

Refuge Bible Fellowship
1600 Chicago Avenue, Suite R7
Riverside, CA 92507

refugefellowship.org

Series: For the Time is Near
Raul Montano, Sr. Pastor
April 24, 2016

Voices from Heaven
Revelation 14

Something took place this week that I think most of the world is aware of. In fact, I've always thought of starting out a wedding sermon with these words: *Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to get through this thing called Life.*

Don't act like you don't know what that means! [laughter] It's leading into a song called *Let's Go Crazy*. Prince died this week.

I grew up listening to his songs and playing them really loud for my mom because I wanted her to hear them. Thank God I came through that time okay. The Lord took me in a different direction and forgave me.

Oftentimes, we mourn more over people like The Artist Formerly Known as Prince. We mourn over some icon that only gave to us something that's really, quite frankly, superficial than we do over our own sins, or who we are before the Lord, or even for each other. I gave out *Foxes Book of Martyrs*. We should take *those* lives into account that have already been surrendered to the Lord and are out there on the front lines, such as the chaplains that we just prayed for, and for Pastor Ruben.

I was thinking how there are many voices that are speaking to us today and coming at us at rates that we've never seen before. It really does matter which voices we're listening to and giving our attention to, because really the bottom line is, we need to know more about the Prince of Peace than the prince of the earth, or Prince himself, or our favorite baseball or football player. Our idols shouldn't be anyone on earth. It should be the One and Only that sits on the throne.

This morning we're going to look at how heaven, during the latter part of the Tribulation, is not silent. There are many voices coming from heaven. There's a voice that is filled with grace and love and mercy as the proclamation of the gospel is given, as we're going to see this morning. But with that comes a warning, which also is filled with mercy, of what will take place if we fail to surrender our lives to Jesus Christ.

I researched the number of ads that we're exposed to today. One of the articles I read said that in 2014 the average person was exposed to 362 ads a day. Now, if you spend a lot of time on the internet, of course you're exposed to more. This is only on average. It could be up to 3000 if you look at the different things that are on the sides of the pages that you visit. How many do you think the average person was exposed to in 1945? Four? Ten? Try 340! In 1945 you were exposed to about 340 ads a day and that was more in the physical sense, not necessarily in the digital sense, electronically.

Do you guys remember the newspaper? Today it's illegal to text and drive, but I remember seeing some people driving and reading the newspaper! Today there are certain ordinances that prohibit the number of signs, but there were billboards everywhere.

Again, what voices are we listening to? What are we paying attention to? God is not silent. He never has been and never will be.

Now, at this point after having been shown the hell that will be unleashed on earth by Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet during the Tribulation Period, John's attention is then turned to the next series of events that the Lord wanted him to see and write about. So obviously he wants us to know about these things.

We're going to see angels that are truly messengers bringing a message of not only good news, but also of warning and consequence. We're going to see the 144,000 that we've previously seen in Revelation Chapter 7. We will also see how the Lord brings to a completion the judgement that He promised would come, and that is the harvest of the earth of those who have completely rebelled against God and rejected Him.

So, let's start out with a word of prayer:

Father, we are thankful that You are long-suffering, and patient. You do not wish that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance. I pray that the message of Your patience, grace, love, and mercy would cause us to walk humbly with You, hand in hand, not allowing the stumbling to keep us down, but that we would be willing to stand up and continue to walk with You to Your glory. Father, speak to us this morning, may You teach us and may You be truly the Lifter of Our Heads as we look at this chapter in the end of times when You will be speaking to the earth and even at that time You are wishing that none should perish. May this be truly a demonstration of Your love and grace toward all mankind. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Let's start out by reading Revelation Chapter 14, verse one:

Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³ and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, ⁵ and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

Standing and Singing – Victorious (vv. 1-5)

John now has his attention turned toward Mount Zion, upon which he sees the 144,000 and the Lamb of God, and they're standing. The 144,000 bear the name of God, we know from Chapter 7 that the name of the Father was placed on their foreheads and served as a seal to protect them during the Tribulation Period. They were God's and God is powerful enough to keep them during that time.

He also hears this singing, a unique song. This song is sung by the 144,000 and all of heaven is witness of this. This is actually taken place before the throne of God, before the 24 Elders, before the four living creatures that we learned about.

What is Mount Zion? It's Jerusalem, the City of David. The question is: *Is this in heaven or is this on earth?* Because at this point, there's still an earthly Jerusalem, but is this that which is in heaven, or that which is on

earth. I want to bring your attention to our text because it's really simple to discern this. We know that these 144,000 were singing and as you see there in verse two: **"And I heard a voice..."** From where? From heaven. So, it wasn't earth.

They were also **"...redeemed from the earth."** in verse three; and in the latter part of verse four it says, **"These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God..."** So, really simply discerned is that this is the heavenly Mount Zion. One day Jesus will stand on the earthly one, along with those who are His redeemed, but we're not talking about that just yet. In fact, if you skip forward and read Revelation, Chapter 21, you will see the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven and it is beautiful.

The 144,000 were also described as undefiled, virgins, morally whole and pure, followers of Jesus Christ. Wherever He leads, they go. In their mouth no lie was found. They were blameless in every way. This is a beautiful group of people who were completely set aside for the Lord. Now, were they perfect and without sin? No, there's none righteous, no not one, is what the Bible says. So, no, they're not perfect and without sin, but they're blameless because of The Lamb. Let me tell you this, they were a people who kept themselves in the love of Christ. They kept themselves as John said in John 15, abiding in Christ, connected to the vine during the Tribulation Period when it seemed as if Satan had the upper hand. A time that will be without parallel, or comparison to anything we know today.

Again, I keep going back to the fact that sometimes, many times perhaps, we allow the littlest of things to derail us, to take us off course. We should be discerning and come to a point to where we're aware of something that is not of God, and we should quickly repent and get back on track.

But they endured and lived victoriously, beyond anything that we know today. They were referred to in Revelation 7:3-4:

³ saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴ And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel...

That was the beginning of the Tribulation Period. While those Gentiles who worshiped the Beast and Satan and are marked on their foreheads and on their hands, there is a contrast to those who follow Jesus Christ and worship Him. They will be marked and sealed with God's seal on their foreheads and kept by God.

They are standing on Mount Zion and singing. No one stands and sings that is not confident, that is not sure, that is not victorious. This was definitely a battle-ready group of 144,000. They were completely given to the Lord. They will go through the most amazing period of time that the earth will ever see, as far as persecution is concerned, and yet, we see them standing and singing this unique song. Why? Because no one experienced exactly what they experienced.

These 144,000 were set aside by the Lord, but they're not the only ones that were saved. We're going to look at others that were saved. So, Jehovah's Witnesses, sorry you're wrong. There's not just room for only 144,000, There's room for many more in heaven. The 144,000 is describing the 12 twelve tribes of Israel, specific to them. This is what we would consider today as Messianic Jews, who believe in Jesus Christ, that He came, died, and resurrected, and today sits at the right hand of the Father. They were victorious. That should be an encouragement to us.

Good news! In heaven there are no denominations, no divisions, no groups. As you come in, as they say, to the pearly gates, it won't be a question of, *Hey, are there any Southern Baptists here? Any Calvinists? Armenians?*

There will be no questions like that. No divisions, whatsoever, just one body worshipping the Lord, standing and singing. Now for them, they sang this unique song that pertained to them. So, it serves as a voice of encouragement from the very throne of God.

An Angel Proclaiming Salvation and Judgment (vv. 6-7)

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

This angel is flying through the heavens and proclaiming this eternal gospel! How amazing is that going to be? Can you imagine if you saw that today? That would be absolutely amazing! Now we know that according to Revelation Chapter 7:9-14 that there are multitudes that are in heaven that have been saved. So many that you can't count them! I couldn't imagine those who are going through the Tribulation Period and seeing all that is taking place and not respond to the gospel proclaimed by this angel. I mean, all hell is breaking loose and then you have this angel that's flying across the sky.

Now, the angel is not referring to John Wycliffe. You laugh, but I tell you this because some people believe that's who it is referring to. John Wycliffe translated the Bible into many different languages and distributed it throughout the whole earth. This is not him.

Nor is it any present, past, or future media ministry that reaches people worldwide. Some people actually reference a TV evangelist, or some kind of a media outlet to be the angel that Revelation, Chapter 14 is referring to. No, it doesn't say "*like*" an angel. Those are the little things that we need to pay attention to. He's referred to there as a *he*, and this angel has one message for everyone on the face of the earth: *Fear God, give Him glory; His judgement is at hand, worship the Creator of the universe.*

For those of you who don't know what Roman's Road is, it's just a series of verses that leads people to understand why they need a Savior. I'm all for bringing people through that, but I don't see in there all the parts of, what we would say to be, the full proclamation of the gospel as we see such as in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. We went over that on Easter. This is what theologians call *Natural Theology*. You can reference Romans 1:18 for that.

There's not one person who is without excuse. *Well, how is it fair for the person who hasn't heard the gospel?* Listen the heavens proclaim the glory of God. If you look all around you, you'll know that there is a God. There's no way that earth can be the way it is without a God of order that has designed it all and put it all into motion. God is Creator; worship and serve Him.

At that time, that's all that's being said. He's an angel that was dispatched from heaven. He's doing it exactly like he was told to do it. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and not the fear of the Beast. A lot of the earth will be fearing the Beast, and not necessarily having the fear of the Lord, so he's trying to draw their attention: *God is still merciful, He's still being patient. The church is taken up, but come to the Lord by grace, but you need to fear Him; you need to worship Him; you need to serve Him.*

What's ironic is that all those that reject worshipping God, will one day worship God anyway, and confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father, according to Philippians 2:9-11. Some will do it from the bowels of hell, others from the glory of heaven. All of mankind does choose. Not choosing Jesus, is choosing to reject Him, but one day all knees will bow and all tongues will confess that Jesus is Lord.

An Angel Proclaiming the Fall of Babylon (v. 8)

⁸ Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality."

This is a general proclamation of the fall of Babylon and we'll see more details in the coming chapters. In fact, Chapter 17 and 18 give us a little bit more in regards to the fall of Babylon. Now, Babylon is representative of the world's rebellion and the world's system; the world's rebellion against God and an earthly humanistic system.

If you have the New King James Version, a word that is a better translation than *passion*, is *wrath*. It gives us a better understanding of the consequences of drinking this cup of fornication, of sexual immorality. This is referencing spiritual fornication as the world worships other gods. But listen, the spiritual will always, in some way shape or form, materialize in the physical. It never remains hidden; it always comes out. At the roots of sexual immorality are *spiritual adultery; spiritual compromise*, and really, it's one word--idolatry.

In Chapters 17 and 18, we're going to see how heaven is rejoicing! Babylon has fallen! It's God's doing, it's not ours; we didn't take them out!

An Angel Proclaiming a Warning of God's Wrath (vv. 9-11)

⁹ And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

Initially in Chapter 13 we don't really see a clear connection between receiving the mark on the forehead or on the hand and worshiping the Beast and its image, but now we do. *What's the harm? At least we'll be able to eat, live, trade, whatever we need to do.* It's now abundantly clear. This is a warning. God says that no one will accidentally, or unknowingly, receive the mark of the Beast and not know that it is in worship of the Beast. It's going to be super clear. I'm sure that the world will be bold enough at that time and say, *Receive it! What's the harm? It's to honor your king. Put this chip on your hand or your forehead and go about your business.*

I'm sure they won't be using the name the Beast or the Antichrist. They'll call all the believers crazy and they'll give him another name.

It will be super clear; we have the text here! Whoever is left and is going through the Tribulation Period, they can just read right here and know exactly what it was that God was saying to them. Many can ignore this warning, but it does not strip it of its truth. Just because you don't believe, doesn't mean it's not true.

There is a verse that is oftentimes taken way out of context. Romans 12:18 says:

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Sometimes that is used by people to give license to enjoy a sinful life.

1 Corinthians 9:22b:

I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

Those are two verses that kind of go in that direction. But Romans 12:18 is referring to making every attempt at living in harmony with one another without pride and not taking vengeance upon others, not repaying evil for evil, but instead doing what is honorable in the sight of God. Yes, we all have liberty, we all have the freedoms, but not all is profitable, so we need to be careful as Christians. Jesus said it is better to have a millstone hung around your neck and thrown into the ocean than for you to stumble one of these little ones [Matthew 18:6]. It doesn't mean that we are to compromise for the sake of keeping the peace at any price, including doing, or even accepting, sin.

Let me give you some examples:

- Daniel is a great example! He didn't stop praying when a decree was established prohibiting any form of worship toward anyone or anything other than King Darius and he was thrown into the lion's den. He didn't stop, in fact, he opened up his shutters and did what he normally did; and that was to pray to the Lord.
- Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego refused to bow down to the golden statue of King Nebuchadnezzar and were thrown into the fiery furnace. In both cases, God preserved them.
- Paul did not stop teaching and preaching the truth; proclaiming the gospel, no matter what happened to him. He was beaten in prison, shipwrecked, all kinds of things. And you would think that if it was all a lie, that he would have stopped at some point. *You know, I wish I could go on with you, but this is about where it ends.* He didn't! Was he living peaceably with all men? No, there was definitely contrast and friction that happened.
- The apostles and other disciples were imprisoned, stoned, ordered to stop teaching in the name of Jesus, and even martyred for their faith, but they did not stop! Compromise is never what was intended to be communicated by this verse, but rather a peace that *if possible* should be kept without personal vengeance. For God says, **"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."** [Romans 12:19-21].

Remember when I said at the beginning that when you study the Bible and read it in its context, observe all the little details within the text, make sure that the Bible interprets the Bible, and then apply it to your own life. That's how you can be safe as you go through the Word of God.

There is no excuse or allowance given by God to compromise during this hellish time of the Tribulation Period. You would think that if at any time as believers we would be given a little leeway. *Hey, listen God, you know what I'm going through.* How often do we say that? But if any group of people can say that, it would be them, right? No, not even them. The Bible says that we are to be holy as He is holy.

This angel is being merciful in warning everyone on earth of the consequences of receiving the mark of the Beast on their forehead or hand, or of worshipping the Beast or his image.

First, we see God's wrath will be received in full strength, there will be no dilution whatsoever.

Secondly, they will be tormented with fire and sulfur forever and ever. Forever and ever is eternal! We can't really understand what eternity is in this place, but that's where people will go without Jesus.

Thirdly, they will not escape the presence of God's angels nor the Lamb of God, Jesus Himself, although they will wish they could. The very One that was rejected will be in their presence.

David Guzik said this: *"If the only consequences for sin are in this life, or if the only penalty for sin is temporary, then clever sinners have won out over God."*

If there's truly a place called purgatory, if that's somewhere found in Scripture, then by all means what are you waiting for? Get up, get out of here and go party! Go out and enjoy yourselves! Do whatever you want to do because you know in the end all you're going to do is go into that place and pay for all of your sins; I don't know what length it would be, but then you're going to go into heaven. It's not true! It's a lie, a deception.

What's true is that at the moment you take your last breath here, you're in one of two places: You're truly in the presence of God and in His glory; or you're in hell, and it's forever. In fact, in the original language of the Greek, it expresses *forever* with the strongest expression of eternity. In other words, it cannot be overemphasized. This is serious.

If I preached on hell and then at the very end gave you this presentation of God's grace, you should be begging God to forgive you of your sins; you should be on your knees! *I do not want to go there!* There's no end to it! No end! There's these movies, things that we're exposed to, and play around with it as if it's nothing; they desensitize us. Listen, it's forever! It's eternal and not to be joked with. I believe it would do us all good to think more on this eternal torment in the pit of hell so that it might help us to desire more earnestly to draw near to God and remain in Him by His grace.

God is being merciful even during this last portion of the earth's history. As he sends His flying angel overhead to warn the earth of worshipping the Beast, He's saying, *Don't do it.*

Encouraged to Endure in Serving God Faithfully (vv. 12-13)

And then we see this encouragement to endure in serving God faithfully. This is beautiful. For anyone who is currently serving, listen to this:

¹² Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

¹³ And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

So actually, we do take things to heaven; it's our works. Our attention is now turned toward those who remain on earth as followers of Jesus Christ during the Tribulation Period and it's outside of the 144,000. It's a separate group.

First, they are encouraged to endure by keeping God's commandments and their faith in Jesus Christ. Enduring, by the way, is not just grinning and bearing. *I'm just gonna sit here and take it. It's hard, but look at me, I'm standing.* It's not sitting on your hands, it's not waiting or void of movement. It is living out God's Word and standing fast in our faith with action. Faith without action, as James said, is dead. It's dead! It's worth nothing, because it's in our action that our faith is proven.

I remember when I first came to that place where I recommitted my life to Christ. Thank God for a couple that came alongside Betina and me. I thank God for them because when I truly recommitted my life to Christ I couldn't stand still. I didn't know what I was doing, but I just wanted to do something. *You want me to do*

coffee? I'll do coffee. You want me to put up the lyrics on the screen? I'll go sit in front of everyone and put these transparencies up, even though they were out of order. Your faith moves you, that's it.

Secondly, and this is an encouragement to everyone who is serving right here, they were encouraged by being reminded that they were blessed if they die in the Lord. The only people that will be blessed to die are those who have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, no one else. No one else.

Thirdly, encouraged by knowing that they will rest from all of their labor. I can't imagine what their work will look like in those days. To endure, to persevere in their faith, but it will be very, very, very difficult. Death will be a welcomed event because it will serve as a doorway to full rest. I can't imagine when they're at the place when they're about to die, to take their last breath, and out they go, so looking forward to it.

Fourthly, they're encouraged with knowing their deeds will follow them. We're encouraged today. Our deeds will follow us? They're encouraged by that and you should be encouraged as well. Nothing is done in vain, if it's done unto the Lord. A person can never do enough for the Lord. Never! And this verse here tells us that our work for the Lord will follow us into heaven and will give it worth, purpose, and significance. In fact, it doesn't matter what anyone else says, it will be dignified. In an instant, you'll be in the presence of the Lord and your deeds will follow you. They'll be tested with fire, but whatever remains, remains and it's all to God's glory. Any and all service unto the Lord does not go unnoticed.

I will say this, there are some works that we do while grumbling and complaining, and thinking, *Man I should receive more pats on the back.* Listen, we're truly all grateful, we really are, but the One that you are to be serving is the Lord. So those things that we're doing *unto Him*, not unto one another, will be those things that will follow us into eternity. This should serve to encourage you today to remain faithful and serve God.

Warren Wiersbe said this: *"Better to endure persecution patiently now than to escape it and suffer throughout eternity."*

Ripe for the Harvest (vv. 14-20)

Let's look at the last portion of this chapter:

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." 16 So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." 19 So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the

winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

Now the first portion is in reference to Jesus Christ, seated on a cloud with a golden crown on His head.

C.H. Spurgeon said, *"How different it will be to see Him with a crown of gold upon His head from what it was to see Him wearing that terrible crown of thorns which the cruel soldiers plaited and thrust upon His brow! The word used here does not usually refer to the diadem power, but the crown won in conflict; and it is very remarkable that it should be said that, when Christ comes to judge the world, He will wear a garland of victory, the crown which He has won in the great battle which He has fought. How significant of His final triumph will that crown of gold be about those brows that were once covered with bloody sweat when He was fighting the battle of our salvation!"*

So, He has this crown of gold on His head, but He has a sickle of judgment in His hand. We don't use a sickle today. A sickle was used to cut down crops as they were ready, ripe for the harvest; barley, wheat, and other crops. They would cut them down, bundle them, and then bring them in. Today we have these large machines that do that for us. A sickle has a wooden handle with a large crescent shaped blade. This is what is identified with the harvest of the earth at the time of God's judgement. There was previously the image of the cup of God's wrath, and now have the image of the sickle and the harvest that all point to an earth that is ripe for judgement. In fact, in the original it is saying that it is overripe. In other words, God has waited and He has waited, and He has waited. He has been patient, and He has been merciful in His patience because He truly wishes that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Now, Israel is referred to as ***"a vine [brought] out of Egypt"***, according to Psalm 80:8. In the New Testament the Father is the Vinedresser, Jesus is the Vine, we are the branches grafted in by adoption. But then there is this other vine that is crushed under the wrath of God. A vine through which the world is intoxicated and will one day be cut down and destroyed in ***"the great winepress of the wrath of God."*** (verse 19). The question is: Is John using poetic language that is illustrative, a vivid, horrible picture in our minds of what will happen at this time? I would think so. He's making reference to Israel being the vine that was taken out of Egypt.

Some understand that this image is the Battle of Armageddon when the armies of the world gather together against Jerusalem.

What John is describing here as 1600 stadia is this: It's a river of blood that is 4 feet high and 2 hundred miles long. From San Diego to Barstow, it's 176 miles; from San Diego to Santa Barbara, it's 216 miles. Can you imagine a river of blood being 4 feet high and extending that distance? In other words, it's going to be great and awful bloodshed at that time, like we've never seen before. The point cannot be missed. There will soon be a day when the cup of God's wrath will be drunk in full strength. Mercy will not be mingled with judgment at that time; no mercy whatsoever. The harvest has come. The harvest of ripe rebellion will be reaped, the intoxicating vine of the earth will be cut down and thrown into ***"the great wine press of the wrath of God."***

Today, God is speaking to you and to the whole world with grace, but one day when the day is complete, and people are done listening, He will speak with His wrath and full judgement. These are the voices from heaven. If

Voices from Heaven

I were speaking of my own accord, I speak without any authority at all. But because I speak to you the very Word of God, the oracles of God, it is a voice from heaven that is speaking to you this morning, not my own, but God's voice according to His word, with His authority. It's as if you were listening to the angel that was crossing the skies at that time. The day is spent, the night is gone, it the 11th hour. Redeem the time, truly turn to Christ, serve Him, worship Him, call on Him as Lord and follow Him. There is no time for playing games with our faith, testing His patience, nor sitting idly, nor seeking to get our ears tickled. The Voice from heaven is speaking and His name is Jesus. **"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."** [Revelation 2:29].

Lord, I pray, I plead with You, that You would just continue to be patient with us, and that we would be stirred, come to this sobering understanding of the urgency of the time, that we would be more inclined to lend You our ear than anyone else. Although we do hear voices from all over the place, from every direction, I pray that we would more closely tune in to Your voice from heaven and do just as Your Son did, the will of the Father, that You may be glorified. In fact, Jesus said that "If you love Me, you'll obey my commandments." [John 14:15]. I pray that we would come to know Your commandments and walk them out in our lives to Your glory. Let us hear Your voice above all else. In Jesus' name, amen.