

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

One day soon the churches of America will unite, not only with one another, but with the secular power to sustain a false and compromised religion. The day is coming when the state will use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church. When this takes place, then will America have formed an image to the beast.

Once the Protestants join hands with the Catholics and Spiritualists and seek the power of the civil authority in enforcing their decrees, the United States will then embark on the most dreadful campaign imaginable for we read: "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, 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" (Revelation 13:16).

Inasmuch as we have identified the beast, or Anti-Christ, as the Roman Catholic Church, there remains only to discover what its "mark" is. This is a most important issue with which every individual upon this earth should concern himself for whether or not one receives it shall result in either eternal life or eternal damnation, for the most awesome punishment to be handed out by God will fall upon those who receive this mark. Revelation 14:9-10.

It should not be very hard to find what this mark is for all we must do is try and discover if there is any teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that has been accepted by all people, Protestants, Catholics, and non-church members alike, and which can be considered a universal mark of acceptance by all people.

There are several teachings which have been handed down by the church of Rome which have been quite widely accepted around the world, such as the use of images in divine worship, or the change in the mode of baptism from immersion to sprinkling or pouring, as well as infant baptism, yet none of these can be considered as universal. But there is one thing that they have done that both Christians and non-Christians have accepted on a world-wide scale and that is the change of the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week, Sunday, and of this they haughtily boast: "Of course the Catholic church claims that the change was her act. It could not have been otherwise as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her and THE ACT IS A *MARK OF HER ECCLESIASTICAL POWER AND AUTHORITY* in religious matters." (Emphasis supplied) James Cardinal Gibbons, November 11, 1895.

The earliest known Sunday law was issued in A.D. 321 by Constantine the emperor of Rome from A.D. 306-337 which read: "On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain sowing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. (Given the 7th day of March, Crispus and Constantine being consuls each of them for the second time)." Phillip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, Vol. III, p. 380*

Before his professed conversion Constantine had been a sun worshiper and even afterward had remained at heart a devotee of the sun. Of his religion Edward Gibbon has said: "The devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry. The unerring shafts of that deity, the brightness of his eyes, his laurel wreath, immortal

beauty, and elegant accomplishments, seem to point him out as the patron of a young hero. The altars of Apollo were crowned with the votive offerings of Constantine; and the credulous multitude were taught to believe that the emperor was permitted to behold with mortal eyes the visible majesty of their tutelar deity; and that, either waking or in a vision, he was blessed with the suspicious omens of a long and victorious reign. The sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine." Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. II, p. 291*

Even with the infiltration of pagans into the early church and with them the institution of the day of their sun god we find from history that, "Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued." Lyman Coleman, *Quoted in Bible Readings for the Home, p. 422*

Sozomen, a church historian of the fifth century inform us, "The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria." Sozomen, *Ibid.*

During the Reformation the Catholic church was faced with a dilemma. The Protestants were claiming that the Bible was the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian, yet the Catholic church was teaching things not found in the Scriptures, and rejecting things that were there. Thus, the Council of Trent (1545-1562) was called to try and combat Protestantism and the Word of God.

Was tradition of equal authority with Scripture? Some said yes, others said no, but the Archbishop of Reggio gave a closing address in 1562 that settled the matter once and for all. "Yes, the church has the power to change even the divine precepts of God. Yes, the tradition of the church, and the teachings of the church fathers supersede the Scriptures, as can easily be proven, for were it not true how could we then have changed one of God's divine commands and changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday? Thus, tradition is above Scripture."

That settled it; how could you argue with that? To remain a Catholic they had to say yes. They took the position that the Word of God was secondary to the teachings and traditions of men.

As we can see, this change from the Sabbath of the Lord to the day of the sun god was a slow process, but nevertheless it took place and to this day the Church of Rome points to this with pride as evidence of its power to even change a commandment of God as can be seen by the following extracts from Catholic catechisms:

"Question - Which is the Sabbath day?

Answer - Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Question - Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

Answer - We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." Peter Geiermann, *The Converts Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, p. 50*

"Question- Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?"

Answer - Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her--she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority." Stephen Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism, p. 174*

Again, these brazen statements can be found throughout their publications as the following clearly indicates.

The Catholic Mirror, the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons, has openly declared that "the Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday." *The Catholic Mirror*, September 23, 1893

Another official publication of Catholicism, *The Catholic Virginian*, brazenly boasts: "Nowhere in the Bible do we find that Christ or the Apostles ordered that the Sabbath be changed from Saturday to Sunday. We have the commandment of God given to Moses to keep holy the Sabbath day, that is the seventh day of the week, Saturday. Today most Christians keep Sunday because it has been revealed to us by the church [Catholic] outside the Bible." *The Catholic Virginian*, October 3, 1947

A Roman Catholic priest in St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo., May 17, 1936: "If you go to the Bible you find that the seventh-day Sabbath was the original Sabbath, but there is one thing you must understand and that is that we Catholics take the stand that the Bible does not contain all truths necessary to salvation, but that tradition of the Fathers and acts taken by the church are of equal importance with the Bible. The early church Christians observed the seventh day of the week, Saturday, as the Sabbath. In the early day the early Christian fathers began advocating Sunday as the Sabbath in honor of the resurrection of Christ. Early church councils took certain actions changing to Sunday as the Sabbath. There is no text in the Bible that gives authority for this change. Protestants broke away from the Catholic Church in the 15th and 16th centuries, but they did not go back to the Bible Sabbath: they are still following the Catholic Church in the observance of Sunday." Roger Holley, *Bible Lectures: The Mark of the Beast*, p. 12

"Question - What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Who gave the Pope the authority to change a command of God?

Answer - If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing Saturday with the Jews. But Catholics learn what to believe and do from the divine, infallible authority established by Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church... Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Catholic Church?" Conway, *The Question Box*, pp. 254-255

Can there be any further doubt as to what the "mark of the beast" is or how wide spread it is? We have but to look about us to see further fulfillment of this prophecy in the enactment of the Sunday Blue Laws in America. But while here in this country the law pertains mostly to forcing places of business to close on Sunday. In some countries of Europe and South America one can even be fined or imprisoned for as little as hanging a rug out of their window on this false Sabbath.

But prophecy informs us that this issue is to eventually carry with it a death decree for those who do not accept the mark and thereby pay homage to the beast. Yet those who do accept it willingly disobey our Creator who has commanded us, "Remember the Sabbath day."

In Revelation 7:3 we have pictured yet another mark or "seal". This seal is to be upon a small group just before the second coming of our Lord and it is referred to as "the seal of the living God". But what is this seal? Let us first note that an official seal must contain three things:

- (1) The name of the law giver.
- (2) His official position or title or right to rule.
- (3) His kingdom or the territory over which he rules.

For example: Name-- George Bush; Position-- President; Extent of Jurisdiction-- USA.

Since the mark of the beast is received through disobedience to the commandments of God, through disregard of His Sabbath, we shall also turn to His commandments to see if they also

contain "the seal of the living God." And there we find that the seal of God is found in the very same command that the world in general has disregarded, the same commandment which the papacy has claimed to have changed and declared to be a "mark of her power and authority". Let us look briefly at this commandment:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the *Lord thy God*": (Here we have His name) "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days *the Lord made*." (Here we have not only His name again, but also His office; that of Creator). He is the Creator of, "Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." (Here we have His territory, the whole vast universe).

Now we can plainly see the monstrous religious counterfeit this reveals. There has never been anything like it in all the annals of time. This great religious power, which claims the authority of Almighty God on earth, reaches down into the very heart of God's law and removes the true Sabbath, God's seal. Then with an audacity that can be matched nowhere in the universe, this power which God has identified as the beast, puts in place of the true Sabbath a false Sabbath and says, "This is my mark. You will keep this day, and this is the mark of my authority in the earth."

When the Lord Jesus Christ returns in the near future He will find two classes of people. Those who have "the seal of God" and those who have "the mark of the beast." Those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord and those who keep the Sunday of the Catholic church. Those who have the seal of God are given eternal life and are permitted to spend eternity with their God.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 7:15-17).

And of those who have "the mark of the beast" we read: **"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 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 into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:9-11).**

As to which class an individual will belong at this time is completely dependent upon the personal decision made by each person upon this earth and it must be made on an individual basis. Do we obey our Creator or the papacy? Jesus said, **"But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).** Therefore, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).** Yet Priest Enright, President of Redemption College, a Catholic school located in Kansas City, Missouri has boastfully declared: **"I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says. 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.' The Catholic Church says, 'No! By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep holy the first day of the week!' And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church."**

Scripture tells us that when the teachings of men conflict with the Word of God **"We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29.** Whom will you obey? The decision is up to you.