

*Let us pray: Heavenly Father, left to our own devices we would have destroyed your church long ago. However, You have preserved Your Church and You continue to preserve it. Please, Lord, continue to bless and preserve us in the truth of Your Gospel as we continue to live out our days this side of heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The portion of Scripture before us today is found in the Revelation of Jesus Christ as told by Saint John, the fourteenth chapter beginning at the sixth verse:

***6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— 7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear***

***God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”***

And now may the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing and acceptable to you, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Dear Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

It is this epistle lesson that teaches everyone who reads the Bible about Doctor Martin Luther. You see it in the text, do you not? An angel comes who preaches the everlasting Gospel, the Gospel of truth, the Gospel of love... the Gospel of forgiveness. This is the message that Luther came to preach to all who would listen to him and this is the exact same message that those we are blessed and privileged to hear every week.

However, we also know that to take this verse and apply it to only Doctor Luther would be a grave mistake. While this verse does indeed talk about the angel who would come and share the gospel, how many of those angels do you have in your own life? Your pastor? Your spouse? Your child? Your parents? So many ‘angels’ whom God has sent to tell you the great message of His love and of His mercy.

And with this Gospel comes the greatest blessing that we could ever receive: this Gospel tells us about our Savior Jesus Christ. Our Savior who would give up His life for us; our Savior who would hang on a cross for us; our Savior who would rise from the dead for us, Jesus Christ is who this Gospel is speaking about. And now, for all that He has done and continues to do for us we can ***Give Glory to God!***

To see the broader picture of this text we need to understand what is before it. With this text being in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, I can assume you’ve all read the first thirteen chapters to know what the story is so far, right? But for those who have not recently read the Book of Revelation we need to know that this passage comes just after a description of the great dragon or beast. This great beast would spread many a blasphemy and perform many ‘miracles’ in his own right... and thus would lead many people away from the worship of the one true God. And with this beast on the earth spreading lies and turning people away from God, the angel appears to share the Gospel. Sounds pretty familiar, no?

This side of heaven those of the world will try to convince and show us foolish Christians just how smart and right they are. They will show that this world must have come into being by accident. They will show

us that they can predict anything that is going to happen... or at least they will try. They will show us the great miracles that they can do by 'raising' people from the 'dead,' or by growing people parts on animals... or various other 'miracles' that will cause many people to 'ooh' and 'aah.'

This world is full of lies and blasphemies that have been spread from the beginning. God is not all powerful, for if He were there would be no wrong in this world. God does not exist for if He did He would show Himself to me and I would believe in Him. God is nothing because I can state with scientific conjecture that all this 'world' stuff came to be by accident and evolution... we don't need your God. And far too often many "Christians" buy into this.

In fact, there is even a branch of the "Lutheran" church that buys into the concepts of evolution, universalism, and

whatever else society forces upon it. This Lutheran Church is okay with homosexuality amongst the clergy and laity. This Lutheran Church is all for the killing, at any time, of babies. This Lutheran Church has no problem turning away from the very word of God when it comes to homosexuality, or pastoral leadership, or sin and grace. This church has no problem buying what the world and what the dragon are selling... and far too often we buy into it also.

Why can't people have abortions? Why can't women serve as pastors? Why can't gay people just be happy and get married? Why can't we just do away with this whole 'sin' thing and making people feel bad? Why can't we just teach that everyone goes to heaven? Why? BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS SO! We cannot teach the things of this world, the things of the dragon because we are opposed to the dragon. We do not listen to the dragon; rather, we listen to the angels.

The angels who made announcements to men: ***“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.” “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to ALL people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.” “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*** And now in our text for today, ***“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has***

***come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”*** These are just some of the announcements that the angels have made to men.

And so, like the angels, we speak what God has told us. While He has not spoken audibly in my ears, He has given me His word, His Bible, in which are recorded all the things I need to know for my salvation.

That Jesus Christ was born into this world of a Virgin. That Jesus Christ lived a perfect life while He was here. That Jesus died an innocent death paying the punishment for all of our sins. That three days later He rose and now He is exalted to the Right Hand of God in power and glory... and just as He went into heaven, so too will He return.

The world teaches me none of this, only God does. It is only through the Gospel of God,

which tells about His Son Jesus Christ, nothing else does that. And it is this Gospel which we are compelled to preach until He comes back to take us home to Him.

For you see, even back in Martin Luther's day the gospel was shrouded and concealed. The world knew very little of the Gospel and was led astray by the great dragon who was performing his miracles... and so it is this day. The gospel is far too often shrouded and knocked to the side and the world is led astray by the dragon and his 'miracles' and enlightenment.

But the angel proclaiming the Gospel is still alive and active to this very day. Yes, we can see Luther in that angel, but we can also see all of those faithful preachers who have taken the Word of God to the very ends of the earth to proclaim that true Gospel of Christ to the world.

The Gospel message that all sins are forgiven and covered in the blood of Christ. The Gospel message that Jesus Christ died for everyone. The message that no amount of works or deeds will ever make us right with God. The message that God has not damned certain people to hell. The Gospel message that proclaims that heaven is now yours and it begs one thing: "Just believe."

And that ability, that capacity, to believe has been given to us by our God. Through baptism and His word, He has poured His Holy Spirit into us. Through His word and the Lord's Supper, He assures us of the forgiveness of all of our sins through faith in Jesus Christ. And to this very day He continues to strengthen that faith through His word and His sacraments. Faith, which clings to Christ all the tighter and which knows, which believes, that heaven is now ours because of all that Jesus Christ has done.

Dear friends in Christ, hopefully now you can see Luther and all of your pastors as a part of the Bible. While our names are not mentioned, we can see the angel who is proclaiming the everlasting Gospel, the message of Christ's sacrifice for the world, as the very one standing in the pulpit preaching to us.

Thanks be to God for giving us His Gospel. Thanks be to God for allowing Doctor Luther to re-discover the blessed Gospel when he did. And thanks be to God that His Gospel has been continually proclaimed throughout all time.

Dear friends, *give glory to God.* Amen.