

Rev. 14:6. the Everlasting Gospel

by Horatius Bonar

The everlasting gospel is the true good news of God's free love, great gift, propitiation for sin, righteousness, and kingdom, which is to be preached to all nations for a witness before the end comes.

Scripture: Matthew 4:23, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, John 3:16, Romans 3:25, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 1:14, Hebrews 13:8, 1 Peter 1:25, Revelation 14:6

Topics: "The Everlasting Gospel", "Urgency of Proclamation"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the urgency and universality of the everlasting gospel as proclaimed in Revelation 14:6, highlighting that this glad message is to be shared widely as the end approaches. He explains that angels play a significant role in the dissemination of the gospel, acting as invisible agents that stir human hearts to spread the good news. The gospel is characterized by God's free love, the sacrificial gift of His Son, and the promise of righteousness and access to His kingdom. Bonar reassures that this everlasting gospel is unchanging and relevant for all ages and nations, urging listeners to respond as the hour of judgment draws near. He calls for a renewed commitment to proclaiming this message with urgency and clarity.

Transcript

"Having the everlasting gospel to preach unto those who dwell on the earth."--Revelation 14:6.

This worldwide proclamation of the glad message has been going on for ages. It is to be wider, and louder, and more urgent as the end draws near. The gospel is to be preached to all nations for a witness before the end comes.

The proclamation is made by an angel--an angel flying in mid-heaven, the position of the sun at noon--that all may see and hear. Angels in the book of Revelation, are representatives of the invisible agencies at work on earth.

They are living and personal agencies, though invisible--superhuman powers, setting in motion the whole machinery of the world; and in the case of the present angel, the special machinery for the promulgation of the everlasting gospel. This book of the Revelation (like Daniel and Zechariah) takes us 'within the veil that hides the material from the spiritual', the human from the superhuman. It gives us the hidden, or supernatural side of Church history; the secret springs and invisible agencies which produce events and facts--changes for good or evil; it gives us a glimpse of the true laws of nature, or at least of those living

powers and processes by which these laws are regulated and made to subserve the Creator's purpose. It shows us that angels have far more to do with our world and its history than we suppose; it keeps before us, what is so much needed in our day, the supernatural world of intelligence, and life, and strength, outside of ours--yet quite as real and true--closely though invisibly connected with us, and operating at all points, animate and inanimate, spiritual and physical, upon the course of things in this lower sphere of ours. These 'ministering angels' (Hebrews 1:14) have far more numerous and various ministries in connection with earth and its history than we usually ascribe to them.

This angel is seen 'preaching' (he has the 'evangel to evangelize,' as the words are literally), making the good news known. Not that he actually preaches as men do; both by stirring up human agencies and in other more secret ways communicating it to men. Satan and his angels work for evil, in the dissemination of error, the sowing of tares, the inventing of strong delusions; and why should it be thought incredible that good angels might, in their sphere of good, do the like service for truth and righteousness? How Satan tempted Christ--how he made Ananias lie to God--how he sowed the tares--how he leavens the world with error--how he beguiles us with his subtlety--we know not; but he does so. Just as the law was given by angels, as the 'word was spoken by angels' (Hebrews 2:2), as 'the angel testified these things in the Churches' (Revelation 22:16), so this angel in mid-heaven may be understood as proclaiming the everlasting gospel. Angelic lips may not be heard; but human lips, set in motion by agencies which eye has not seen, may proclaim it. There is here a new proclamation of an old thing; a re-promulgation on a wider circle of the everlasting gospel in the last days, just before the great act of judgment is consummated.

I. The GOSPEL. It is a 'glad message' from God to man; good news from heaven to earth. In it we have not man speaking to God, but God to man; not earth crying to heaven, but heaven to earth; it is love descending, not love ascending. It is the gladdest of all glad tidings that ever came to earth. It is the true good news--

(1) It is the true good news of God's free love. To be good news, it must be the news of love. And for that love to be available or accessible to the sinner, it must be absolutely and unconditionally free. God's free love is the very essence and marrow of the gospel. And it is as large as it is free.

(2) It is the true good news of God's great gift. God gave His Son--and the Son gave Himself. Here is a gift beyond all measure and price--an 'unspeakable gift.' Of this the gospel is the glad message.

(3) It is the true good news of God's propitiation for sin. It was not a mere gift, but a gift which was to be a propitiation--an atonement--a sacrificial gift--the gift of a substitute and surety. One special part of the value and suitableness of this gift--that which made it so pre-eminently a gift of sinners--was its sacrificial character. It was an offering for sin. It contained cleansing and reconciling blood. Yes, Christ is the propitiation for our sins! God has set Him forth as a propitiation. This is the very gladness of the glad message.

(4) It is the true good news of God's righteousness. He is the righteousness of God--and He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We bring glad tidings of a divine righteousness in preaching the gospel of the grace of God--righteousness for the unrighteous, yes, for the most unrighteous of the sons of men!

(5) It is the true good news of God's kingdom. The 'gospel of the kingdom' is its special designation. It is good news of a kingdom, and of the new and living way, and of the open gate into that kingdom for

sinner. There is a glorious kingdom--there is free access to it; its gates are open; God bids us welcome. This is our gospel. Enter in, O man, O sinner, into the kingdom of God!

II. The EVERLASTING gospel. We read of eternal or everlasting salvation, eternal or everlasting redemption; and here is the same word applied to the good news concerning these.

(1) Its past is everlasting--It came forth from the bosom of Him from whom the only-begotten Son came; it is the embodiment of His eternal purpose. It was hidden in the eternal ages; and from these it has come out to us. It is no new thing to God; no unexpected thing devised to meet a sudden emergency. It is from everlasting--like the love and grace out of which it sprang.

(2) Its future is everlasting--It is forever and ever. Its gladness is forever; its provisions last forever; and what it does for those who believe it, it does forever. The eternal future is filled with the trophies and bright with the splendors of this glorious gospel.

(3) It is illimitable--It extends on all sides, through all space as well as through all time. Its center is the cross; its circumference is nowhere, or rather everywhere, round the whole universe of God.

(4) It is unchangeable--Like Him of whom it brings good news, it is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is without variableness or shadow of turning. One gospel, only one--yet that one sufficient for worlds of sinners--the same forever. It does not know progress or progressive development, for it is perfect.

(5) It is the gospel of every age and nation--It is not for one century more than another, but for all; not for one nation more than another, but for all. It suits the nineteenth century as truly as the first; civilized Europe as truly as barbarian Madagascar. It is the gospel for the ages--in every age the same, supplying the same needs, addressing itself to the same kinds of sinners pardoning the same sins, removing the same fears and sorrows. It is the everlasting gospel; more truly such than the everlasting hills or the everlasting stars. It is a gospel for fallen men--human, and yet divine--of earth, and yet of heaven.

And this gospel is to be enforced in the last days by a special argument--'Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.' The gospel changes not, yet each age furnishes its own potent reasons for receiving it--the last age the most potent and irresistible of all. Now or never! For the last trumpet is about to sound. Now or never! For the son of man is just at hand!

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