

## “Should Preaching Be Re-imagined If Its Global Mandate Has Been Fulfilled?”

© Greg R. Scharf<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract:

“Does preaching matter?” The question must be asked in a global perspective in the twenty-first century. Ironically, contextualization now necessitates globalization. The present paper explores the surprising number of biblical texts that appear to assert that the gospel has *already* been widely—indeed universally—proclaimed, both with respect to location and time. This claim, if it can be sustained, has the potential of calling into question the necessity of preaching. The fruit of a careful examination of these texts in their contexts and the respective purposes for which they were written is then brought to bear on contemporary preaching.

### The Biblical Data

Twelve New Testament texts say or imply that the gospel has been universally proclaimed. The clearest, Colossians 1:23<sup>2</sup> [*“if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of **the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.**”*], is reinforced in its preceding context by Col. 1:6 which says of the gospel, *“which has come to you, as indeed **in the whole world** it is bearing fruit and growing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, . . .”*

Hebrews 4:2 and 6 are almost equally direct, extending the preaching of the gospel to the covenant people living during the wilderness wanderings immediately after the exodus. *“For indeed we have had good news preached to us, **just as they also**; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.*<sup>3</sup> Verse 6: *“Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who **formerly received the good news** failed to enter because of disobedience . . .”*

Galatians 3:8 asserts that Scripture preached the gospel to Abraham: *“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham**, saying, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’”*

1 Tim. 3:16, apparently citing an early Christian hymn, says *“Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:*

*He was manifested in the flesh,  
vindicated by the Spirit,  
seen by angels,  
**proclaimed among the nations,**  
believed on in the world,  
taken up in glory.”*

Romans 10:18 says *“But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for **‘Their voice has gone out to all the earth,** and their words to the ends of the world.’”*

Romans 16:25-26 puts it no less strongly: *“Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed*

*and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith- . . .”*

Perhaps most noteworthy is the apparent role of Christ in this global proclamation. Acts 26:23 seems unambiguous: *“that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”*

Ephesians 2:17 at least bids us ask *when* Christ preached to the Gentiles. *“And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.”* By far the most challenging texts are 1 Peter 3:19 which says of Christ *“in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,”* and 4:6, *“For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.”*

Although strictly speaking it does not refer to the gospel *already* having been preached, Revelation 14:6<sup>4</sup> nevertheless rounds out the picture underscoring the reach of the gospel in both time and space: *“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.”*

Notice that these statements are not restricted to a single author, speaker, provenance, literary genre, or period of New Testament history. Alongside this raw data from the New Testament we must note in passing that whatever the authors believed concerning how widely the gospel had already been proclaimed by the time they wrote, those convictions did not inhibit their own proclamation or their urging others to speak out. Paul, for instance, is on his way to preach in Spain when he writes Romans with its two assertions that the gospel has been preached to the nations.<sup>5</sup> Peter calls for his readers to be ready to make a defense for the hope within them in the very context where he speaks of Christ preaching to the spirits. Taken together, the scriptural assertions and the apostolic practice may leave the interpreter somewhat defensive, feeling a need to explain away these texts or ignore them. I propose an approach to them that takes them seriously as part of Holy Writ and seeks to discover in them their abiding relevance for the contemporary preacher.

### **Interpretive Strategy**

Our approach to these texts rests on the observation that in each case, the assertion concerning the universal scope of proclamation is not the primary point of the section of Scripture in which it lies. Our task will be to determine what that aim of the paragraph or section is and then to discern what the assertion concerning proclamation contributes to it. By this means, we hope to let the context keep us from overstating its teaching, disregarding it, or misapplying it. The fruit of this exercise will be a pattern of ideas that do reflect the rhetorical purposes of the texts in question, and which can then be brought to bear on preaching as it is or should be practiced today. Let us examine each text in context in the order cited above. As we go along we will not repeat all that might be mentioned from each text, but instead underscore what the passage under scrutiny adds to the larger picture.

### ***Colossians 1:6, 23***

"[the gospel] which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing- as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth,"

"if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

It is understandable why some older commentators treat these words "from an ideal standpoint,"<sup>6</sup> or as "not a questionable exaggeration but as a strong figure of speech,"<sup>7</sup> or as "hyperbolic".<sup>8</sup> Bruce calls them a "prophetic prolepsis."<sup>9</sup> Harris, while affirming the hyperbole, endorses O'Brien's concept of "representative universalism".<sup>10</sup> Moule is more comfortable saying that "To proclaim the gospel 'in the whole of creation' evidently meant for St. Paul, not necessarily to reach every individual with the Good News, but to let it be heard in all the great centers of the Empire."<sup>11</sup> Hendriksen, citing statistics from R. H. Glover of half a million Christian disciples by the end of the apostolic period<sup>12</sup>, seems happy with a more literal understanding of the text. Lenski reckons the periphrastic present tenses "emphasize most strongly the fact that fruit-bearing and the growing are in full force, ever progressing, never stopping within any nation or country."<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the starkness of the Apostle's assertion assumes its proper proportion when we ask *why* he mentions the cosmic proclamation of the gospel in 1:6 and 1:23. Paul evidently wants those at Colosse (and the others elsewhere who will read this letter) to remain rooted and built up in the selfsame Christ they have already heard faithfully proclaimed by Epaphras (2:6-7; 1:7). These young Christians were being doctrinally harassed by some whose alternative christology—whatever its details were—failed the test of apostolic doctrine and whose spirituality was correspondingly deficient. In between Paul's two references to the already-universally-proclaimed gospel lies a vivid description of God's Son in whom alone all the benefits of the gospel are found. What is striking about this section (1:15-20) is how often the word some form of the Greek word for "all" is used (eight times, vv. 15, 16 [twice], 17 [twice], 18 ["everything" in the ESV], 19, 20). It is precisely because he is creator of all things, before all things, sustainer of all things, and preeminent over all things that he is able to reconcile all things to himself and only he is able to do so. Therefore any abandonment of this gospel, centered in this Christ, is doomed to failure and must be resisted and rejected. It takes a cosmic Christ to save the entire cosmos. The fact that this is already happening with no spatial limits bolsters the pastoral argument for sticking with the faith as the Colossians were taught it. There is only one gospel to be proclaimed in all creation because there is only one who is Creator/Sustainer/Redeemer. The fact that Paul's gospel includes the Gentiles (1:27) and that he aims to proclaim it and teach it to *everyone* (1:28) is not incidental to his gospel but intrinsic to it. Indeed the gospel requires universal proclamation as the logic of 1 Tim 2:1-7 makes plain. Moreover, this gospel has necessary implications for church life. Our unity in Christ eclipses our ethnic and social identities (Col. 3:11) and rules out all partiality since we are to treat one another as God treats us in Christ (3:25). As William Hendriksen puts it, "the gospel needs no addition or supplement"<sup>14</sup>. Any efforts to add to Christ are both futile and unnecessary. Of this, the universal proclamation of the gospel and its global fruitfulness bear supportive testimony.

This is not merely a pragmatic argument resting upon observable results. It is also an affirmation of Paul's apostolic policy. He says, in effect, "We did not tinker with the gospel to make it effective for you. We did not need to do so precisely because of the

theological reality at its core, the cosmic Christ. Nor will you be enticed to alter it once you reaffirm the true Christology to which the gospel bears witness and on which it rests. The global reach of the gospel is inextricably linked to the cosmic Christ at its center.”

### **Hebrews 4:2, 6**

“For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.”

“Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,”

The author’s purpose is evident throughout the letter: he wants for his readers and hearers the perseverance that comes by faith. To urge them in this direction he employs two strategies. On the one hand he issues warnings. He warns against drifting (2:1), neglect (2:3), falling away (3:12), falling by disobedience (4:11), shrinking back (10:39) and notes the dreadful consequences of such falling away (10:26-31; 12:15, 25). On the other hand, he uses exhortation: his hearers are to pay attention to what they have heard (2:1), to consider Jesus (3:1; 12:3), to exhort one another (3:13; 10:24-5), to strive to enter in to the rest of God (4:11), to hold fast to their confession (4:14; 10:23), confidently drawing near to the throne of grace (4:16). They are to leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and go on to maturity (6:1), to have faith and preserve their souls (10:39), to persevere in disciplined holiness (12:7-17), and to be grateful and receive an unshakeable kingdom (12:28). These warnings and exhortations are eminently reasonable because the centerpiece of their faith, Jesus, is here portrayed as superior to everything these Hebrew Christians may have relied upon under the old economy: whether angels, Moses, the law, the sacrifices, the covenant, or the promises. Jesus is superior, especially in his priesthood precisely because he is eternal (7:8, 21-24; 13:8).

Yet the old realities are not merely exposed as obsolete forms, they are also employed as teaching tools to help readers see the superiority and permanence of Christ. For instance, the Aaronic priesthood, the mountain that could be touched, and the tabernacle all function in this way as types whose very limitations underscore the transcendence of Christ and his priesthood. Similarly, characters such as Esau and the rebels in the wilderness make the warnings vivid and personal just as the heroes of faith and godly leaders exemplify the ideal of persevering faith. It is these wilderness rebels to whom the gospel was already preached according to our texts, Hebrews 4:2 and 6. In this context the author is expounding Ps. 95, arguing from the very fact of the Psalm that the wanderers’ failure to enter God’s rest kept the promise open, as it were, in David’s day. By analogy, its “today” remains in the first century just as it was in David’s day and — we might reason—in our own day as well. What clinches this connection for the author of *Hebrews* is that the wanderers’ situation was sufficiently analogous to that of his hearers because they too had heard the gospel preached. George Guthrie captures the thought well. “The analogous nature of the wilderness situation to the experience of *Hebrews*’ addressees is clearly expressed in places such as 4:2—‘just as those’ (*kathaper kakeinoi*)—and it works because there is both continuity and discontinuity between the old- and new-covenant situations. The addressees of Hebrews also are the people of God to whom the good news has been preached, but they, when juxtaposed to the wilderness generation, hear the voice of God at another time and in another situation.”<sup>15</sup> Philip E. Hughes puts it even more strongly. “Quite literally, the opening clause of [4:2] reads, ‘for

we also have been evangelized just as they were,' the perfect tense of the verb implying, as Spicq observes, the completeness of the evangelization that had taken place, and thus leaving no room for any excuse to the effect that the evangelization had been inadequate or deficient. There is a real equivalence between the *promise* of the Old Testament and the *evangel* of the New Testament, for their essential content is the same: the former looks ahead to fulfillment in Christ, the latter proclaims the accomplishment in Christ of what was promised."<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps additional, if tangential testimony to the author's convictions concerning the continuity between the two covenants is his expression in 11:26 where he says *of Moses* that he "considered the reproaches *of Christ* greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt." [Emphasis added.] Closer to our text lies the reason in the immediate context for exhorting his addressees to enter that rest. "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (4:12). Both the wilderness wanderers and the author's addressees have heard God's voice speaking through his servant. Their response is required because what they have heard in both cases is God's word, mediated though it is. This conclusion is further reinforced by the larger framework of *Hebrews* as a whole, emphasizing as it does that those who have heard must heed God's voice. It begins with the assertion that God has spoken (1:1-2), and a challenge to pay closer attention to what we have heard (2:1). It ends with a warning not to refuse "him who is speaking" (12:25), and to remember (i.e., follow the example of) those "who spoke to you the word of God." (13:7).

Our author's argument then is that when it comes to having a right relationship with God, being evangelized is necessary but not sufficient. The hearers in the wilderness were truly evangelized but they failed to enter the promised rest because of their disobedience of unbelief. To his contemporaries the author says, in effect, "Be warned by their experience, but be heartened by the fact that the promise remains (4:6). You have been evangelized, but that does not guarantee your salvation. Do not harden your hearts but continue to believe, persevere, and enter into that promised rest." His handling of Scripture is instructive. He preaches the Old Testament expecting the gospel message to be readily found there, but even more for God's voice to be clearly heard from its pages. As George Guthrie notes, twenty-three of the Old Testament quotations in *Hebrews* have God as the speaker; in four Christ speaks the words of the Old Testament, and four are attributed to the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup> Scripture is still the place where God speaks and His voice is heard. The author does not hesitate to make use of biblical words and phrases for pastoral purposes. His Christocentric hermeneutic frees him to neglect secondary details and to commandeer what otherwise might strike the reader as peripheral. He is not afraid to use biblical characters to instruct us, but his treatment of them could not be called moralistic because he sees their obedience or disobedience against the backdrop of God's plan of redemption.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Galatians 3:8***

"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

This forthright letter expresses the apostle's exasperation that those who heard the (only) true gospel from him could so quickly abandon it for a non-gospel. Having been

freed from the law as a way of justification and given the Holy Spirit by the hearing of faith (3:2) Paul's readers, under the malignant influence of the Judaizers, now imagine they need to be circumcised. Paul's verbal onslaught against their untenable position uses one argument after another employing logic, experience (his and theirs), human analogies, and Scripture. In this section (3:1-9) Paul's six rapid-fire rhetorical questions (3:1-6) leave no doubt about his view of the folly of their misguided ideas. In the final verses of this section (6-9) Paul supplies an alternative. He speaks of Abraham, mentioning him four of the eight times his name appears in Galatians. To be children of Abraham, his readers need no external, fleshly, law-required sign. "Abraham" as Genesis 15:6 says, "believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." Those who share his *faith* also share this blessing. Abraham's example is significant because in salvation history he came before the law and, as Lenski argues, in a sense, he came before Judaism, for "while Abraham is the forefather of the Jews, when he received this promise he was as much a Gentile as the Gentile Galatians themselves."<sup>19</sup> So what did Abraham believe? He believed the promise of God. That promise was good news. Abraham believed the gospel. As Dunn puts it, "Paul could describe the promise to Abraham as 'gospel'; not as a prefiguring of the gospel, not as an incomplete forerunner, but as the good news itself preached beforehand . . ."<sup>20</sup> Notice that the subject of the verb 'preached the gospel' is the Scripture. As Warfield noted long ago, in the Bible, what Scripture says, God says. Paul's assertion here is not a claim that all the details of the Christ event were proclaimed but that good news was not only preached, it was preached by God himself, and it met with faith in Abraham. His response anticipates that of all who hear the good news preached and respond as he did. They too are justified by faith, the only way people are justified in God's sight.

This text reinforces the truth that those who speak in the church are to speak as oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11). That is possible because the Scripture itself preaches the gospel as it has done since it was written. Our task is to handle it so faithfully that God's voice is not muzzled.

### **1 Tim. 3:16**

"Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory."

This verse contains a six-line hymn which Paul recites as an exposition of the "mystery of godliness". The Apostle's aim in 1 Timothy is to counter doctrinal error with the truth, but not truth in some abstract sense but embodied truth, truth incarnate. For this reason he instructs Timothy concerning the appointment of elders who are not only to teach the truth but display it in their private, family, and church lives (3:1-8). The church, as the household of God, is where God lives, where he indwells a people who make the truth solid as a buttress does for a building, and make it visible as pillars do when they support the building's roof. Truth can be incarnate in the church precisely because it has already been incarnate in Jesus. The mission of the church cannot be understood apart from the mission of God accomplished in Christ. Right behavior in the church, which Paul writes this letter to foster (3:15), rests upon a Christological foundation. The confessional hymn Paul recites reminds his hearers of the whole career of the Savior. Exactly how it does so remains a matter of some discussion. David J. MacLeod links the individual lines to sequential parts of that career: the incarnation, resurrection, ascension,

proclamation, reception, and enthronement.<sup>21</sup> George Knight sees a theological direction, if not a strict chronological sequence, and takes the six lines as three couplets which speak first of “the accomplishment of Christ’s work, the second of the accomplishment made known, and the third of the response to the accomplishment made known.”<sup>22</sup> The proclamation in line four may include that by the angels who have just seen the risen Christ, but is not limited to their announcements. Since the nations are the audience, what seems to be envisioned by lines five and six is the post-ascension proclamation of Christ by Christ’s apostles and other followers that engendering belief. Already Christ has been proclaimed among the nations. No geographical markers are necessary to make the point. How ever one parses the parts in detail, the striking thought is that this early Christological confession, perhaps second only in brevity to “Jesus is Lord”, includes a statement about preaching and believing. What we know and believe about the Christ would risk some deficiency if this detail were omitted. This lean affirmation secures the truth already stated more fully in 2:5, “For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”

The vindication of Jesus, first by the Holy Spirit in Christ’s resurrection, and ultimately by Heaven itself in his ascension and proleptically by his glorification, is matched already by widespread acknowledgment here on earth. God’s purpose to have worldwide outposts of His rule had already begun by the early 60’s of this era. In each place where the truth is declared and embodied, it will be countercultural, no matter what the surrounding culture is like. The confidence that each outpost is part of a global phenomenon gives courage to those fighting for the truth on any front.

### ***Romans 10:18***

“But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

This verse is a small part of a lengthy theodicy in which Paul defends God’s plan to get glory for himself (9:23; 11:36) through both Jews and Gentiles. One facet of that defense is an argument that *the word of God has not failed* (9:6). Paul contends that salvation by grace through faith, the message he preaches (10:8), is for everyone, both the Jew and the Greek, as he calls Gentiles here (10:11-13). Paul must now explain how that message gets to both these groups. How do people call on the name of the Lord? A chain of five rhetorical questions (10:14-15) links the gospel to the hearer. *Sending* enables *preaching* which allows *hearing* which enables *believing* which results in them *calling* on the Name of the Lord for salvation. The chain is secure and its logic beyond dispute. Nevertheless empirical fact and Scriptural testimony agree that not all have obeyed (16). Where then is the weak link in the chain? Could it be “hearing” since “faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (10:17)? No, says Paul in verse 18, if by “hearing” you do not mean “heeding” for they *have* heard for, in the words of Ps. 19:4, “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” Whose voice has been heard? In the original context it is the heavens that speak, the skies that pour forth words. General revelation is, by definition, universal. Moo reckons that Paul’s “application probably rests on a general analogy: as God’s word of general revelation has been proclaimed over the earth, so God’s word of special revelation, in the gospel has been spread over the earth. His intention is not to interpret the verse of the

Psalm, but to use its language, with the ‘echoes’ of God’s revelation that it awakes, to assert the universal preaching of the gospel.”<sup>23</sup> Who then has heard this universal proclamation? Although the analogy with general revelation would have us respond that *everyone* has heard, this does not seem to be Paul’s point here. General revelation renders everyone accountable (1:20), but is not sufficient to save anyone. In the following context (10:19, 21) it becomes plain that *Israel* is the audience Paul has in mind. They heard because wherever they went God’s voice was heard week by week in their synagogues (so Bruce<sup>24</sup>, Lenski<sup>25</sup>, and Godet<sup>26</sup>). Luke records James saying something related to this in Acts 15:21. Having pointed out to the Jerusalem Council that the prophets anticipate a Gentile ingathering, he encourages the assembly not to lay any *additional* burdens on the Gentiles, other than the four specific duties from the only section of Leviticus that explicitly requires the Gentiles to obey.<sup>27</sup> In other words, in essentially Jewish Christian assemblies, Gentiles are not being asked to become Jews first, but merely to express by their behavior their submission to general biblical standards required of all. Although it is not clear (to me) whether James is advocating wise sensitivity on the part of Gentile Christians, or reassuring hard-line Jewish Christians that the law will not evaporate from the scene, the fact to which he points is the reading of the Torah every Sabbath in the synagogues, something that began in ancient times and can be presumed to continue. Wherever the Jews are, Moses is preached. Paul, (to return to Romans) it would seem, reckons every Jew has heard the voice of God at the reading of Scripture. The explanation of this *apparent* failure of the Word of God (i.e., that the majority of Jews have not repented) must be sought elsewhere than in the notion that they have not heard. The Jews have heard the gospel preached.

Any responsible practice of public worship must include the public reading of Scripture (1 Tim. 4:13). Those who read it well make their subsequent exposition of it easier, for the Scripture itself preaches the gospel, as the case of the Jews in any synagogue illustrates.

### ***Romans 16:25-26***

“Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages<sup>26</sup> but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-”

This doxology, though missing in some manuscripts and placed elsewhere in others, picks up earlier expressions and emphases of the letter and on balance should be taken as genuine. As a doxology this section does not tell us the function of the focal phrase, “has been made known to all the nations” in the same way a logical argument might. A doxology is the overflow of a heart in praise to God and its contents are limited only by the space available and the scriptural reservoirs of the writer. Nevertheless, we notice that once again Jesus Christ is central to Paul’s praise as the one preached in what he calls “my gospel” (cf. 2:16). The “preaching of Jesus Christ” [τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,] is virtually interchangeable with the preceding phrase, “my gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου]. Christ is the one at the heart of the prophetic writings, the one whose identity is now disclosed and preached not merely *from* the Scriptures but also *for* the nations. The eternal God’s command aims toward the obedience of faith (cf. 1:5). This *Kerugma* not only makes faith and obedience possible in the first place, it establishes

those who exercise faith and are therefore able to obey. God's command was never that this blessing be restricted to Israel but always that it should include the nations.

These inferences suggest worthwhile criteria for contemporary preaching in the church. Is it always Christ-centered? Is it scriptural, preaching Jesus Christ from the whole canon? Does it go beyond evangelizing to establishing? Does it aim to engender faith that leads to obedience, slighting neither faith nor obedience? Is it preached in faith that the eternal God will use it to establish believers and so get glory for his Name?

### ***Acts 26:23***

"that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

Paul's defense before Agrippa was really a gospel-laden testimony. He told his story but larded the description and dialogue with the good news and its intended recipients. At the heart of Paul's claim to legitimacy is his assertion that there is nothing novel or heterodox about his message. He is merely a witness who only testifies to what Moses and the prophets said would happen (26:22). Verse 23 summarizes what they predicted about Christ by chronicling two events that would give rise to a subsequent action. The two events are first, his suffering—a metonymy for his death—and second, his resurrection from the dead, the first of its kind. Together, these two events set the stage for what comes next, namely that Christ is, literally "about to proclaim light to the people [i.e. Israel] and to the nations." To what does this preaching of "light" by Christ refer? Notice that in this very testimony (vv 17-18) Paul recounts his commission in which Christ refers to both *the people* and *the nations* "to whom I am sending you to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins . . ." This statement echoes what is recorded in Luke 24:46-47 where the risen Lord says, "Thus it is written, that Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to the nations, beginning in Jerusalem." This is followed immediately by the promise of the Holy Spirit and the directive to wait to be clothed with His power. The sequence is the same: suffering, resurrection and preaching. The preaching is predicated of Christ in Acts 26:23 and of those who preach *in his name* and by his Spirit's power in Luke 24. Or to put it otherwise, Jesus fulfills his predicted role as preacher through those who speak as his representatives and are indwelt by His Spirit. It is actually Jesus who preaches through them. That this concept is not foreign to Luke's thinking is evident from such texts as Acts 3:6, 16; 4:7, 10, 17, 18, 30; 5:28, 40; 19:13; 26:9 which describe people speaking and healing in Jesus' name (or being forbidden to do so). Indeed in Acts 4:29-30 Peter and John, now restored to the Christian community, ask the Lord to "grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." The servants speak; the Father heals through the Servant, Jesus, which is a sign that he is the one speaking. What annoyed the authorities was that the Christians were preaching *in Jesus* the resurrection from the dead (4:2). Even they perceived at some level the mediated voice of the risen Christ.

### ***Ephesians 2:17***

"And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near."

In the verses that make up this section (11-22) Paul explicitly addresses Gentile Christians reminding them that though they were once far off, they have been brought near by the blood of Christ (13). This was made possible because Christ met the claims of the law against us by fulfilling the law in his life and taking our prescribed punishment in his death. That atoning sacrifice simultaneously reconciled us all to God and united the Gentiles and the Jews. The latter; though they had the law, could not keep it any more than could the Gentiles who were strangers to its covenant and promises. Verse 17 asserts that Christ came and preached peace to both groups, the far off and the near, preaching the same message of peace to both. This gospel puts Jews and Gentiles on a profoundly equal footing and the one body that results from this transaction is the visual aid of God's manifold wisdom (3:10), and the basis for the unity of the church (4:1 ff). Our text, then, serves to locate Christian unity in the eternal counsels of God, a plan with which God's own actions are consistent.

Nevertheless, the question remains: when did Jesus preach this identical message of peace to Jew and Gentile? When faced with a request for healing from a Canaanite woman, the Lord said he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 15:24), and when he initially sent out the twelve, he instructed them not to go to either Gentiles or Samaritans but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:6). Even if Jesus preached somewhere between when he was crucified and rose from the dead—a subject we will have to address next—there is no indication that his focus was on Gentiles. The same must be said for his recorded post-resurrection appearances, for these were to the eleven and their immediate circle. For these reasons, we agree with Stott that while Ephesians 2:17 must refer to the post-resurrection appearances where he announced the peace he had won at the cross to his disciples, it also includes “his proclamation of the gospel of peace to the world through the apostles and through subsequent generations of Christians. Jesus Christ is still preaching peace in the world today through the lips of his followers. For it is truly a wonderful fact that whenever we proclaim peace, it is Christ who proclaims it through us.”<sup>28</sup>

### ***1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6***

“in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,”

“For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.”

These are by far the most disputed verses on this subject.<sup>29</sup> Instead of trying to answer all the questions they raise, we will follow our usual procedure of asking what the writer is trying to achieve in the lives of his readers and hearers and how the assertions under investigation contribute to that aim. Both these verses support Peter's emphasis on our Christian calling to follow Jesus in obedience in the midst of suffering (2:21; 3:9, 14, 17-18; 4:1, 12-9). Instead of returning reviling for reviling, we are to bless. If we suffer, it is to be for righteousness. By faith we are to see this as the way of blessing, and are not to fear or be troubled (3:14). This is a tall order. Peter wants his addressees to have a growing confidence that this righteous lifestyle is completely warranted. Both 3:19 and 4:6, though probably not referring to the same event, nevertheless are structured in their immediate contexts as additional reasons for beleaguered Christians to persevere in Christ-like obedience. Having offered one reason in verse 17, 1 Peter 3:18—which sets

the stage for verse 19—begins with ὅτι that alerts us that a reason follows. Having exhorted his readers to have the mind of Christ (4:1), and having reminded them that former friends will be surprised by this change and malign them, but will be judged for their sins, 1 Peter 4:6 begins with εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ, “For this is why . . .” as the ESV translates it, anticipating an explanation. That is, the assertions of our texts are designed to undergird the hearers’ confidence in ways I hope to show. Before doing so, we must notice another verbal pattern.

The other thread running through this section is the recurrent reference to “flesh” and “spirit” (3:18, 21; 4:1 [twice], 2, 6). It is *in the flesh* that Jesus suffered. But having been made alive *in the spirit* by his resurrection, he is in a position to sustain and rescue those who though still *in the flesh* have renounced the ways of the flesh and embrace the way of righteousness. How is this reality meant to strengthen the resolve of the Christians? These clues all point in the direction of the authority of Jesus, who though he still has a body, now functions in the realm of the spirit.

One indicator of the scope of that authority of Christ’s risen life is what he did after the resurrection. He preached to the spirits in prison (19). What did he preach? Who are these spirits? When did this preaching take place? Grudem’s argument that Christ preached through Noah in Noah’s day is impressive, especially since it dovetails with what we have already concluded from Ephesians 2:17 and Acts 26:23 that a biblical writer can affirm that “Christ preached” when the message was actually articulated by someone else such as an apostle. In the final analysis, though, Grudem’s argument rests on such a long string of just barely possible interpretive decisions that the likelihood of them all breaking his way seems to me too small. So, I tentatively, and reluctantly, hypothesize that the event here described is the risen Jesus going, after his resurrection, in the spirit, to the unclean spirits<sup>30</sup> who were disobedient in Noah’s day to announce by his word and presence that by virtue of his resurrection he was and is victorious over them and all evil, both terrestrial and cosmic. The apparent reason Peter mentions the spirits in prison as those who were singled out to hear this message is because of his hearers’ familiarity with Enoch.<sup>31</sup> For first century readers, this announcement to the spirits in prison was particularly telling. Peter mentions this event here because Christ’s preachment had more to do with the Preacher than the listeners. It was a token of his cosmic, eternal authority and not an invitation to respond.

A second indicator of the scope of Christ’s authority comes from 1 Peter 4:6 which uses a different word for Christ’s preaching, εὐηγγελίσθη, not ἐκήρυξεν. Here it is the gospel that is preached, not merely a victory that is announced. Who are the dead to whom the gospel was preached? If we believe that Scripture speaks with one voice, Luke 16:26 surely rules out the possibility of anyone offering the dead a second chance. It seems better to understand this verse as saying that the gospel was preached *while they were alive* to people who are now dead.<sup>32</sup> This preaching was done so that though judged in the flesh, i.e., by death, they might live in the spirit if they have faith in Christ who, though innocent, was judged (for us) in the flesh and now lives in the spirit.

These cautious interpretations of the two texts from 1 Peter, for all their tentativeness, do add something solid to our understanding of the scope of gospel proclamation. In the words of Karen Jobes, “First Peter 3:19 and 4:6 are not referring to the same proclamation but both nevertheless do make universal claims for Jesus Christ. In both verses Christ is presented as the victor over both present and ancient evil, who

has full authority over both fallen angels and human souls.”<sup>33</sup> All Christians faced with either active physical resistance or verbal disapproval need to know that when we renounce our old sinful pleasures for present suffering as part of a future hope we are not making a fool’s bargain. Peter reckons that Jesus’ *earthly* example, crucial as it is, is not sufficient.<sup>34</sup> We need also to know of his post-resurrection triumph, and that he will have the last word judging (or acquitting) the living and the dead. Peter’s perspective, and that of every growing Christian is the same as the apostle Paul’s, who counseled others not to avenge, but to leave it to the wrath of God (Rom. 12:19), and affirmed that if for this life only we have hoped in God, we are of all people most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:19).

### ***Revelation 14:6***

“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.”

John’s kaleidoscopic vision stacks one surreal image on top of another. This detail in what John saw and records here places the gospel messenger directly overhead, and at such an “altitude,” as it were, that the broadcast range is limitless. It is as if the sky were full of geosynchronous satellites whose broadcasts leave no square meter out of range and without a signal. Everyone everywhere is within the sound of the gospel. Is the exhortation in verse 7 a restatement of the “eternal gospel”, a final opportunity to hear (so Osborne), or an application of it, a great “therefore” that assumes all have heard<sup>35</sup>? I am inclined to agree with Osborne that “fear God and give him glory are code words for repentance and conversion.”<sup>36</sup> In either case, whether the eternal gospel is being preached or has been preached, the hour of judgment should be considered as being at hand. Everyone should turn from idolatry in all its forms and worship God. This verse assures us that God’s offer of amnesty is universal but it does not anticipate universal acceptance. On judgment day no one will justly blame God that pardon was not available. John’s hearers here, however, are Christians who, encouraged by God’s vindication and theirs, are to persevere in faith and obedience (14:12). Those who die *in the Lord* are blessed (14:13).

### **Conclusions**

Far from rendering preaching unnecessary, these twelve texts exalt preaching as nothing less than the mediated speech of the living God whose good news is for all people at all times by virtue of his Son’s identity. Jesus emerges not merely as the goal of the Christian life and the object of our faith, the high priest of our profession, but also as the preacher of the gospel who astonishingly speaks through those who preach in his name and by his power. His uniqueness not only establishes his preeminence in the universe, it defines the gospel as universal, and in so doing removes any spatial or cultural restrictions on those who speak in his name. Indeed, a unique Savior *necessitates* global proclamation of a single gospel message. Christ’s cosmic uniqueness and the gospel’s universal scope are two sides of the same coin.

All these texts were written to those combating false teaching, whether it was intentionally targeting them or was emerging in their midst more or less by default. At the heart of their doctrinal restoration lies an orthodox Christology. Christian leaders have a major responsibility to “guard the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:14). Where it has been lost, we share

responsibility to recover it. Christians need not be arrogant in asserting gospel uniqueness, only realistic concerning the problem God's gospel addresses. If the human condition could be remedied by any merely human solution, then various contenders for the office of savior would doubtless each have their advantages and strengths. But, if we humans are alienated from God, dead in our sins, and without hope in the world, then if God offers a single, logically exclusive, solution to that plight—and he has—we would be wise not only to gratefully receive it, but to tell everyone else of it. In that telling, we have the assurance that Christ himself speaks through us for he longs for all to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:4).

This gospel speaks *to us* as sinners before Christ speaks *through us* to others. We are needy recipients by virtue of *our* identity, just as Christ is lavish provider of salvation by virtue of *his* identity. The good news as preached is not merely good news of justification, though that is foundational; it is good news for living. By virtue of Christ's victory over all evil, we have the confidence to face evil, knowing that we follow in Christ's path. He is both pioneer and perfecter of our faith, the one who always lives to make intercession for us.

Scripture itself lives and speaks and what it proclaims is the gospel. In the task of preaching the gospel, we should not neglect Jesus' Bible, what we call the Old Testament. Indeed we should study the New Testament authors' use of it as a pattern for our own hermeneutic. We preach not for our purposes but for purposes that are congruent with its aims in the lives of its original hearers. Our freedom in expounding Scripture, whether Old or New Testament, is constrained by a consuming burden—that the voice of God be heard and that when people hear us speak in Christ's name, what they hear is recognizably his voice. That is, preaching should neither add to the biblical message nor take away from it but rebroadcast it in the languages and idioms of our hearers.

### Works Consulted

Adam, Peter. *Speaking God's Words*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996.

Bandstra, Andrew J. "Making proclamation to the spirits in prison': another look at 1 Peter 3:19." *Calvin Theological Journal* 38 (2003) no. 1: 120-124.

Beale, G. K. and D. A. Carson, eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Bruce, F. F. *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.

Caird, G. B. *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine*. New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

Carson, Herbert M. *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960.

Cranfield, C. E. B. *The International Critical Commentary: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, vol 2*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979.

Cranfield, Charles E. B. "Interpretation of 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6." *Expository Times* 69 (1958) no. 12: 369-372.

Dalton, William J. *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18-4:6*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Revised. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The interpretation of 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6 : light from 2 Peter." *Biblica* 60 (1979) no. 4: 547-555.

Dunn, James D. G. *Black's New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle to the Galatians*. London: A & C. Black, 1993.

Erdman, Charles R. *An Exposition: The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1933.

Godet, F. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969.

Goodspeed, Edgar J. "Some Greek notes." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 73 (1954) no. 2: 84-92.

Grudem, Wayne A. "Christ preaching through Noah : 1 Peter 3:19-20 in the light of dominant themes in Jewish literature." *Trinity Journal* 7 (1986) no. 2: 3-31.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The First Epistle of Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Ham, Clay. "The Christ hymn in 1 Timothy 3:16." *Stone-Campbell Journal* 3 (2000) no. 2: 209-228.

Harris, Murray J. *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament: Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Hendriksen, William. *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964.

Hofer, Herbert. "Gospel Proclamation of the Ascended Lord." *Missiology: An International Review* XXXIII, no. 4 (October 2005) : 435-449.

Hughes, Philip Edgcumbe. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

Jeremias, Joachim. *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.

- Jobes, Karen. *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: 1 Peter*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Johnson, Dennis E. *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007.
- Knight, George W. III, *The New International Greek Commentary: The Pastoral Epistles*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians and Philippians*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1937.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936.
- MacLeod, David J. "Christology in six lines: an exposition of 1 Timothy 3:16." *Bibliotheca sacra* 159 (2002) no. 635: 334-348.
- Moo, Douglas. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Moule, C. F. D. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.
- Omanson, Roger "How does it all Fit Together? Thoughts on translating Acts 1.15-22 and 15.19-21," *The Bible Translator* 41, no. 4 (October 1990), 416-421.
- Osborne, Grant. *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Schwartz, Daniel R. "The futility of preaching Moses (Acts 15:21)." *Biblica* 67 (1986) no. 2: 276-281.
- Schweizer, Eduard. "Lord of the nations." *South East Asia Journal of Theology* 13 (1972) no. 2: 13-21.
- Selwyn, Edward Gordon. *The First Epistle of St. Peter: the Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1946.

Simpson, E. K. and F. F. Bruce. *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.

Stott, John R. W. *God's New Society: the Message of Ephesians*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1979.

Wuest, Kenneth S. *Wuest's Word Studies: Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953.

---

<sup>1</sup> Greg R. Scharf, D. Min., is chair of the department of Pastoral Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all citations are from the English Standard Version, used for its comparatively literal renderings of the Greek text.

<sup>3</sup> *Holy Bible*, New American Standard updated edition, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> I intentionally omit other examples of proclamation by creation (Ps 19:1-6), stones (Luke 19:40), John the Baptist who "preached" (προκηρύξαντος) Christ (Acts 13:24), and those who preach Moses whenever the Torah is preached in the synagogue (Acts 15:21), although this text will be mentioned later in our discussion of Romans 10:18. See Peter Adam, *Speaking God's Word* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), 15-26 for a helpful review of the wider concept of God who speaks.

<sup>5</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *The International Critical Commentary: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), II, 537-8.

<sup>6</sup> Herbert M. Carson, *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), 48.

<sup>7</sup> Charles R. Erdman, *An Exposition: The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1933), 37.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies: Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 174.

<sup>9</sup> E. K. Simpson and F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 213.

<sup>10</sup> Murray J. Harris, *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament: Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 19.

<sup>11</sup> C. F. D. Moule, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 73.

<sup>12</sup> William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964), 51.

<sup>13</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1964), 26-27.

<sup>14</sup> William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1964), 50.

<sup>15</sup> George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), s.v.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 156.

<sup>17</sup> George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 921.

<sup>18</sup> See Dennis E. Johnson, *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R, 2007), chapter 6 for a rich exposition of the author's handling of the Hebrew Scriptures.

<sup>19</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians and Philippians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1937), 139.

<sup>20</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Black's New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle to the Galatians* (London: A & C Black, 1993), 166.

- 
- <sup>21</sup> David J. MacLeod, "Christology in Six Lines: An Exposition of 1 Timothy 3:16," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 159 (July—September 2002): 334-48.
- <sup>22</sup> George W. Knight, III, *The New International Greek Commentary: The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 186.
- <sup>23</sup> Douglas Moo, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 666-667.
- <sup>24</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 206-7.
- <sup>25</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936), 670.
- <sup>26</sup> F. Godet, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 388.
- <sup>27</sup> Roger Omanson, "How Does it All Fit Together? Thoughts on Translating Acts 1.15-22 and 15.19-21," *The Bible Translator* 41:4 (October 1990), 420.
- <sup>28</sup> John R. W. Stott, *God's New Society: the Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1979), 103.
- <sup>29</sup> Sources of some of the most thoughtful reflections are listed in the bibliography. Of the recent commentators, Wayne Grudem makes the strongest case for Christ preaching through Noah. Karen Jobes notes that Peter's readers were likely aware of both Enoch and Noah and takes 3:19 to be Christ's announcement of his victory over sin and death.
- <sup>30</sup> This may include the "sons of God" of Gen 6:1-4 or the wicked men of Gen 6:5-8 or both.
- <sup>31</sup> William Joseph Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18-4:6* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, revised, 1989), 175-6.
- <sup>32</sup> This is a valid use of language. We may say, "The crashed car had new brakes installed." This does not mean that a mechanic went to the junk yard and did a brake job; only that some time prior to the crash a mechanic had done so.
- <sup>33</sup> Karen Jobes, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: 1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 273.
- <sup>34</sup> William Joseph Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18-4:6* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, revised, 1989), 105.
- <sup>35</sup> G. B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 182.
- <sup>36</sup> Grant Osborne, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 535.