

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Standing Firm!

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Marked Men

Bill Brinkworth

In the Word of God, several men and groups have been or will be physically and visibly marked by God. At a glance, it was or will be possible to tell for whom they stood. Were they standing for the cause of Christ, or did they choose to stand against God?

The first man to be marked by God was Cain, the murderer of his brother, Abel. God cursed Cain for his sin by promising that his farming efforts would be for naught, and that he would spend the rest of his life without a permanent home; he would be a vagabond (Genesis 4:12). To keep others from killing Cain, God placed a mark on Cain.

The Bible does not further describe what this mark was. Whatever the branding was, one look at Cain, and the people knew he was under the special care of God, and that none should harm him.

Others who will be marked include 144,000 Jewish, virgin men who will be a group of soul-winners at the beginning of the future seven-year tribulation (Rev. 7:3-8). God will place His seal, His marking, on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3).

The marking will be God's name (Rev. 14:1), and it will clearly identify them as servants of God at a time when the inhabitants of Earth will not tolerate anyone who stands for God.

Those evangelists will win many to the cause of Christ and pluck many out of Hell's grasp. Their efforts will result in their deaths, but they will have a special position in Heaven for their stand for Christ.

Another group that will voluntarily have a mark placed on their hand or forehead will also be seen during the tribulation period (Rev. 13:15-18). They will be told they cannot buy or sell unless they have the mark of 666 placed on them. In doing so, they will be branding themselves as part of the anti-Christ's and false prophet's systems.

Those "survivors" might temporarily be able to get food and other essentials. However, they will mark themselves as enemies of God and will end up in Hell!

These, and others in the Bible, were visibly identified as being for or against God. Although we are not marked physically, we, too, can be "marked."

God knows the sway of our hearts and our allegiance to Him, or are we opposing Him? He knows what we do for Him and the value we place on abiding by His commandments. We are “marked” in His eyes.

The unsaved world can also often see how we, who claim to be Christians, are “marked”. They see whether we are boldly living for Him or shamefully back down from following or believing biblical principles to blend in with those around them.

Our refusal to pray in a public restaurant, in fear of what others think, will mark us as being like all others who do not claim to be Christians. A cowardly decision not to tell our friends and acquaintances about God’s way of salvation or other biblical teachings will also brand us as being like everyone else, in their eyes.

However, a verbal stand for biblical righteousness when we may receive persecution from others, will boldly mark us for whom we stand in God’s eyes and in the eyes of onlookers.

The world is looking for those with the Truth. They do not know where to look. Unfortunately, many are looking in the wrong places for answers. Be the example they need to see!

If you are a Christian, and cross paths with those unsaved, what markings are they seeing in your behavior and character? Do they know from your actions and words that you are a child of God, or have you hidden Who you are standing for? For which side are you marked: God’s or Satan’s?

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Jos. 24:15

“Your walk talks louder than your talk talks.” — Author Unknown

God’s Will

Edited from an article by D. L Moody

When the War between the States started, an elderly woman shook an iron fire-poker threateningly at the enemy troops. She said, “I can’t do much with it, but I can show what side I’m on.” My friends, even if you can’t do much, you can still show which side you belong to.

“None preaches better than the ant, and she says nothing.” — Benjamin Franklin

Imitators of Christ

Edited from an article by C. H. Spurgeon

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;” Ephesians 5:1

Imitate God, not as slaves might imitate their master unwillingly, dreading the crack of his whip, but loving, willing imitators, such as children are.

You do not urge your children to imitate you, but they do so even in their games. See how the boy rides his wooden horse as does his father, and the girl imitates her mother, who takes care of her.

The minister's little boy tries to preach like his father, and you all see the tiny girl with a Bible in front of her and an ancient pair of spectacles upon her nose, saying, " Now I'm grandmamma." They copy us naturally. They cannot help it.

Such will be the holiness of the genuine Christian. He is born from above, and hence he lives above.

His imitation of God springs out of his relationship to God. Holiness must be spontaneous, or it is spurious. We cannot be driven to holiness like a mule to its plowing. We must delight in the law of God after the inward man.

Be imitators because you do not wish for anything better than to be like your Father. Have no ambition in the world except for the aspiration to be holy, even as God is holy.

"Behavior is a mirror in which everyone shows their image."

The Rooted Christian

Edited from an Article by C. H. Spurgeon

I saw, one day, several beech trees forming a thicket. They had all fallen to the ground during a storm. When developing as young saplings, they leaned upon one another to a great extent, and the thickness of their neighbors' roots and trunks prevented each tree from getting a firm hold of the soil.

They kept each other up, but also constrained each other from growing tall, healthy, and with proper root growth. When a storm forced down the first few trees, the others readily followed, one after the other.

Close to that same spot, I saw another tree still standing in solitary strength. The same hurricane had beaten upon it, but it had endured all its force. That lone, brave tree seemed better rooted and able to withstand the storm because it grew apart from the others.

I thought, "Is this not also true with many professors of Christ?" They often hold together and help each other grow up, but if they do not have a firm personal root-growth, when a stormy trial arises they will fall in rows with others who are not living godly lives.

When a minister dies or certain leaders are taken away, church members sometimes spiritually fall. The loss of their spiritual leader caused them to fall, as they had no spiritual stability or growth of their own.

Be self-contained! Each one of you should be growing in Christ independently. Each being rooted and grounded in God's love, faith, and obedience to His Word. Then, when the worst "storm" blows upon your life, you will not fall as do others.

Dare to be a Daniel

The words to Phillip Bliss's 1873 Sunday school song encourages Christians to stand up for what is right, no matter what:

Standing by a purpose true,
Heeding God's command,
Honor them, the faithful few!
All hail to Daniel's band!
*Chorus: Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known.*

Many mighty men are lost
Daring not to stand,
Who for God had been a host
By joining Daniel's band.
Chorus

Many giants, great and tall,
Stalking through the land,
Headlong to the earth would fall,
If met by Daniel's band.
Chorus

Hold the Gospel banner high!
On to vict'ry grand!
Satan and his hosts defy,
And shout for Daniel's band.
Chorus

“A good example has twice the value of good advice.” — Author Unknown