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From Where I Sit . . .

“Blessed Are The Dead...”

The book of **Revelation** is a wonderful book – yet a frightening book to most people because of all the symbols and the great difficulty we have understanding it all. To simplify the book, however, one could say accurately that it was written to show John things that must shortly come to pass, and was written for the **purpose of helping real people in a real world** look beyond distress and persecution to the victory that is assured in Jesus Christ.

Victory assured to the faithful is the overall theme of the book. Jesus is portrayed as the lamb that was slain and has prevailed, and overcoming saints are pictured as reigning with the Lord in the beautiful city of God. In **Revelation 14:13**, John hears a voice that pronounces a state of blessedness upon those who **“die in the Lord.”** They shall **“rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.”**

Just as Jesus pronounced special Blessedness, or happiness in the **Sermon on the Mount** of **Matthew Chapter 5** (9 different times) upon those who are **“Poor in Spirit,” “They that mourn,” “The Merciful,” “The Meek,” “The Pure in Heart,” “The Hungry for Righteousness,” “The Peacemakers,”** and **“Those who suffer faithfully,”** John uses the very same word here to describe the bliss of the one who has walked faithful with the Lord, and comes to the end of his journey and dies in the Lord.

Our ultimate joy, and hope lies in the precious provision God has made for a life beyond the grave which is promised us in Jesus Christ. While there are many obstacles that one might have to cross in getting to that goal, the Holy Spirit wants us to see that the reward of eternal life is worth the endeavor and that bliss awaits the faithful. **“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal”** (2 Cor. 4:17 - 18).

John’s writing in **Revelation 14:13** is as relevant and as needed today as it ever was. Christians need to be reminded of the importance of staying faithful to the Lord and He will give us the great reward which lies beyond the suffering and distress in life. It’s a wonderful thing to know that God’s knows and that God cares. In time of severe persecution God’s people desperately needed a message of encouragement. The Lord sent this message to emphasize that he knew what was going on, that he was standing in the midst of the churches, and that the forces of evil would not succeed in destroying the church. He didn’t want the people to be discouraged.

There are two key concepts we need to consider in view of this great promise: **Be Hopeful:** There is rest for the weary. There is hope in Christ Jesus. The Revelator saw pictures of a new day dawning in a heavenly realm where saints would reign with God forever with no tears, no sorrow, and no pain. Peter saw New Heavens and New Earth (**2 Peter 3:13**). **Be Faithful:** This promise is only to the faithful – those who die in the Lord – who remain steadfast to the end.

. . . . Terry Broome