

## The Eternal Gospel Will be Proclaimed

***“Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth –to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said in a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water.’”***

**Revelation 14:6-7**

These words we read from one of John's recorded visions of the end of time, the time when the Lord comes in all his glory to gather “(Those who) were purchased from among mankind and offered as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb,” (Rev. 14:4) are the words chosen to be the basis for Martin Luther's funeral sermon. At first glance they may seem an unusual choice to share with those mourning the passing from this life to the next of this instrument of God through whom Scripture, Baptism, and Holy Communion were restored to the church as the only way to come to know who God is.

Yet looking more closely, these words also describe the Spirit given confidence in the power of the gospel message Martin Luther had in life. No matter what opposition to the eternal gospel of the love God the Father showering that love through the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ on all those who sit on the face of the earth, God himself promises the eternal gospel will be proclaimed. Proclaiming this eternal gospel of Jesus' life for me which gives me eternal hope, joy, and peace mine through grace alone, by faith in Jesus alone, from the words of Scripture alone is the life to which God had called Martin Luther.

Dr Martin Luther wrote words of hymns that proclaim that Spirit given confidence in the triumph of the eternal gospel message including:

Though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us,  
We tremble not, we fear no ill; they shall not overpower us.  
This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will,  
He can harm us none. He's judged; the deed is done!  
One little Word can fell him. (CW 200 v 3)

And that Word is Jesus!

What about us? What about you and me? How can these inspired words from Revelation give us comfort, peace, and purpose in our lives today?

We live in times not so unlike the days of Martin Luther. We see opposition to the eternal gospel in many shapes and forms. Perhaps we see it in the false teachings from many church bodies who claim to be Christian and yet finding the eternal gospel message in their activities and message is a real challenge. Perhaps we see it in the plethora of anti-Christ religions and groups. Perhaps we see it in the competition for our time and talents in the sea of keeping up with our neighbors in material possessions, prestige, or influence. Perhaps we see opposition to proclaiming the eternal gospel from our family, friends, or co-workers as we live our lives today. Wherever God has called us to serve, whichever ministry for which God has created us as individuals, we too can rely on God's promise that the eternal gospel will be proclaimed to the

ends of the earth, "to every nation, tribe, language, and people" through his chosen messengers.

500 years ago, one of those messengers was a man by the name of Martin Luther. Perhaps the faces of "every nation, tribe, language, and people" are miles away and we can be part of sending messengers to them. But for each of us those faces are also in our families; spouses and children, parents and in-laws. Or maybe those faces are our longtime neighbors or new people with strange customs moving into our circle of acquaintances. Or maybe those faces are co-workers or friends with whom we enjoy spending time. We too have been given the eternal gospel to proclaim to those around us.

And God is faithful as he keeps his promises. The day will come when all mankind will kneel before him in fear. Some will kneel in terror of the just God who will deny knowing those who denied knowing his Son. But we will kneel before him in awe at the power and grace he has in the past and continues through the ages to shower upon his own from "every nation tribe, language, and people" because of his Son.

The Word they still shall let remain, nor any thanks have for it;  
He's by our side upon the plain with his good gifts and Spirit.  
And do what they will –hate, steal, hurt, or kill---  
Though all may be gone, our victory is won;  
The kingdom's ours forever! (CW 200 v 4)

Take time now to thank God for his faithfulness to all of his promises, especially his promise to preserve the eternal gospel through all of time. Ask your heavenly Father to help you see those to whom he has called you to proclaim the eternal gospel. Pray he will send his Spirit to give you the words. Also pray he will strengthen and preserve you as to proclaim the eternal gospel in your words backed up by godly actions and attitudes. Work and rest secure knowing you are God's own child and he will guard and keep you through life because he is the author of the eternal gospel. Come to him through Jesus because we know God promises to hear our every word when we approach him through the Word.

*Written by Kathie Wendland*