

Every Disciple of Jesus Should Acknowledge Him Publicly

by Zac Poonen

Every disciple of Jesus Christ must acknowledge Him publicly, without fear or shame, and reflect the nature of the Lamb and the Father in their lives.

Scripture: Matthew 10:32, Mark 8:38, Luke 15:11, 1 John 2:12, Revelation 14:1

Topics: "Public Confession", "Bold Witnessing"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches on the importance of publicly acknowledging Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, contrasting it with the Antichrist's offer of secrecy. He emphasizes the need for every disciple to boldly confess their faith, with the mark of the Lord metaphorically on their foreheads, reflecting a life that mirrors the character of Jesus and the Father. Poonen challenges believers to not be ashamed of their faith, but to be bold witnesses of Christ in every aspect of their lives, just like the 144,000 'overcomers' mentioned in Revelation.

Transcript

It is written in Revelation 14:1 "And I looked and behold the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads."

What we see here is in striking contrast to what is written in Revelation 13. There we see that the Antichrist offered people the option of acknowledging Him publicly (on the forehead) or secretly (in the right palm). But here we see that the Lord Jesus Christ offers no such option to His disciples. Every disciple of His has to acknowledge Him publicly. The mark MUST be on their forehead alone.

We are not called to be secret followers of Christ. Jesus said, "Everyone who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Matt. 10:32, 33; Mark. 8:38).

If you are working in an office, the mark of the Lord should be on your forehead. In other words, everyone in your office should know that you are a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as

having a hidden mark on your hand, that no-one in your place of work knows about. A true follower of Jesus Christ will have the mark on his forehead. His colleagues know him as Christ's disciple!

It is a shame that many "believers" are ashamed to be known as followers of Jesus Christ. I have seen non-Christians openly wearing religious marks on their foreheads - unashamedly proclaiming their religion! But Christians are so often ashamed to let it be known whom they follow - perhaps because they are afraid that their chances of promotion in the office will thereby be affected. Such Christians are compromisers and lovers of earthly honour, and not bold witnesses of Jesus Christ. They will certainly not be among those who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, for those 144,000 are disciples who are not ashamed to boldly confess that they follow Jesus Christ. They do not compromise in the midst of their relatives, or in their office, or in their neighbourhood. Every time you see a non-Christian wearing his religious marks on his forehead, let that be a challenge to you. If he is not ashamed to proclaim thereby that he worships his god, why should you be ashamed to proclaim that you worship Jesus Christ?

The 144,000 here are not the ones we saw earlier in Chapter 7. Those were from the tribes of Israel alone - and the tribes of Israel certainly do not follow the Lamb or believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. This is another group altogether. These are the ones who are called "overcomers" in Revelation 2 and 3.

A 'name' represented character in the Old Testament. So "the Name of the Lamb and of the Father" being on the foreheads of these 144,000 indicates that their lives reflected the nature of the Lamb and of the Father.

A good question therefore to ask ourselves is this: In our attitude towards others who are evil toward us, do we reflect the nature of the Lamb Who kept His mouth shut when He was being sheared, Who was silent when He was slaughtered, and Who committed His cause to His Father when He was treated unjustly and stripped of His rights and His reputation? Do we reflect the nature of our Father Who is longsuffering with sinners and Who welcomes repentant backsliders (Luke. 15:11-24).

Some may ask, "Do you mean to say that only such a small number are overcomers?" But how many believers have you seen in your life who never lose their temper and who have learnt to keep quiet under provocation? That is certainly a small number. The nature that these 144,000 had acquired inwardly on earth now begins to shine through their personality on their faces - "the nature of the Father." God's desire for every one of us is that we grow up to maturity and be like Him towards other people. He trains us with that end in view.

When we begin the Christian life we are all babies. If we grow up, we will gradually be like young men. And if we continue to grow, we will become like fathers (1 Jn.2:12-14) - fathers who deny themselves to serve others, fathers who long to lead others to maturity.

This should be our passion - that the nature of the Lamb and of the Father should become so totally ours that it is reflected through our personality.

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