Sunday Morning Message

August 16, 2026

Series: Soul Winning in the Scriptures

Soul Winning in the Great Tribulation

Text: *Revelation 14:1–20*

Congregational Reading – *Revelation 14:6-13*

Introduction

We come this morning to what was originally intended to be the final message in our series on soul winning in the Scriptures. Throughout this series we have examined various accounts of how God reaches lost people and how His servants participate in that work. Today we turn to one of the most remarkable passages in all the Bible concerning the heart of God for the lost—Revelation chapter 14.

This chapter sits in a parenthetical section of the Book of Revelation. After the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11) and before the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath (Revelation 16), the Holy Spirit pauses the chronological narrative to give us additional information that clarifies what is taking place throughout the Tribulation Period. Amid the most catastrophic judgments the world will ever see, we are shown the heart of a compassionate God who is still reaching out to save people.

> *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9)

Even in the Great Tribulation—after the church has been raptured, after seal judgments and trumpet judgments have devastated the earth, and as the final vials of wrath approach—God is still offering salvation to any who will receive it. This passage demonstrates the incredible, persistent love of Jesus Christ for lost people. He never gives up until the very last opportunity is past.

In Revelation 14 we see three primary means by which God continues to reach the lost during the Tribulation Period: the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, three powerful angels proclaiming messages from heaven, and finally the harvest that brings everything to a close.

I. The 144,000 Witnesses – God Uses Faithful Servants (vv. 1–5)

We were first introduced to these special witnesses in Revelation 7:1–8. There we learned that this group is made up of 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (with the tribe of Dan notably omitted). They are sealed by God in their foreheads for protection and identification during the Tribulation.

In chapter 14 we are given a preview—a glimpse of the end of the Tribulation Period and the beginning of the Millennium. These 144,000 stand on Mount Zion with the Lamb.

Whether this is the earthly Mount Zion at the beginning of the Kingdom or a heavenly scene, the point is clear: the Lamb has lost none of them. They have come through the Great Tribulation just as the three Hebrew children came through the fiery furnace.

A description is given of these remarkable men:

1. **They are virgins.** – These men had never been married. The Tribulation Period is not a good time for marriage (see Matthew 24:19 and 1 Corinthians 7:25ff.). They were also morally pure. This is important because the corporate Body of Christ is referred to as "a chaste virgin" (2 Corinthians 11:2). These men, however, represent Israel and are Tribulation saints, not the Church.
2. **They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.** – Complete devotion and obedience. They are not part-time servants.
3. **They are the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.** – These men are the firstfruits of the Kingdom Age, just as the Lord is the firstfruits of the Church Age. Many more from Israel will follow them and be led to salvation through their ministry.
4. **In their mouth was found no guile.** – They spoke the truth and had absolutely nothing to do with the lies of the Antichrist.
5. **They are without fault before the throne of God.** – This speaks of both positional righteousness (Romans 3:22) and holy living. The Greek word (*amōmos*) is used elsewhere for positional righteousness, yet the parallel phrase "no guile" makes clear that their conduct matched their position.

These 144,000 will confront unbelievers, call them to Christ through repentance and faith, and proclaim the coming judgments. Though they will endure hardship and flee persecution, they will be divinely protected and eventually enter the thousand-year earthly reign of Christ.

Application: God still uses clean, committed vessels. In a day when many believers live casually, these men remind us that holiness and undivided devotion still matter in the work of soul winning. If God can use 144,000 sealed Jewish men in the darkest hour of history, He can certainly use us today if we will walk in integrity and follow the Lamb.

II. The Three Angels – God Uses Extraordinary Methods (vv. 6–13)

Though the mention of these angels comes after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, we must remember that this section is parenthetical. These angels appear during the Tribulation Period—most likely in the second half—but the exact timing is not the main point. The main point is that God will not leave the world without a clear witness of the gospel, even when human messengers are scarce or silenced.

A. The Preaching Angel – The Everlasting Gospel (vv. 6–7)

This is a literal, visible angel flying in the midst of heaven (the meridian, where what is done can be seen and heard by all). He has the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth—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 14:7)

Notice that this is the same gospel we preach today—the good news of redemption through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1–4). The call is to fear God, give Him glory, and worship the Creator. In a world that has largely rejected the Creator and embraced the lie of evolution and human autonomy, this message strikes at the root.

It is possible this angel appears early in the Tribulation when there are few saved people left to preach after the Rapture. Or it may come near the end as God's final, global call of grace before the return of Christ. Either way, the point is stunning: God is so determined that people hear the gospel that He will send an angel flying through the sky if necessary.

Notice also the scope: every nation (*ethnos*), kindred (*phylē* – tribes), tongue (*glōssa*), and people (*laos*). This is the same breakdown we are commanded to reach in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47).

Important reminder for us: In this present Dispensation of Grace there will be no angel flying through the sky preaching the gospel. It is up to **us**—the church—to go everywhere, to all nations, ethnic groups, and languages, and give them the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. The Prophesying Angel – The Fall of Babylon (v. 8)

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication". (Revelation 14:8)

This angel announces the certain, future fall of Babylon. The details will be given in Revelation 17–18. "Mystery Babylon" in chapter 17 speaks of the one-world religion of Antichrist. Chapter 18 speaks of commercial Babylon. Whether a literal rebuilt city or a symbolic reference to the revived Roman Empire system centered in Rome, the message is clear: the entire system of rebellion against God that began at Babel (Genesis 10–11) will finally and completely fall under the judgment of God.

This announcement is itself a form of warning and a call to come out of the world's system before it is too late.

C. The Warning Angel – The Mark of the Beast (vv. 9–13)

The third angel gives a final, solemn warning regarding worshipping the beast and receiving his mark:

"If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." (Revelation 14:9–11)

During the Tribulation the pressure to take the mark will be enormous. Believers will be forced into hiding and will not be able to buy or sell. Yet the eternal consequences of yielding are far worse than any temporary earthly suffering. God's wrath is "without mixture"—not diluted. The torment is eternal.

Yet in the middle of this terrifying warning, we find a word of encouragement for the saints:

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Revelation 14:12)

True believers will endure. The same grace that saves them will keep them. Faith and works will be joined together. Then comes one of the seven beatitudes of Revelation:

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

On earth life will be difficult and painful for those who refuse the mark, but the rewards in heaven are wonderful. Better to reign with Christ forever than with Antichrist for a few short years. Better to endure persecution patiently now than to escape it and suffer throughout eternity. And notice: "their works do follow them." Whatever we do for the Lord will be rewarded (1 Corinthians 3:12–15). This truth applies to every believer in every age.

III. The Two Sickles – The Final Harvest (vv. 14–20)

The chapter closes with two harvest scenes. One "like unto the Son of man" sits on a cloud with a golden crown and a sharp sickle. An angel announces that the time of harvest has come. Then another angel comes out of the temple with a sharp sickle and reaps the vine of the earth, casting it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Blood comes out of the winepress even unto the horse bridles, for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs (approximately 180–200 miles—the distance from Armageddon in the north to Edom in the south).

Some see the first harvest as the gathering of the elect (the wheat) and the second as the judgment of the lost (the tares or the grapes of wrath). Others see both as aspects of the final judgment culminating at Armageddon (Revelation 19:11–21). Either way, the

message is sober: the day of grace will end. The harvest will come. There is a point of no return.

This brings us back to the central theme of the chapter and of our series: while the door of opportunity is still open, God is still reaching, still warning, still calling. But the harvest is coming.

Soul Winning Principles from Revelation 14

As we close this series on soul winning in the Scriptures, let these truths from Revelation 14 settle deeply into our hearts:

1. **God never gives up trying to reach people.** Even in the Great Tribulation—after the Rapture, after worldwide judgments, under the reign of Antichrist—God is still sending 144,000 sealed witnesses and three angels with the everlasting gospel and final warnings. If God is that persistent, how can we grow weary in well doing? How can we decide that someone is "too far gone" or that a situation is "hopeless"? The longsuffering of God should fuel the longsuffering of His people.
2. **God is not limited by conventional methods.** He will use Jewish evangelists, flying angels, or any other means necessary to get the gospel out. Jesus said, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40). Soul winning in the Tribulation will not look like soul winning today. We ought to be willing to use creative, unconventional, Spirit-led methods to get the gospel to people in our day as well. Door-to-door may not always be the most effective approach. Technology, relationships, workplace conversations, online opportunities, and other avenues are tools God can use if we are willing.
3. **There is urgency because the harvest is coming.** The day of grace will not last forever. For those living in the Tribulation there will be a final opportunity, and then the sickles will be thrust in. For us today, the Rapture could occur at any moment. Every conversation, every tract, every invitation, every prayer for a lost loved one carries eternal weight. "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).
4. **Faithful service will be rewarded; our works follow us.** Verse 13 is a beatitude for every age: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord… and their works do follow them." Nothing done for Christ is wasted. The labor of soul winning—often unseen, sometimes discouraging, occasionally costly—will follow the believer into eternity and be rewarded by the Lord Himself.

Conclusion

Revelation 14 shows us a God who is still reaching, still warning, still loving, even when judgment is falling all around. If that is true in the darkest hour of human history, how much more should it be true of us who live in this present age of grace?

The church has been given the greatest privilege and the greatest responsibility on earth: to take the everlasting gospel to every creature. There is no flying angel doing our work for us. There is no sealed army of 144,000 taking our place. The Holy Spirit has placed that responsibility on the local church and on every individual believer.

As we conclude this series, may the Holy Spirit renew in each of us a fresh passion for the lost. May we leave this place determined never to give up on anyone, willing to use every legitimate means, urgent about the time, and confident that our labor in the Lord is not in vain.

If you are here this morning without Christ, the same longsuffering God who will still be offering salvation in the Tribulation is offering it to you right now. The hour of judgment has not yet come for you. The door of grace is still open. Fear God, give glory to Him, and put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for your sins and rose again. Do not wait until it is eternally too late.

For the rest of us, let us rise from this series more committed than ever to the work of soul winning—because our God is a soul-winning God, and He is not willing that any should perish.

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