

Messages from Revelation 2 of 16

Restoring God's Image

#0463

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—May 11, 1973

Our text again this evening is found in Revelation 14. This is the heart of this wonderful book that closes the sacred canon.

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass...” John” Revelation 1:1.

In the 14th chapter, we have the great, threefold message that ripens the earth for the harvest: Heaven’s announcement of the coming of the Lord and a picture of the people that are ready to meet him. We’ll begin reading with the sixth verse tonight. When we get down to the seventh verse, I’d like you to read it with me what the angel says.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” Revelation 14:6–7.

In our last vesper service, we noted this opening expression, “Fear God, and give glory to Him.” Much of sin in this world comes from the fear of man. The wise man says that the fear of man bringeth a snare. The only cure for the fear of man is the true fear of the true God. Not a slavish fear, but a reverence and godly fear. And really, dear ones, God is the only one we need to fear. When we fear Him in love, that casts out all selfish fear.

John the Baptist could stand erect and fearless in the presence of earthly monarchs because with trembling, he had bowed low before the King of kings. This will be the experience of the remnant.

This evening, we want to focus on this expression “for the hour of His judgment is come.” This is the angel’s reason, the *urgent* reason for giving attention to everything else. “Fear God and give glory to Him for (because) the hour of His judgment is come.” It’s checking-up time, final examination. May I remind you that examinations do not impart knowledge, they *test* knowledge. The judgment does not make character, it *reveals* character. This is a vital distinction. And so as we are

summoned to judgment, we earnestly desire to know how, before the moment of final decision arises, to enter into God's purpose.

In this same 14th chapter, beginning with the 14th verse, we have a description of this final work of separating the righteous from the wicked, the true from the false, the good from the bad, the heavenly from the hellish, under the figure of harvest.

“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe” Revelation 14:14–15.

When is the time to reap? When the harvest is ripe. As you read on, you'll note that there are two harvests—the harvest of golden grain, and the harvest of grapes—the grapes of wrath. Both harvests get ripe at the same time. The same sun and rain which get the harvest of God ready, get the harvest of Satan ready. Looking at this in a very simple and practical way, we note this: everybody in this world will soon be like Jesus or like Satan. Wouldn't it be an awful thing, a terrible thing to be like the Devil? But this is where the millions of the earth are headed.

On the other hand, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to be like Jesus? Like Him in His loyalty to truth? Like Him in His meekness and lowliness? Like Him in His love and kindness? Could it be? Oh yes, I just read it. When He comes the angel who knows says to Him, “Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap, for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” Ready for harvest.

May I read a little comment on this in the book *Christ Object Lessons*?

“When the fruit is brought forth, immediately He puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come.’ Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own” *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69.

He's waiting for the harvest, and when the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle.

You see, this character of Jesus, the character of love, is something that Satan says is impossible to be found in humanity. He attaches a selfish motive to everything that people do. Himself selfish, he thinks that everybody else is selfish. He even tries to get us to believe that God is selfish. But thank God, Jesus is going to demonstrate in this closing hour that there is such a thing as unselfish love, love that can motivate everything that a man does. Christ lived that life 2,000 years ago

here on earth, and He's going to demonstrate through His entire church in the remnant of time that that life can be lived in human flesh.

Which harvest do you want to be a part of: the golden grain for the garner of God, or the gory grapes for the winepress of wrath? Every one of us is ripening up whether we know it or not, whether we realize it or not.

A few texts you might like to write down in your notes: Matthew 13:39. The harvest is the end of the world. When is the harvest? The end of the world. The verse before that says:

“...the good seed are the children of the kingdom...”
Matthew 13:38–39.

What's the seed represent? God's children.

In Galatians 3:16, we are told that Christ is the seed, singular. But if ye be Christ's, then you're seed (Galatians 3:29). This all agrees together. One grain of wheat is put in the ground and by and by, there are 30 or 60 or 100 grains. And tell me, when we put wheat in the ground, what do we get back at harvest time? Wheat. Always? Always. Oh, I'm so glad, I repeat, that it's possible for the life of Jesus to be lived in human flesh. He is the seed. And that reproduction of His life from one seed to many seeds, from one life to many lives, this is what He has set His heart on, this is what He's waiting for.

The announcement of the judgment hour means that if it's ever going to be, it must be now. It's just about closing time. If the demonstration is ever to be made, it must be made now. Will it be?

“...it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him...”
1 John 3:2.

You see in the beginning, as Moses wrote in Genesis 1:26–27, man was made in the image of God. God said, “Let us make man in our image. So God created man in His own image. Genesis 2:7, the Lord God *formed* man of the dust of the ground. Can you picture the Creator taking the clay and molding it in His image? How He must have lingered over each part. He was making the masterpiece of His creation.

May I suggest that when God took those original elements and combined them and shaped them into a form like Himself, not only outwardly, but a mind to think as God thinks, to reason as God reasons, to love as God loves. I repeat, when God did that, He exalted matter to the highest place it was possible for Him to do it in this world. Of all the myriads of things God made, *man* is the greatest on this planet. Why? Because he is made in God's image. No greater destiny, no higher honor can be imagined. Do you agree with me? You see that, don't you?

What a tragedy it was, then, when man used that choice which God gave him, to mar, to pervert, to lose that image. What a pity, what an insult, and as I said, what a tragedy. And the loss was so great that God in Christ gave Himself. What for? To bring men back to that image—to restore in man the divine perfection. To bring back all that was lost. This is the object of the plan of salvation.

Turn please to Romans 8:29. Here is a most significant statement concerning God's purpose. Thank God it will ultimately be realized.

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” Romans 8:29.

Notice, God foreknew you; that is He knew you before you were. In Ephesians the first chapter, Paul tells us that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. God didn't make you just to fill a place in this world; He made the world so you'd have a place to live in.

Now, whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. God predestined you; that is He marked your destination. He planned the purpose of your life that you might be conformed to the image of His Son.

Notice in the original creation God formed man in His own image (Genesis 2:7, 1:27). In the Gospel He has arranged that we shall be conformed, that is reformed, transformed into what? The image of His Son, the original image. Oh, I'm so glad that all that was lost is to be restored, aren't you, friends? What a destiny, what a glorious destiny.

Now let's turn to this same book of Romans and turn to the 12:2 and notice how this is to be accomplished. God did it in one day back there at creation. When Friday morning dawned, there was not Adam there. But when the evening shadows fell and the Sabbath began, Adam and Eve stood side by side there with God, in the joy of the new creation, and in the blessing of that first Sabbath. Yes, that wonderful work of being formed in the image of God was accomplished in just a very short time.

But how does He do this reforming, this transforming, this conforming?

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” Romans 12:2.

Don't be conformed to the world, but be what? Transformed. How? By the renewing of your mind. Note that God works from the inside to the outside. His plan is not to whitewash us, not to get a spray gun and paint us. No. He wants to *transform* us by the renewing of our what? Mind.

Do you know how the mind is renewed? Well, just as the body is being built up, rebuilt every day by the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe; by what we take in through the stomach and lungs, so the mind is being built up by what we see, what we hear, and what we feel and smell and taste. These sense organs convey to the brain certain impressions. They affect the thoughts we think, the ideas we have, the attitudes we have, our disposition, our purpose. All of these are affected by what we see and hear, and what reaches us through the other sense organs.

So He says, "Don't be conformed to this world." Why? Well, the world is going the other way. Who's the god of this world, as the Bible says? Satan is the god of this world. Jesus called him the prince of this world. He runs a lot of things here. I'd like to ask you, friend: who do you think controls most of what goes on the TV—the God of Heaven or the god of this world? Who do you think controls most what comes out in the public press, in the newspapers and magazines—the God of Heaven or the god of this world? Who do you think inspires most of what comes on the radio—the God of Heaven or the god of this world? Now, if I listen to what the world listens to, and I look at what the world looks at, then the danger is that I will be conformed to that pattern.

What a strange thing it would be for me to have a camera here and focus it on an undesirable thing—a dead cat or a pile of garbage. You say to me, "You don't want that picture, do you?" And I say, "Well, I wouldn't want to keep it," but I'm going to open the eye of the camera and let it take a look. Do you know what will happen to the film when I open the eye of the camera and let it take a look at the dead cat or the garbage? Do you know what will happen to the film? Why, you all know, don't you? There will be an impression made. Of course, I can change that, can't I? I can say, "Oh well, I don't think I would like to keep that picture." Do you know all I can do with that, friend? I can throw it away; I can burn it up.

Just *how* will you throw away those brain cells that are the photographic film of the mind? Just *how* will you burn those up without burning everything up?

Oh friends, were it not for the *cleansing* power of the blood of Christ, we would be hopelessly lost. But thank God, there is power in the blood of Jesus to cleanse us. Brainwashed? That's what I need, friends. I want some brainwashing. I want every one of these ten billion cells washed by His precious blood.

But is it reasonable for me to kneel down and pray, "Lord wash out the impressions of years of looking at the world; wash it out by that precious blood at Calvary." I say, is it reasonable for me to pray that, and then go on taking in some more impressions of lewdness, lasciviousness, adultery, crime, theft, murder, gossip, scandal, and all the rest of the horrid family? I say, is it reasonable to ask God to blot out what's already there, and then me keep on adding more? Is that reasonable? Does that make sense? No. One or the other will stop. I'll either quit looking and listening to the things that defile the mind, or else I'll quit praying to God to blot them out. Won't I quit one or the other? I'm bound to quit one or the other.

We're in the harvest time, and everything's going to seed. Oh, so rapidly things are ripening up. Even children today are old in sin. Thank God, some of them are maturing in righteousness. Joseph did in a wicked and degenerate environment. Daniel, how he stood for God right in Babylon itself in the very palace of the heathen king. Jesus lived this life in a wicked and dissolute Nazareth. Thank God, there're going to be boys and girls today who will live that life. They won't find that life by keeping up with what the world is keeping up with. In the Heavenly Sanctuary, they are beholding the pattern of Jesus' beautiful life.

Phillips translates this verse we've just read in Romans 12:2, in an interesting way, just let me read it here to you:

"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold" Romans 12:2 (*Phillip's Translation*).

Other modern translations put it:

"Do not live according to the fashions of the times."

"Do not imitate the ways of this world."

"You must not adopt the customs of this world."

"Be not fashioned according to this world."

Well, there it is:

"Be not conformed into this world, but be ye transformed but the renewing of your mind" Romans 12:2.

Now I want to ask you something. Was Joseph *like* the Egyptians around him? He was what? Peculiar. Was Daniel *like* the Babylonians around him? No, he was what? Peculiar. Was Jesus *like* the children around Him in Nazareth? No, He was peculiar. And concerning the remnant it is written:

"Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel..." Isaiah 8:18.

That's the statement there in Isaiah 8, right in the midst of prophecy after prophecy, dealing with this last generation. God's going to have some children and young people today that will be signs and wonders as Joseph was in Egypt, and Daniel was in Babylon. Boys and girls, you can be among them. Parents, your children can be trained to be a part of this glorious demonstration. They can be a part of that golden grain that is reaped by the sickle of the Son of God. Oh, God forbid that they should be in that awful other harvest, and cast into the winepress of the wrath, trodden without the city.

May I stress that this work of reforming the human character is not innovation, it's restoration. It is not thinking up some new ideas that'll startle people. No. It is bringing us back to God's original purpose and plan—"old-fashioned," if you please—as old-fashioned as Abraham, as Enoch, as old-fashioned as Eden. Remember, not innovation, but restoration. This is what God is seeking to accomplish in our lives today.

Now, turn to Revelation again, this 14th chapter, I want you to get a picture of this group; they're presented as golden grain. In the first verse, they're pictured as men, standing with their Lord on Mt. Sion. I want you to notice what they had right up here in their foreheads.

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" Revelation 14:1.

Another translation says: "Having His name..." That is, Christ's name and the Father's name. "...written in their foreheads." It's the same, for Jesus and His Father have the same name, and the same character, the same likeness. Christ is the express image of His Father's person.

My point is, John sees as the result of the sowing of the Gospel seed in this last generation, a harvest of people ransomed from this world that stand on Mount Zion, and they have the character of God right here in their foreheads. Anatomically, that's where it is—the forebrain, right up here. This is the seat of reason and conscience and judgment. This is where character is. And if you ever have the name of God, the seal of God, the mark of God, the sign of God, you'll have it right here—in the forehead. Oh, what a wonderful thing to think like God. What do you say? *His* name, in our foreheads.

Now look at the chapter before and see the contrast. See how the Devil works through the powers of earth:

"And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark..."

Where?

"...in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name"
Revelation 13:16–17.

Notice the contrast. Christ's name is put only where? In the forehead. Satan, working through the combination of organized religion and organized government says, "We will either get you to believe it, or we will make you *do it* whether you believe it or not."

This is what Nebuchadnezzar said on the plain of Dura. If you like my image, fall down and worship it. But if you don't like it, do it anyway. If you don't, here's the furnace, and we'll roast you. You notice in this 13th chapter speaking of the coming persecution—and it's so near:

And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" Revelation 13:15.

So there you see, you have quite a choice to make. Will you have God's sign up here [in the forehead], or will you have the mark of the beast? And even if you don't *believe* what the Devil says, will you yield to it and act in harmony with it? Will you take that mark in your forehead or in your hand? One or the other. The Devil says, "OK, if I can fool you, deceive you so that you believe a lie, fine. That suits me." But oh, the Devil takes fiendish pleasure in *making* people do things that they don't believe in at all. He has a devilish glee when he can roast people, pull them apart, torture them, and make them do what he says. And every soul in this world is going to face that.

What is going to keep God's people from yielding to that pressure? If there's enough love in the forehead, there's no room for selfishness. If Jesus is in the heart, the Devil can rage and threaten and torture, but he cannot compel.

The great demonstration of this was made at Calvary. In the Garden, in the judgment hall and on the cross, Satan tortured the suffering soul of Christ. Men and devils conspired to put the greatest pressure that anyone ever experienced on Jesus. And through it all, do you know the only thing that was revealed? It was love, forgiving love. Do you know why that was all that came out? That's all that was in there.

He poured out His soul unto death, the Bible says. Yes, at Calvary God's character was revealed. Christ emptied Himself. There was nothing more to give. There was no hatred revealed in that outpouring. No anger, no selfishness.

On the other hand, look how Satan exhibited himself when he took the meek, selfless Savior and nailed Him to the cross, and inspired men to ridicule and mock Him and spit in His face. As the weary hours dragged by, the universe looking on said, "If that is what Satan is, we want nothing more to do with him."

How is it with you, friend, as you come to Calvary? Which do you want to be like—the Savior who dies on the cross, or the Devil who tortured Him? You will be like one or the other.

That which was demonstrated, the character of God, and the character of Satan on Calvary is again to be demonstrated all over this world. As we approach the great, final test, God will have His church brought to that place where the life of

Jesus is so lived in them, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, that they become the special target for the torture of the Devil. All this boycott of the 13th chapter, this death decree that we just read about here; all these things are the exhibition of Satan's wrath.

Why is Satan so angry? It looks like God is to prove that the character of Jesus can be reproduced in thousands and thousands of lives here in this world. This *infuriates* the Devil, and he goes forth with great fury to destroy! But that very exhibition of his wrath shows the universe again what a devil he is. And that beautiful demonstration of fidelity, of constancy, of obedience under pressure that the remnant church gives, I say that demonstration causes a thrill of joy and glory to go through the universe.

This is the hour to which we've come. *This* is the judgment hour. "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." *You* are on trial, and *He* is on trial.

If you are a witness for Him, He will be a witness for you. If you stand for Him before men, Jesus will stand for you at the supreme court of the universe.

"All right," says one, "This is what I want, but how?" Very well, the question is well asked—How? How can these things be? How can it be done?

It is the miracle of the seed. You remember we were talking a little while ago about the wheat. You plant wheat and you get what? Wheat. Every time? Every time. That's the law established at creation—every plant produces after its kind. Who is the seed? Jesus is the seed; we read that in Galatians 3. But let me give you a little secret; you'll find it in Luke 8:

"...The seed is the word of God" Luke 8:11.

Will you repeat that with me?

"...The seed is the word of God" Luke 8:11.

What's the seed? The Word of God. What is the Word of God? It's seed. Would you like a harvest in your life like Jesus? The seed is the Word of God. You see, Christ is the living Word. He's the Word made flesh. The Bible is the Word in print, but it's the same life, the same character, the same nature. And as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

So, as surely as the photographic film receives what it looks at, so you and I day by day are being impressed, we are being transformed, we are being changed according to what we look at and what we listen to. If we want to be like Jesus, let's take in His Word into our hearts. What do you say? This is the secret: If you've been spending five minutes a day with this Word, how about making it ten minutes? If it's been ten minutes, you might want to make it 15 or 20 minutes.

It isn't just a matter of mathematics. It needs attention. We need to focus.

May I make a suggestion that somebody here may get a blessing from? If you've never tried this, try getting down by your bed or by a chair, and there with the Bible, pray to God about what you read. Let God speak to you through this book. Then you talk to Him about what you see on these pages. If you can't kneel, try doing it with your head bowed in your chair or wherever.

What I'm trying to say is, regard the Bible as the voice of God speaking directly to you. When you read a promise, claim it in prayer. When you read a command, ask God to give you the power to do what you read. All His biddings are enablings. Put your will on the side of faith and action.

Yes, friends, this is harvest time. Every plant is going to seed fast. Let's get the Gospel hoe and weed out the Devil's weeds. Let's not plant anymore, what do you say? And let us ask Jesus to put His seed, His precious life, His Word, into our hearts that all that was revealed in Him 2,000 years ago may be revealed in us today.

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