

The Mark of the Beast

by John Rhys Watkins

John Rhys Watkins explores the implications of the Mark of the Beast and the Antichrist, emphasizing the importance of pursuing Christ and understanding absolute truth amidst modern deceptions in the church.

Duration: 33:47

Scripture: Galatians 1:6-9, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Revelation 6:10, Revelation 13:18

Topics: "Mark Of The Beast"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the topic of the mark of the beast and the presence of the Antichrist within the church. He emphasizes the importance of understanding and recognizing the number of the beast, which is 666. The preacher warns that the fascination and obsession with the Antichrist within the church should be met with revulsion and caution. He highlights the need for the church to learn from its mistakes and be aware of Satan's deceptive tactics, as seen in the Garden of Eden. The sermon also emphasizes the significance of the blood of Jesus Christ and its role in salvation.

Transcript

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For more information, visit us at www.bethelpulpitministries.com or email us at info at www.bethelpulpitministries.com Revelation 13, beginning at verse 16, just a few verses. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, and to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Hear his wisdom, let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred, a threescore, and six. Now, just in case you don't know, that's six, six, six. Six hundred and sixty-six.

So the message tonight is the mark of the beast. The subject today of the Antichrist within the church is sadly turned from horror and revulsion into a circus of fascination and cultic obsession. You see, the thought of Antichrist, and the spirit of Antichrist, and the working of Antichrist only within the church should cause us to shudder.

It should bring a sickness to the body. But today it is a circus event. With some people it's become an obsession.

It's a curiosity that the church likes to delve into. It's something occult that occupies the church. This wasn't so from the beginning.

The subject of Antichrist, whilst being biblical, can become detrimental and unhealthy to a true spiritual growth within the church. Now, I say this from experience. I'm not preaching out of some dusty book.

I know that it can be detrimental for a person to delve too deeply into these things and waste so much time. There was for many years, from my own experience, a great interest in the mechanics of prophecy, the mechanical unfolding of the end times. I wasted seven years of my life tracking the Antichrist, trying to find out who he was.

Every week, every book, every tape that I had, I had a different name. He could have been living next door to me, but I'd never have found that beast. I'm looking for the wrong thing.

So I'm just trying to say to people, you can save yourself such a lot of wasted time, unprofitable time, by just cutting that off. Don't go looking for no beast. I was one of those people who were fixed and absolutely sure as to the workings out and the fulfilments of end time prophecies.

Woe to any man that would challenge my thoughts, my theories, my own theology in that area, the area of eschatology, the end time prophecy. I had it all worked out, but God came, and God showed me, you're looking at the wrong things. You see, the pursuit of any church or Christian has to be the pursuit of Christ, the Son of God.

That has to be first and foremost. Whether you hear me tonight or not, it doesn't matter, but I'm going to tell you one thing. The key to understanding the subject of Antichrist, the beast and his mark is found only in the person of Jesus Christ.

Unless we're faithful and surrendered to the mind and the will of God, and God alone, we place ourselves in vulnerable positions. You cannot know any truth concerning Antichrist unless you know absolute truth. This is the first and foremost condition for the Christian, and for the church, that they must know absolute truth.

Absolute truth is not theory, it's not doctrine, it is a person, it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Not just in theory, but in union and conformity to him. That's absolute truth.

That is the church being conformed to Jesus Christ. It is not a doctrinal deed. Doctrine is important, but the church must be on that path, must be moving herself into the conformity of Jesus Christ.

When a church, a people, an individual is on that path, you know that you're in the path, the way of absolute truth. Knowing truth is not the same as knowing doctrine. The devil's theology would be much more orthodox than mine or yours tonight, and what he lacks is union.

He lacks accord, he lacks intercourse, he lacks brotherhood with Jesus Christ. That's what he doesn't have. This is what we have.

He might know more theology than you and me, but he lacks that union with Jesus Christ. James wrote to the church very early on in that first century. He says this, talking to the church, Thou believest that there

is one God.

Your theology is rightly saying, Thou doest well, but the devils also believe and they tremble. What is James saying to the church? Well, all that you know, the devil knows too, and it does him absolutely no good at all. Much of today's eschatology, end-time theology, is thought out and written in light of current worldviews.

What does that say? It means you'll change tomorrow. The book you read last year, it's irrelevant next year. Theologians, prophecy specialists and Christian writers, they shape in the minds of the church as they themselves are being shaped by science and current events.

I don't know if you search the net, but every other Christian website is a website dedicated to the end times. Every one of them has a theory, and they'll tell you if you like that Bin Laden is the Antichrist, or his mother is the Antichrist, or the tea lady is the Antichrist. Every one of them has a different viewpoint.

You see as science advances, so do your theories concerning the Mark of the Beast. It evolves. It changes all the time.

We can trace this mark throughout history. From early time, from being a literal branding with an aught-iron, this is what their belief was in the first century. The Romans, the Catholic, the Roman Catholic Church, the signing of the cross with water upon a convert's forehead, this was the Mark of the Beast to the Reformation, to the Protestants.

The wristwatch to some groups was the Mark of the Beast. When the wristwatch was invented, anyone who wore one of those, he had took the Mark of the Beast. National insurance numbers, computers, credit cards, barcodes, microchip implants, nanomites, and whatever else they're going to invent tomorrow.

Everything except the kettle with a bit of luck will become the Mark of the Beast to someone's thought, to someone's theology. Those who look for a literal branding, they looked for the wrong thing. Those who looked for the wristwatch, they looked for the wrong thing.

Those who looked at credit cards, they looked for the wrong things. Whatever it will be, it will only be revealed in a time of its manifestation, and it's only going to be discerned by those who have the wisdom through spiritual union with Jesus Christ. It's only going to be understood in that day, in that time, only then, and only by those that are in union with Jesus Christ.

Only by those. There has been many individuals that has been named as Antichrist, but none as yet has fulfilled the prophecies. Much of the church that is carried away in this field is caught up in the turbulent world of sensationalism.

Everyone is interested in another name thrown in the hat, but this type of activity undermines spiritual maturity in the church and is paving the way for Antichrist to be made manifest. Every other name that is thrown out, every other prophecy that does not come to pass is paving the way for Antichrist. Satan and his demons are feeding upon this mess within the church.

The coming of Antichrist is only possible according to the apostasy of the church. This must come first, the falling away from the truth. Listen to what Paul wrote to the church.

Now we beseech you, he says, we beg you, brothers, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand, that no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come unless they come a-falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition. It has to be an apostasy a-falling away before he is revealed.

Him that opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that when I was with you, I told you these things. What is Paul saying to the church? I've told you time and time and time again, these things are sureties, but it cannot happen.

It cannot come forth. That spirit of wickedness, that manifestation of iniquity, cannot come forth until the church falls away from the truth. Now in our post-modern consumerist societies, very difficult for us to acknowledge that not only is apostasy a condition necessary for the coming of Antichrist, but it's difficult for this mind to admit that it is happening.

Very difficult for a Christian today to stand up and say that we are in apostasy. The thought, the main shout, the cry anew of the church today is that we're in revival, that God is blessing, but all along the church is apostatizing. The conditions of apostasy are set by spiritual forces that have infiltrated and seduced the church through subtlety and deception.

Make no bones about it. The apostasy, it is not of men. Men are used, but it is satanic.

It's devilish. It is of the demons. It is the doctrine of demons that will cause these things.

Paul warns, by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter. He's warning the church. These are the avenues which the apostasy will come.

By those who prophesy falsely. By those who preach a false gospel. By those who teach false and pernicious doctrines.

This is what Paul is warning about. But today we have people sitting in a church that will pray for revival. And all along they know very well that there are those amongst them that will prophesy, give a word over someone.

It's not going to come to pass because it's not a word from heaven. It's a word of flesh. It is a false prophecy.

And it's unrepentant all. And we ask God to bless the church. We ask Him to bring revival.

Revival cannot come upon that situation. We have a false gospel being preached in the church today. Now you know as well as I do that leading someone through a sinner's prayer cannot save them.

We put them on courses that we know in those courses they have dissected the gospel. Removed the doctrine of repentance out. And somehow they expect people to be saved, get to heaven without repentance.

It is farcical. It is impossible. No man will get to heaven unless he's repented of this world, of his wicked ways and come to Christ.

Lead them through a prayer cannot guarantee anything. You have to lead them to Christ. This means they have to forsake everything that they are, everything that is of the world.

Deny the deeds of the flesh and of the devil. Repent. Come to Christ.

Also those who teach false and pernicious doctrines. The wickedness that is being taught today. Guised in Christian jargon.

Well, he's a pastor. Well, he's a preacher. I've seen him on the telly.

He's got a church of a million. He must be telling the truth. I can tell you, usually if they've got a church of a million, it's not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This gospel does not appeal to the flesh. In other words, we are tolerating today the teachings and the practices that would have made the average Christian violently sick just 30 years ago. Just 30 years ago.

I know. Pastor Cooper. Some of you would have known him.

He was sick. He was ill at some of the things that were going on in the church in his time. His beloved church.

His denomination. He knew and he pointed that there was an apostasy. How did he know? Because he remembered his roots.

He remembered what he came into. He remembered how he was birthed into Christ. And he saw that the way the church was going today.

It's not the same. It wasn't the same, he said. It's not the same.

The things that they wouldn't tolerate in those days, we are tolerating. We have embraced them. We are parading them.

We are paying for these things in the church. This is what Paul calls the falling away. The apostasia.

I say this only in light of our message. He, the devil, antichrist cannot come forth until the apostasy is happening. It's happening now.

I don't know how far it's gone. Only God knows how far. But I know this.

We're in apostasy. The church in general is in apostasy. If the greater church is in apostasy, we're in that church.

I'm talking about the body of Jesus Christ. We cannot say it's just them. We have to make a stand with and for them.

According to Paul, he cannot come until that church falls away from the truth. What is truth? What is truth to us? Well, truth is simply the man Christ Jesus. He is the personification of truth.

Just as antichrist is the personification of the lie, he is the truth. So it's not a doctrinal deal. They're not falling away from their pet doctrines.

It's not denominational creeds. It's not their statements of faith. It's from Jesus Christ himself that the church will fall away.

Can they fall away? Can a born man walk away from the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, in his own lifetime, he turns to some and says, Are you going to leave me? Many have turned back. They said, We cannot understand this teaching. How can we eat your flesh? How can we drink of your blood? They said, We have to go.

And he turned around. Didn't beg anyone to come back. But he said to the rest, Do you want to leave me as well? Do you want to go? Because the church can leave him.

Paul, continuing 2 Thessalonians, Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause, God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe their lie. In the Greek, it's their lie.

That they should believe the Antichrist. That they should believe the spirit of Antichrist. Where did this delusion come from? Is it from some false teacher? Is it from some demon? Well, the Bible says, God will send that delusion.

God himself, right at the end of this age, will send a strong delusion because he himself will be ready not only to judge, but to wrap up this world, roll the ball up, roll the world up into a ball and throw it into the sun, cause it to absolutely burn forever and be gone. This is what God will do. Who is Paul talking about? Who is Paul addressing this letter to? Who is it that knows the truth and falls away from it? It cannot be an unbeliever.

Only a believer can know the truth. The Bible says that it is Antichrist that is worshipped in the church. This is where he wants to be.

In the church. So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God. Now, please don't believe that that is a rebuilt Jewish temple.

That's not the temple of God. That will be built, I have no doubt. That has a special place in prophecy, I have no doubt.

But the temple of God is always going to be the church, the body, the temple of Jesus Christ. God does not live in a temple made with hands. He is never going to leave his church, never going to leave his bride, I'll never leave you, nor will I forsake you.

He is not going to leave this life to live in sticks and stones. Corinthians, we all know John 3.16, but every Christian should know 1 Corinthians 3.16. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. That tells me that me, I, us, the church, are the temple of God.

You see, the church of the Galatians, they'd been deceived and had fallen away from the grace of God. They'd been fooled into believing a modern gospel that was not the true gospel. Their faith in salvation was made shipwrecked.

Even though they continued to worship in that church, they did not know that their worship was in honor of Satan himself. Is it possible then that a church can worship, sing about Jesus, sing about God, invoke the

Holy Spirit, and at the same time, be worshiped in the Spirit of Antichrist? We know that it is so. Christ spoke to that church of Pergaus.

Those that know the deep things of Satan, pour right into those Galatians. Says this, He says, I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ and to another gospel. You're in the grace of Christ.

You're saved, but you're moved. In which direction, Paul, have they moved? Well, there's only one way. Into Christ and out.

They were in, now they're out. Which is not another, he says. It's not another gospel.

There is but one gospel. There is but one Christ. There is but one Savior.

But there be some that trouble you that would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Oh, these are strong words from Paul.

These are strong words. Oh, I can imagine him, if he got on the God channel today, they'd shut him off. They'd not have such a preacher today.

Let him be accursed, he said. What does that mean? Anathema. Let him be cut off.

Let him be cast into the lake of fire. You see the greatest deception of Satan. It was in the Garden of Eden when he deceived the woman.

Who can estimate the full cost of that terrible fall? Those early chapters, they're not written for us to beat the reality of creation with the evolutionists. That's not what it's there for in the Bible. I don't know much about creation, but I know that it was a creation.

I'm not interested about Darwin's theory. I don't care what the name of the ship he sailed on. I don't care if he measured a giraffe's neck and it's grown ten foot more since he measured it.

I believe that God created this in six days. And on the seventh, he took a rest. That's all I need to know.

I don't need to know anything. These things, Genesis 1, 2, 3, they were written because Satan will again try to deceive the bride of Adam. Not the first Adam now, but the second Adam.

Eve then, as the mother of all the living, she represents the church. But though she is called the mother of the living, she cannot stop the seduction of her children nor the loss of life. You know this story.

Her firstborn, Cain, he was and is a type of antichrist. He was born and came from the womb of the woman, representing the church. And though he knew the truth, he would not allow that truth to set him free.

Therefore, he rose up and destroyed all that was called good in the sight of God. That man, Cain, his attack was upon his own. He didn't go out looking for the heathen.

He attacked his own. He attacked that which he came from. He attacked and killed, destroyed his own brother, Abel.

Abel was a type of the church, a type of those who would endure great tribulation for the sake of truth, which is the testimony of Jesus Christ. He is a man. He is that end time church that would lay down his life for the gospel.

Though in the sight of men this Abel be dead, yet was he alive according to the blood that cried out from the ground unto the throne of God. This is our hope today. This is the hope of us in Christ.

Though we be slain, though we be slain all the day long, that blood in the ground is still alive because of his blood. This is not Abel's blood that's crying out. This is the blood of Jesus Christ crying.

This is why we're saved, because of that blood. Oh, we hear so little of the blood being preached today, but it is the blood. I shared with some of you this week one of the great commentators of our time says that the Christian is not saved through the blood.

He sells more commentaries than Bibles. I'm going to tell you who's going to help. It's not the man that prints the Bible.

It's the person that believes that wickedness. He is alive because of the blood. After this, we see that the mark was set upon Cain the destroyer so that every man would know who he was.

God set that mark upon his forehead. Now much is written concerning this mark. Many commentators disagree.

Some of the old Jewish sages of their time, they all have their different ideas and opinions. Some say that a great horn grew out of his head. You've seen the pictures in the Jack Check magazines.

Some say that he was cursed with leprosy. Others say that that mark was the dog. He took Abel's dog with him wherever he went.

So whatever you read, you'll read in your commentaries something different. All that we know is that the word means a sign. God placed a sign upon this man.

You see, it's a spiritual sign that man would know through discernment who and what this person was. Not everyone might distinguish, but the man with discernment would know this is Cain. This is the killer.

This is the destroyer. I'm not going to lay a finger upon him because God said you're not going to do that, but I'm going to stay out of his way because he's a destroyer. If he'll kill his own flesh and blood, he'll think not twice about sliding my throat.

The name Cain, it means possessed. He's a possessed man. All of this is leading us into the type of antichrist.

From Genesis 3, we know that Satan will continue his war with the seed of the woman. Why is this? Because he thought that Abel was the seed. Is that right? This is why he had Abel killed.

That's the seed. Kill the seed. End of prophecy.

But Abel only represented part of the seed. The devil has learned nothing from his early failures. From this, and so his plans are the same.

Infiltrate and destroy the seed of the woman. The church, of course, it's not the seed. We represent part of the seed, but because of our union and our conformity to Jesus Christ, he is unable to perceive the truth.

And so he vainly believes that if he destroys the church, he'll destroy the Lord himself. This is why he's after you and me. Destroy the seed, he'll destroy the Christ.

He didn't learn from the garden. He cannot learn. We see this scene played out again and again in the last days.

Confirming to us that all that is written in this book is written for our admonition, a warning to the church. You're listening. It's written as a warning.

Why do people sound alarms? Why do we have smoke detectors in the house? To sound an alarm, to give us a warning, to say that something's wrong. Admonition, a warning, in the book, in this Bible, for the church. Why is that? So that the church would learn from their mistakes.

The church would learn from their faults. In Revelation 6 and 10, it says, And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord? Holy and true dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell on the earth. You see the ambition of Satan so monstrous that it staggers the mind.

It absolutely staggers the mind. He does not want to be the coming prophet of Islam. That's not his intention.

He doesn't want to be the Shakyamuni of Buddhism. It's not his ambition. He doesn't want to be the Maitreya of the New Age.

That's not for Satan. He has one prize, the on-eye calling. He wants to be the Christ of Christianity.

That's his path. That's his glory. That is his destination according to his own mind and his own rotten heart.

Everything else he'll swipe away. But his target, the bullseye, the center of his call is to be the Christ of Christianity. Satan is worshipped with blinded reverence in all that is called Christendom.

Everything that is called Christendom worships Satan today. All the cults, they worship what they do not know. Though they call upon the name of Jesus, they may hold to some truth but deny the essence, the nature and the purpose of God and confirmed only their blindness and their inability to know Him in a saving way.

We're all lumped together with the cults. Everything, even the denominations that are no longer Christian. That's Christendom.

All that they do is worship the beast. We're lumped with them but we're not them. Much of the church today has been swept away under a torrent of spiritual deception that has not only brought confusion to the church but has brought the death and the decay that we see now.

How many of you who are friends in America or Africa or wherever you email? You tell them you live in Wales and the first thing they ask is How's Evan Roberts? How's the revival doing in Wales? They think it's still going on. They think we're still a land of revival but we're darker than Africa today I can tell you. We're in a state of death and decay.

Confusion today disguises itself as peace. Heresy dresses itself up as new revelation. Sin masquerades in the robes of righteousness.

An apostasy though wearing the Emperor's new clothes is seen today in the church as a new thing. Well it's never been done. It's not biblical.

There's no foundation for it in the word of God. It must be a new thing. Just stick the label new thing on and it doesn't matter that they worship in the devil.

It's a new thing. You see the voices of many have made straight the path of Antichrist. Christ had one proclaiming his coming but the voices for Antichrist they herald in his path not one crying in the wilderness but many calling not calling from the wilderness but from the vineyard of God itself.

All of it all of that mess the doctrines that we have to put up with today. We're not to look far into the future to understand the mark of the beast. We're unable to predict its final manifestation but we can and will be shown its true nature.

We're getting to the point now. The nature of that mark is always spiritual and it's a counterfeit of truth. The mark of the beast is only a counterfeit of the seal of God.

The angel ascending from the east in Revelation 7 says Hurt not the earth neither the sea nor the tree till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. He is just counterfeiting something that God is already doing. It's a counterfeit.

God will always preserve for himself a remnant that has set itself to know God. He's always going to preserve that people. This mark is not litrical or a physical seal yet it is discerned by spiritual creatures.

The 144,000 the people that will come after them there's not going to be 7-7 on their forehead. There's not going to be any physical mark yet it is discernable. It's discernable by those who are spiritual.

When I talk about spiritual creatures I'm not just talking about Christians full of the spirit of God. I'm talking about the demoniacs. I'm talking about those things that are in league with Satan.

I'm talking about the deception that is sweeping the world at that time. They too know that these have been with God. They see that mark.

They sense that mark. They discern that these men have been with Jesus. Just as the believer should be able to discern that which is evil so can the devil discern that which is good.

There is preservation in the seal of God but not protection. Preserve for each other eternal life but many of these will have their heads cut off. They'll be hung drawn maybe quartered.

Some will be skinned alive perhaps shot and all sorts of things but they are preserved under God. That life goes on forever. These are the ones whose blood is calling from the altar of God.

These are those who follow with them and have learned the meaning of Christ. Not the doctrine. It's not the letter of the book.

It's knowing Him. They know what it means to love not their lives unto death. They know what it is.

They know what is the cost of following Christ. They know what it's like to hunger. They know what it's like to thirst.

They know what it's like to be burned for their faith. We know none of these things. These are not the carnal Christians that have read a book from a fiction shelf of an alleged Christian book shop.

It is not those who read such rubbish instead of the word of God hoping to escape hell whilst enjoying their own laziness upon this planet. It's not them. These people, these people who we're talking about here knew their God.

You see, there are people today who know that they'll not make the rapture. They're not interested in the rapture because they've been deceived. They think, oh, there's a second chance.

Worse than that, they don't even want the rapture because they're too busy enjoying themselves with their sleazy friendship with the world. He who is a friend of this world is an enemy of God, my Bible says. If anyone thinks that they can play games with God and still have full salvation, they are but deceived.

The books and the videos that are sold today that give the impression that you can be left behind and still make it to heaven is a deception itself. You'll find them in the Christian book shops. It is a deception of itself.

What sort of heart is looking forward to going through a tribulation? What sort of Christianity is that? What spirit lingers in the center of that life? What is going on in such a place? Whoever is left behind that once knew the truth, they've already received the mark. God has washed his hands with you if you're left behind. God will send a strong delusion.

We've read it. Paul taught this. God will send a strong delusion that they will believe the lie.

What is the lie? It's Antichrist himself. Now if God sends a delusion, I'm going to tell you that's a good delusion. Not only is that a counterfeit, that's the best of all counterfeits.

They will believe the lie. They will actually believe that he, that Antichrist is God Almighty himself. They once knew Christ.

They worshipped in the church. They've been left behind but the delusion so strong they worship that man sitting in the temple. This is not demonic deception.

It's a heavenly delusion. This is what happens to Laodicea after the rapture. All that is left behind is Laodicea.

When the church goes, it's Philadelphia and all those that repented, that heard what the spirit is saying. You see our modern, carnal, Laodicean Christianity will so offend Jesus Christ that it's going to make him sick to the very stomach. Whilst at one time they were truly part of his body, now they've been thrown out, rejected of Christ.

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