

# **“Rest & Rewards”**

(Rev. 14:6-13)

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**Oct. 28, 2007a.m.**  
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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. The weary pilgrim**

Dr. Morrison spoke at the Winona Lake Conference about his trip around the world, preaching and teaching the gospel truth. He went on the trip at the same time that Theodore Roosevelt went to Africa. Morrison preached the gospel at every port. “Teddy” went to Africa to do some exploring and shoot a few wart hogs. When he came back, he was accorded a reception such as few living men had. The governor and the mayor greeted him, the bands played, and countless thousands thronged the wharf to welcome him.

When Dr. Morrison returned home, the governor of the state didn’t come to meet him, nor did the mayor or the police force. The fire department never noticed him. No flags were waving, no whistles blowing. He did not even have a relative waiting for him. President Roosevelt, on the other hand, boarded a train and had the same sort of reception all over again when he reached his home city. He was lauded and honored all the way.

Morrison also boarded a train and went home. He did not have a reception at all. Nobody met him. The only person who recognized him was the old baggage master, and he just said, “Hello, there!” in a casual sort of way.

*Morrison said: “I picked up my heavy bags and started off, all alone. I could not help contrasting the homecoming of President Roosevelt with my own. God had privileged me to lead ten thousand souls to Christ on that trip—and yet there I was, without a soul to meet me! Nobody cared. Suddenly I stopped. A new, glorious truth had gripped me. And I found myself saying aloud, slowly, exultantly, “Maybe I’m not home yet! Maybe I’m not home!”*

—Words in Season

### **B. The weary pilgrims of the Tribulation**

1. Unspeakable suffering!
2. Will they ever get rewarded for their efforts?
3. The answer is found in Rev. 14:13

***“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”***

4. “for their deeds will follow them.”???
5. What about you?
  - a. Are you tired?
  - b. Will you ever get rewarded for your labors on this earth?

## **II. Review**

### **A. Revelation of God’s plan for mankind**

### **B. The seven years of Tribulation**

1. The seven seals & seven trumpets
2. Between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpets

### **C. Now...some angelic proclamations**

## **III. Text**

### **A. The Final Invitation (v.6-7)**

***“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.” (v.6)***

1. ***“Another Angel”***
  - a. Like the ones with the seals and trumpets
2. Addressing all the people of the earth
  - a. ***“to every nation, tribe, language and people”***
  - b. The current growth of Christianity
3. ***“proclaiming the eternal gospel”***
  - a. The good news regarding Jesus, the Son of God
  - b. A “public invitation”

4. It also includes a serious warning

***“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 heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.’ (v.7)***

- a. There is one gospel
  - 1. It contains the marvelous offer of salvation
    - a. The free pardon
  - 2. But it likewise contains a warning of punishment to those who reject it
- b. The message goes out world-wide
  - 1. Don’t know how
  - 2. Only that all will hear it
  - 3. Nobody will be able to say they weren’t warned
- c. Last call to repent and be saved!
  - 1. Worship God or suffer the consequences

## **B. The Fall of Babylon the Great (v. 8)**

***“A second angel followed and said, ‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.’ (v.8)***

- 1. Remember—this is a preview of the end
  - a. Details in chapters 17 & 18
  - b. Let’s wait till then
- 2. Babylon can refer to either:
  - a. False system of religion
    - 1. Roman Catholicism?
    - 2. Islam?

b. An economic power

1. Iran?

2. Iraq?

3. I'll share who I think they are

### C. The Frightening Warning (v. 9-11)

1. Another angelic warning

*(9) A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, (10) he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. (11) And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."*

2. Still not too late

3. Warned against accepting the mark of the Beast

a. 666 on the hand or forehead

b. A sign of obedience to Satan

4. The plight of those who reject Jesus

a. They will suffer the wrath of God on their sins

b. They will be tormented by fire and burning sulfur (brimstone)

1. In the presence of the holy angels

2. In the presence of the Lamb

c. A preview of hell

d. Forever and ever

1. The worst part

2. 10,000 years—just started

5. The same awaits all today who die having rejected Jesus...v.11

***“There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.”***

- a. I’m called to warn you of what lies ahead
- b. Very unpopular topic in most churches
- c. But there is a Hell

\*warning our children

6. Our urgency in sharing the Gospel

- a. My goal in every sermon
- b. You need to get friends and family here
- c. Let the Holy Spirit use my words

## **D. The Fate of the Faithful (v. 12-13)**

***1. They will “keep the faith” despite their suffering***

***(12) This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.***

- a. The Tribulation Saints will hang on despite unspeakable horrors
- b. They will keep the commandments of God
  - a. “the saints who obey God’s commandments”***
  - b. They will have to choose to obey God rather than the Antichrist
- c. They will keep the faith
  - 1. ***“and remain faithful to Jesus.” (v.13)***
  - 2. But the literal Greek
    - a. The saints that ***“keep the faith of Jesus”***

3. What a testimony
  - a. (II Timothy 4:7)—“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, *I have kept the faith.*”
  - b. My tombstone: “Rick kept *the faith*”
4. It means I finished strong
  - a. Serving Christ is a marathon
  - b. (I Cor. 16:13)—“Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong
5. Keeping the faith is not for wimps
  - a. The most courageous men and women the world has ever seen are Christians!

#### **D. The Fate of the Faithful (v. 12-13)**

##### *2. They will be “blessed”... especially in death*

- a. The voice from Heaven (v.13)

*(13) Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.”*

- b. Keeping the faith will lead to suffering....v.13
  1. As a matter of fact—many of them die!
- c. Yet they are called “**Blessed**”
  1. “happy”
  2. Trade persecution for paradise

#### **D. The Fate of the Faithful (v. 12-13)**

##### *3. They will receive rest from their labor*

- a. Firefighters in California

1. 48 hours straight
- b. Rest isn't just sleeping
  1. The Greek
    1. *"the ceasing of strenuous soldiering"*
    2. A change for the better
- c. There's a difference between "work" and "labor"
  1. Talk with man about how much he loves what he is doing
  2. It's not "laborious"
- d. God never promised you rest this side of Heaven
  1. This is where the work is to be done
    1. The middle of the race
    2. Don't start coasting until you're home
    3. The closer you get, the harder you push
- g. Keep your eyes on the goal
  1. Keep your eyes on your home—
  2. Remember the coming rest

## **D. The Fate of the Faithful (v. 12-13)**

### ***4. They will be rewarded fairly for all their labor***

- a. Doing good matters
  1. You do not labor in vain (I Cor. 15:58)
  2. You won't lose this investment
    - a. They will follow you
  4. Great reward for Tribulation Saints

- a. And they will deserve it
- b. Investment Seminars
  - 1. How to get the most from your investments
  - 2. How to avoid bad investments
  - 3. No crashes in Heaven's stock market!

## **E. Five thoughts regarding rewards in heaven**

### ***1. There are major differences between Heavenly rewards & Salvation***

- **Rewards are a result of your work...Salvation is a result of God's work**

- a. Salvation comes from God's work

*John 3:16—For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever should believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life*

- b. Rewards come from your deeds

- 1. Rev. 14:13 “for your deeds will follow you”

- 2. When “the books are opened”

- 3. I Cor. 3:14 “*If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.*”

- **Rewards must be earned...Salvation is a free gift**

- a. Romans 11:6— “*And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.*”

- b. If you have to pay anything for it...it's not a gift

- c. ...and you could never do enough to afford salvation

- **Rewards can be lost.....Salvation can not**

- a. I Cor. 3:11-15

*“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. (12) If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, (13) his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. (14) If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. (15) If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”*

- b. Heavenly rewards based on earthly motives
- c. “Why” did you do it????
- d. *“Doing the right thing for the wrong reason”*

## **F. Five thoughts regarding rewards in heaven**

### ***2. Heavenly investments are more valuable than earthly investments***

#### a. No security down here

- 1. California wildfires
- 2. Foreclosures
- 3. Stock market
- 4. Auto workers

#### b. Matthew 6:19-21

<sup>19</sup> Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- c. How rich will you be in heaven???
- d. Will all your assets be left behind?

### ***3. It’s okay...and wise... to try to accrue rewards in heaven***

There are several reasons why you should want to serve Jesus

- ***It should be a natural response to the love God has shown you***

- a. In that while I was a sinner, Christ loved me
- b. I love Him because He first loved me
- c. As a natural response – Ephesians 2:10

<sup>10</sup> *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

- ***It will help you avoid the earthly consequences of sin***

- a. Sin results in broken marriages
- b. Sin results in scarred kids
- c. Sin results in lost reputations
- d. Sin results in broken health
- e. Sin can lead to financial ruin

- ***It will allow you to enjoy the earthly benefits of righteous living***

1. To bear fruit

Gal. 5:22-23—“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

2. To enjoy life

I Peter 3:10-12—“He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile; <sup>11</sup> Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> for the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

- ***God wants you to work for eternal rewards***

- a. We are told to strive for various “crowns” (rewards)
- b. If you do “good” you will also do “well”

## **E. Five thoughts regarding rewards in heaven**

### **4. *How you live today will determine how you will live eternally***

#### **a. *“for your deeds will follow you”***

1. Your every deed is being recorded
2. The book of your life will be opened
3. Apart from their salvation, every believer will get exactly what they deserve

#### **b. People spend a lifetime preparing for retirement**

1. Want to ensure they are comfortable for their “golden years”
2. Saving so they don’t run out of money

#### **c. Yet....are you preparing for life after death?**

### **5. *There’ll be some real surprises when you get to Heaven***

#### **a. Some who you expect to be a “big shot”**

1. The rich and the powerful
  - a. Put their names on buildings
  - b. Lead great churches
2. Their role in heaven may not be so exalted
2. They got the “what” right and the “why” wrong
  - a. May have served for the applause of man

#### **b. Some behind the scenes workers with a huge heavenly investment**

1. Based on the “fruit of the spirit”
2. Based on how you used what God gave you

#### **c. The parable of the talents**

1. God will hold you accountable for how you used what he gave you
2. And for serving for the right reasons

### **III. Summary**

#### **A. One final difference between rewards and salvation**

1. With heavenly rewards, you'll get exactly what you deserve. With salvation, you'll get exactly what you don't deserve.
2. If you got what you deserved based on your effort, you'd get hell
3. Christ took what you deserved for you on the Cross....Grace