The Creator’s Bill of Rights

(Revelation 14:6-13)

Revelation 14:6-13 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” 8 And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” 9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” 12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. 13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

Many years ago, when Christian Herter was governor of Massachusetts, he was running hard for a second term in office. And one day, after a busy morning chasing votes (and no lunch), he arrived at a church barbecue. It was late in the afternoon and Herter was starving.

As Herter moved down the serving line, he held out his plate to the woman serving chicken. She put a piece on his plate and turned to the next person in line.

“﻿Excuse me,﻿” Governor Herter said, “﻿do you mind if I have another piece of chicken?﻿”

“﻿Sorry,﻿” the woman told him. “﻿I﻿’m supposed to give one piece of chicken to each person.﻿”

“﻿But I﻿’m starved,﻿” the governor said.

“﻿Sorry,﻿” the woman said again. “﻿Only one to a customer.﻿”

Now, even though Governor Herter was a humble and kind man, he decided throw his weight around a little, and he said the server:

“﻿Do you know who I am?﻿ ﻿I’m the governor of this state.﻿”

And the woman replied: “﻿Do you know who I am?﻿ ﻿I﻿’m the lady in charge of the chicken. Move along, please.﻿”

Now, we all laugh at that story, but I’ll bet that if the chicken lady told her boss what she told the governor of Massachusetts, he probably would have had a heart attack. But the truth of the matter is that she was in authority of what each person received and regardless of whether it was the governor or a local sanitation worker, each person was to receive one piece of chicken.

I don’t have to tell you, do I, that we live in a world in which the vast, vast majority of people do not take the authority of God seriously. They feel as if no one has the right to tell them what to do and that they don’t have to give an account to anybody. And when you live in the midst of a world where the vast majority of the people around you feel this way it can wear you out---it makes it very difficult sometimes to stay strong and to be obedient to God.

So this morning before we share the Lord’s Supper, I’d like to give you some very important reminders about God’s authority over His creation.

The title of my message is: “The Creator’s Bill of Rights.”

(Prayer)

The last time we met together and looked at Revelation, John had a vision of the 144,000 Jewish men who will spread out over the entire world to witness standing victoriously with the Son of God on Mount Zion.

But in our text that we read this morning, his vision begins with an angel who has a message for the people of planet earth. You will remember that this message is for a world full of people who are dangerously close to going beyond what we could call “the point of no return” spiritually. In other words, they have rejected the testimony of God’s Two Witnesses and are about to take the mark of the Beast---a mark that, as we shall see, will seal their eternal fate.

But since there are still people who haven’t received the mark, God makes a last-ditch effort to get through to them. And the angel says:

Revelation 14:7 “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

What is God’s message to people who feel that no one has a right to tell them what to do? He calls their bluff. He says, “People of earth **listen to Me**---I am your Creator---I have made the everything in the sky, the earth, the oceans, and every source of fresh water. And I want you to know in no uncertain terms that I mean business---the hour of my judgment has come. And since I am the Creator, I have the perfect right to do so.”

Christian author and scholar Norman Geisler said the following in a conversation with Lee Strobel:

“People assume that what’s wrong for us is wrong for God. However, it’s wrong for me to take your life, because I didn’t make it and I don’t own it. For example, it’s wrong for me to go into your yard and pull up your bushes, cut them down, kill them, transplant them, move them around. I can do that in my yard, because I own the bushes in my yard…God is sovereign over all of life and he has the right to take it if he wishes. In fact, **we tend to forget that God takes the life of every human being**. It’s called death. The only question is when and how, which we have to leave up to him.”

The truth is, and our text bears this out, when people refuse to give God the time of day---when they refuse His authority and set themselves up as God---**God has the right to judge.**

**1. God has the right to judge people temporally---in the here and now**---it is called His wrath (vv 9-10):

“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of **the wrath of God**, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation.”

We will see this when we study the bowl judgments in chapter 16.

**ILLUSTRATION**

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Now if God’s judgment in the here and now was all that these people would have to endure, it would be bad enough, but from God’s Word we discover that:

**2. God also has the right to judge people eternally as well.**

In the future Tribulation Period, those who take the Mark of the Beast seal their eternal fate (v. 10):

He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends **forever and ever**; and they have **no rest day or night**, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

(Comments)

**3. God also has the right to reward people eternally** (vv. 12-13)

12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. 13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

God WILL reward those who submit to His authority. This is what keeps us going when so many around us thumb their nose at God.

**Application:**

How have you been doing when it comes to God’s authority?

Do you struggle with God telling you what to do?

(Lord’s Supper)