in **chapter 9:2** where he asks, "How should man be just with God?" That was the all-important question to Job. This is the same question that tortured the mind of Martin Luther as he ascended Pilate's staircase on his knees, "How should a man be just with God?" This was the question on the minds of the multitude on the day of Pentecost when they realized, through the preaching of Peter, that they had crucified the Saviour of the world. "How should a man be just with God?" And **Romans 1:17** gives the answer to this all-important question where it simply says, "The just shall live by faith." "The faith of Jesus." That's what saints have!

"How should a man be just with God" is also the question on the minds of people today, isn't it? and both the third and fourth angel's messages give the answer when they are presented as they should be. The loud cry of the third angel, which includes the fourth, as we've already seen, is a call to endure to the end as saints by being obedient to all ten of the commandments of God and to separate from those on a corporate level who are not keeping those commandments. Our advent pioneers had to do it, and that's the reason **Revelation 18:2** says, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen", it's mentioned twice because we have to do what our pioneers did the first time. Do you want to endure to the end as a saint? It begins by full surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ and ends the same way, and full surrender includes separation from both sin and sinners. Let me read it to you as we draw to a close.

Patriarchs and Prophets, page 167, "The state of corruption and apostasy that in the last days would exist in the religious world, was presented to the prophet John in the vision of Babylon, 'that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' Before its destruction the call is to be given from heaven, 'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' As in the days of Noah and Lot, there must be a marked separation from sin and sinners." And thus we have the third and fourth angel's messages combined in these last days.

Oh friend, this is the present truth for these last days, and this message is not going to change or morph into something different, because it's the binding off message with no others to follow. This is it! And as difficult as it may be, we need to give heed to the combination of these two messages in order to be counted on the Lord's side in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. May God give us the courage to follow this inspired counsel.