
The Real Issue

The problem is that obeying man will be popular.

Obeying God will be unpopular.

Real crosses and real electric chairs have never been popular.

Jesus says, “Take up your cross and follow Me.” Roman soldiers nailed the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to the cross. He felt more pain than we can imagine, for our benefit. He did not do the popular thing. Dying in an electric chair is not popular today. When have you seen crowds of people pushing to be the first one to die in the electric chair? Death from the torture of the cross would today be even less popular than electrocution in the electric chair.

Having someone drive nails through your hands and feet into a wooden cross was not popular. Neither was feeling the torture of tearing flesh from the jarring drop of the cross as it thudded into the hole prepared for it. After the drop, the nail wounds gaped from the weight hanging from the nails.

Blood flowed freely, dripping from the hands and feet and even from the backs of those whom the soldiers whipped before they crucified them. Crosses were tools of torture. Jesus is calling you to a life of discipline and a willingness to be unpopular and unashamed.

Jesus is calling for Christian soldiers. Onward, Christian soldiers! Onward to service, onward to choosing the life of the cross and knowing that Christ is beside you and that He surrounds you with angels. You will go through trials, but He will go through with you. Let other soldiers fight with their guns and their fear and their hatred. God is calling for volunteers. God is calling you! Yes, you! He is speaking to your heart, assuring you that you can find total and complete forgiveness for your sins and true meaning in service.

You must be willing to surrender all, even if necessary your life, for Him. He gave His life for you and wants to be first in your life. He loves you in spite of all the bad things you may have said or done. He will forgive all. In return, He wants your love. He wants your life. He wants to fill your life with purpose and meaning and power.

When Jesus walked among His disciples, He saw Peter and John and James washing their nets at the lake of Galilee. They were fishermen. Jesus called them to leave all that behind. He said, “Come and follow Me, and I’ll make you fishers of men.” That call included women and children. Now, instead of catching fish in a net, they were to invite sinners to know Jesus as their Savior from sin.

Jesus will forgive you for your disobedience, unkindness, and sin of all kinds—even crimes that society will never forgive. But He wants to do even more for you. He wants to give you His Holy Spirit to give you the power to be fishers of men, women, and children. God wants to give you the privilege of working with Him for the salvation of your family, your friends, your neighbors, and anyone with whom you come in contact. God wants you to be His partner. What a privilege—working with the Creator of all!

Take God’s Word and give it away. Talk to others about what you are discovering. Many will not listen. The majority did not accept Christ. Otherwise they would not have nailed Him to a cross. But some here and some there accepted Him. God has put the power in His Word. The only reason this book is powerful is that it is filled with God’s word. It was by His word that He created this world. He spoke, and the creative energy of His word brought the world into existence.

The Word—Small, but Powerful!

The secret of life that many have never discovered is that the Word of God looks plain and ordinary. Many think of it as an ordinary book. But it is full of power just waiting to be released. Read the Word, believe the Word, share the Word, and your life will have a power and purpose that you

never dreamed possible. Share the Word with another, and it is like a farmer planting a very small seed in the ground. It looks ordinary and tiny, but within a watermelon seed planted in the ground are many huge watermelons waiting to be grown and harvested.

Plant God's Word by sharing it with others, and you will see some of those people again in heaven and in the earth made new. They will throw their arms around you and say, "Oh, thank you! Thank you! If it weren't for you, I wouldn't be here!" "The harvest is the end of the world, and the angels are the reapers." Plant God's Word by sharing it with your friends, neighbors, relatives, and anyone you come in contact with, and you will have a big harvest. Matthew 13:39.

You will never know when you have planted a seed of God's Word in someone's heart that will take root in their mind and grow and guide them into choosing Jesus Christ and the way of the cross. You will be surprised someday at how many are saved as a result of your life. The one you helped will help yet another, and that person will help another choose Jesus, and the harvest will multiply.

You might begin by using this very book you are reading. Either buy extra copies for your friends, or give them the Internet URL—www.prophecymadeeasy.com—to look up and read on their computers.

God will use you mightily in the closing conflict, Christian soldier. Take up your cross and follow Jesus. The reward is eternal life and the knowledge that your life purpose has been realized. God has placed a God-shaped hole in every heart—a void that men and women and children try to fill. Many try to fill it with liquor, cigarettes, drugs, sex, violence, pleasure, or money. But none of those things will ever fill that hole. Ask Jesus Christ to fill that hole for you.

You and I are related in two ways. We share common distant grandparents—Adam and Eve. We also share a new-birth commitment and relationship with Jesus Christ, providing you have asked Christ into your heart and are seeking to continue that relationship with Christ.

I'm Praying for You!

Dear friend of mine, let's make a pact to pray for each other. I probably haven't met you yet, but I will if we both stay close to Christ. I will pray for you, the reader, and ask that you pray for me. We will meet in New Jerusalem, the beautiful city of the future. There will be no more death, no more pain, no more tears, no more loneliness, and no more struggles.

It will be exciting! I'm already looking forward to meeting you in God's

beautiful city. Read more about it in chapters 29 and 30 of this book and the last two chapters of your Bible—Revelation 21 and 22. You will have a beautiful house in the earth made new. Jesus Himself said, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” You may not qualify as “meek” now, but don’t let that stop you. The word *meek* does not mean what many think it does. It does not describe a fearful, milk-toast of a person. It is a word that suggests strength under difficult situations. Jesus comes into the heart, and you no longer have to prove how tough you are. You have a new strength—a quiet strength.

Jesus is telling you to “take up your cross and follow” Him. “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” Luke 9:23-26. Jesus wants you to follow Him even when it is the unpopular thing to do. No one naturally wants to be unpopular. Will you be ashamed of Christ when you must make an unpopular decision in order to continue following Him?

*Those who obey God keep the commandments of God
and the faith of Jesus.*

But those who do not obey God worship the beast and his image.

They receive his mark and must endure the seven last plagues.

“All, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave” (Revelation 13:16), receive “the mark of the beast.” The only exception is a small group of people who know part two of God’s plan and put God first. They are those who have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, [and] stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” Revelation 15:2, 3.

You must choose between popular sin and unpopular truth.

What Is the Mark of the Beast?

“Seal the law among My disciples.” Isaiah 8:16. The seal of God’s law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, includes both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It says that He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. When the papal power changed the Sabbath, it took God’s seal from His law. Revelation 7:1-3, Daniel 7:25.

In the days just preceding the second coming of Christ, every person on Planet Earth will either have the seal of God and keep the Sabbath day holy, or they will have the mark of the beast. Leaders of the Roman Catholic Church acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church and say that Protestants, by observing Sunday, are recognizing her power. In the *Catholic Catechism of Christian Religion*, in answer to a question as to the day to be observed in obedience to the fourth commandment, this is what is written: “During the old law Saturday was the day sanctified; but the church, instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day.” In *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine*, page 58, papal writers say that “the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; . . . because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church’s power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.”

Thus we can see that the change of the Sabbath is a sign or mark of the authority of the Roman Church—“the mark of the beast.” Revelation, chapter 14 tells us that just before Christ returns, three messages will be carried worldwide to prepare the world for the second coming of Christ. The first message is: “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.” The second message (seen in both Revelation 14 and Revelation 18) is: “Babylon is fallen, is fallen . . . Come out of her, my people, that you receive not of her plagues.” The third message is: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture [without mercy].” Revelation 14:7, 9, 10; 18:2, 4, KJV.

Does anyone have the mark of the beast now? No. Not until the time when all men will be forced to choose whether or not to receive it. The mark of the beast is the mark of the beast power’s authority. When that authority is enforced with Sunday laws with worldwide application, then those who choose to obey that authority above the authority of God will be choosing the mark of the beast. All people everywhere will either have the mark of the beast or the seal of God, which is found in God’s holy Sabbath observance. Those with God’s seal will enter the New Jerusalem, and those with the mark will ultimately be no more.

God told Noah He would destroy the world with a flood. Noah warned the world, but only eight people believed and got into the ark of safety. In other words, God says to modern man, “Sin has become so great that I will destroy the world again. I will not destroy it with water. I will destroy it with the seven plagues that I warn you about in the sixteenth chapter of

Revelation. You can choose to believe it or disbelieve it. But if you believe and come into my ark of safety, I will take care of you, and I will save you. And if you choose to disbelieve, you will be choosing death. Please choose life!” We can, by faith, enter God’s ark of safety. “In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His tabernacle [the sanctuary].” Psalm 27:5, KJV. Enter God’s sanctuary in heaven, by faith, and see Christ in His work of judgment and let Him write His holy law in your heart.

“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20, KJV.

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their sin.” Isaiah 58:1, 2, NKJV.

“You will raise up the foundations of many generations; and you will be called, the repairer of the breach.” Isaiah 58:12-14, NKJV.