

Message #58 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

“Three Witnesses”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Before we get started, I'd like to refer you to the Image of the Beast study series that we provide. We've produced this study series on Revelation, chapter 13, and the study is quite extensive. You may write to us and request this study, which is free of charge, as are all of our materials. However, I do want to stress the importance of having a good base of knowledge concerning prophetic scripture before you attempt this Revelation 13 study, in that the study delves deeply into the symbolic Biblical descriptions in order to give a full picture of these spiritual applications. Now, I'm not implying that prophecy is only symbolic. Prophecy definitely does produce events in our physical world, but it is the symbolic meanings which give us a clearer understanding of what is causing, or will cause, those events to come to pass.

The warnings of scripture are often portrayed in physical terms. However, not all events will come to fulfillment in a completely literal fashion. But, most current day interpretations of prophetic passages are based on strictly physical explanations. However, if we ignore the spiritual implication of scripture, and we ignore the symbolic meaning of these scriptures, we will very likely miss the warning signs God has given us to prepare us for the end time.

It is evident that we are physical beings, and that the end-time events certainly will affect us physically, but, if we interpret all scripture in a literal sense, we will miss much of the understanding God intends us to have. A question we should ask ourselves is, "Why would God make it so difficult for people to understand his word?" The answer to this is that God does want his children to understand, but, he does not want any person to understand if they are not truly seeking him. Nor does God intend that people should be able to comprehend the scriptures

without the help of the Holy Spirit. There are many people today who call themselves Christians but who have little or no comprehension of being led by God's Spirit. But, recognizing whether or not something is true is not based on logic, but on recognizing the type of spirit that comes with it. Now, this is important, so, let me say this once again. Truth is recognized by the type of spirit that comes with it. This is how God enables us to recognize what is true and what isn't true. When God's Spirit dwells within us and our spirit is in tune with His Spirit, then we will recognize that which comes from God by recognizing his Holy Spirit.

If you hear or read something, you must first determine whether it is truth or lie before you can add it to your storehouse of knowledge. You do this by recognizing the spirit which accompanies the information. You must ask yourself, "Does this bring peace to my soul, or does it bring confusion and anxiety?" Sometimes we Christians forget to check our spirit for what seems right, and instead, try to rely on just figuring out the scripture. Some people even attempt to understand scripture by using a formula, or by a system which is commonly called, critical exegesis. But formulas or logical systems are not the same thing as the Holy Spirit. And without being able to recognize the Holy Spirit, how will you recognize truth that the Holy Spirit is trying to guide you to?

So, who is guiding you into all truth? Is it the Holy Spirit of God who is revealing to you what is truth, or is your guide your pastor or your Sunday School teacher? If you're listening to me today and you're not checking your spirit, then I suggest you turn me off right now, get on your knees, and ask God to forgive you for not allowing his Holy Spirit to be your guide. In order for you to understand the warning messages of end-time prophecy, you must be led by God's Spirit, and not by man. For if you accept a man's explanation of end-time events, you will be in a whole lot of trouble if that man is wrong. The only way to be absolutely certain of truth is to go to the supreme author of truth and allow Him to show you. Without this, your soul is in danger of hellfire.

Now, many people worry a great deal that something will harm their flesh, and that they will suffer physically. But, what happens to our soul is much more important than what happens to our bodies. After all, we know that our bodies will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Our bodies are just flesh and blood. And, in the end, it will not be our bodies that determine where our soul ends up, but it will be our inner man that will be affected by the prophecies of scripture. So many people fear what the Bible refers to as the Great Tribulation. And the reason they fear it so is because of the current day teaching that this Great Tribulation period will be a time of physical suffering. Certainly, we cannot deny the possibility of suffering tribulation in the physical sense. However, what most Christians fail to realize is that Satan is not trying to destroy your flesh, but your soul. The devil does not care if flesh and blood is destroyed. He knows that flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of heaven anyway. In fact, he knows that if every human body on earth was destroyed, it would not further his cause at all. What Satan does know is that it is a man's soul which must be destroyed. The soul of a person is the life of the person. It is his existence.

A man has a soul because he is a living breathing being. The supreme enemy of every living soul is death. But we know that the first death, the death of the body, is overcome by Jesus Christ.

Therefore the first death is not really that important. But it is the second death which is ultimately destructive. This is where the wicked will find themselves for eternity. The real concern for Christians today is that their soul might be saved. In order to do this they will have to truly accomplish the requirements of salvation. And notice that I said, truly accomplish. In order to be saved a person must accept Jesus Christ as not only Savior, but also as Lord. This means that salvation only comes to those who humble themselves before Jesus Christ and allow him to be master of their lives. However, everyone, whether they profess Jesus Christ as Lord or reject Jesus Christ as Lord, will still be required to stand before God and be judged. Judgment will come to all people.

But how will judgment actually be accomplished? What are the rules governing the final decision for each human being? We know that the books will be opened, and the results will be shown for everyone to see. But what will be written in the book? Many think that it will only be their works that will be shown. They think that just the deeds they have done will be written in the book, and that if they have done good deeds they will be saved. But what is shown by the body may not line up with what is seen in the heart. There are many people in this world who reject Jesus Christ as Lord, and rely on good deeds to get themselves a spot in God's kingdom. But we know that if the heart of man is not true, then he will be rejected by God.

And, from another angle, let's look at the type of human who confesses Jesus Christ with his mouth, but does not do the works which should naturally follow a true salvation experience. In this sense also, they cannot expect themselves to be accepted into the presence of God just because they profess to believe. But still, from one more angle, let's look at a person who seems to do good deeds on the outside, and who apparently professes to accept Jesus Christ, but who has a spirit within them that is not aligned with the Holy Spirit of God. This kind of person is one who tries to look and sound like a Christian on the outside, but who follows after another spirit when no one is looking.

But, God is able to look past the outside, and he observes the spirit of man in order to find out what the inner part of man really is. This is described in Proverbs 20:27, where it says, "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, and searches all the inward parts." God can see what spirit is moving a person. And even in those times when the person seems to be able to pull the wool over other people's eyes, God can still see inside the person. Every person's spirit will either be aligned with the Holy Spirit of God or aligned with the spirit of evil. Therefore, every person will be judged, not just by what they profess with their mouth, nor by a multitude of good deeds that they have done, but they will be judged according to all three witnesses that testify to the guilt or innocence of the man.

Let me explain this. Each person, no matter whether they are small or great, rich or poor, will give a testimony before God in that great judgment day of whether or not they have truly become a child of God. Their testimony will incorporate three parts. When the books of life are opened, there will be seen not only the deeds that have been done, and not only the words that have been professed, but also what spirit truly motivated the person. These three parts of man will give the complete testimonial picture. No man will be condemned to hell because of only one witness. As the Bible says, no man should be put to death without two or three witnesses. Jesus also

added to this concept by stressing the point that even his word was not true if it stood alone. He told us in John 5:31-37, that if he testified of himself, and that if this was the only testimony which gave witness to him, then his word was not true. But we know his word is true. But we know that the reason it is true is because his words were not the only testimony, the only witness, to his words. Jesus explained in these verses that his word was true because the Holy Spirit also gave witness that his words were true by the miracles he did. He also explained that his words were true because he had the third witness, the Father, who testified that the words of the Son were indeed true.

The testimony of Jesus Christ is therefore established upon the principle of three witnesses. Just as Old Testament scripture first established the principle that a life and death situation would only be determined by the testimony of two or three witnesses, we also will stand in judgment and will give the testimony of three witnesses. The three witnesses we will give will be, one, the witness of our spirit which moves us, two, the witness of our words which we profess, and three, the witness of our works which we do. It will be the combination of these three testimonies, these three witnesses, which will determine our final judgment. In Old Testament times, when a person stood before a judge, they would give testimony as to their own guilt or innocence. When a man pleaded innocent, the court would ask for other witnesses who could give testimony which would establish the guilt of the man. If there were two other people who gave testimony that the man was guilty of a crime subject to a death penalty, then the man would be condemned. However, if there was only one other witness who testified against the man, then the man would not be condemned to die. The Bible clearly expressed that in order to condemn a man to death there must be two or three witnesses.

In this court of law which could sentence a man to death, there would be at least three witnesses which gave testimony. One testimony would come from the defendant, and two testimonies would come from the other two witnesses. These three testimonies, the one from the defendant, and the two from the other witnesses, would establish a record. When a judge condemned a man to death he would have a record which established that at least two witnesses had testified as to the guilt of the man. It is even possible that after two witnesses gave testimony of the guilt of the man, that the man himself may confess to the crime. In this sense, there would be no division between the testimonies, for all three witnesses, the defendant himself and the two other persons, would agree to the guilt of the man. Either way, three witnesses would be established.

If you stop and think about it, you may be able to realize that the testimony of all three witnesses cannot be accepted unless these three witnesses each qualify first as witnesses. A simple example of this is a person who had no knowledge of a particular legal court case, and tried to give testimony. It is easy to see that no testimony would be received by the judge from this person because they are unqualified to know what really happened in the case of the defendant. Of course, this is a very simple concept, but, no one would ever be able to get a fair judgment if testimony was excepted from a witness that actually had no knowledge of the defendant, nor of the crime. True testimony can only come from those who have true knowledge of the situation. Any other witness would be considered a false witness, and their testimony would be thrown out.

But it is the same simple concept for us when we stand before God in the judgment day. We will only be convicted or exonerated by three witnesses which can qualify to testify concerning us. Those three witnesses are not other people in this world. We will not be sent to hell nor be given eternal life because of witnesses from other people. But just as Jesus gave testimony of himself, and the Father and the Holy Spirit both testified of him, we also will give a three-part testimony of ourselves. Just as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit has established the truth concerning Jesus as the word of God, we also will establish the truth concerning our lives by our own three perspectives of father, son, and spirit. Humans are made in the image of God, and therefore just as God has a Father aspect, which is the authority part over body and spirit, we also have our own father aspect, which means that our inner man controls the actions of our body and our spirit. What our body actually manifests outwardly is a testimony to our inner man, for it gives witness of what our inner man is really like. Our inner man will be known by what our outward man demonstrates, and also by what our spirit shows.

When we stand before God and the books of life are opened God will cause to be read the three testimonies of each person. Each person will have established a true record of his innermost convictions. The record will be established by the witness of his spirit, by the witness of his outward words and actions through his body, and by the witness of his own heart. And this three-part witness will determine the mark, name, or number which will be assigned to that person. If the three part testimony of the person agrees that the person truly does love Jesus Christ, then the name of God will be written in the forehead of that person. But if the testimonies of the person all agree that the person does not truly love Jesus Christ, then the mark, name, or number of Satan will be written in their forehead.

This concept of writing the name of God in the foreheads of his children is described several times in scripture. But, nowhere does the Bible suggest that this name of God is a physical marking. We can easily see that in Old Testament times the marking in the forehead of God's true people was not physical, but was a spiritual concept. Yet, why do the prophecy teachers of today continue to interpret the mark in the foreheads of evil persons as being a computer chip or bar code? When you think about this it is easy to see that just as the name of Christ is written in our foreheads in a spiritual sense, the name of Satan is also written in the foreheads of wicked people in that same spiritual sense. The deception that has permeated the church is that we are waiting around for an Antichrist to inject a computer chip into our forehead or to walk around in this world with a name physically stamped in the forehead or hand. But this is only Satan's way of pulling the wool over people's eyes so that they cannot comprehend the mark, name, or number of the Beast.

Whether you have the mark of the beast, the name of the beast, or the number of his name, you will still be designated as belonging to Satan. Many Christians have been told that all they have to do to resist receiving the mark of the beast is to refuse to have their forehead or right hand stamped or injected. They think that a physical resistance will establish their righteousness. But many Christians are deceived into thinking that this computer chip or bar code is coming sometime in the near future, and by this deception they are hindered from recognizing that the mark of the beast is already here. Have you ever noticed that every new trick that comes down

the line gives the impression that the mark of the beast is just around the corner. In our history, there have been many concepts for the mark of the beast. But, in every case, it did not happen, and each concept was soon replaced by a new concept which again promised that the mark of the beast was just around the corner. When the computer chip has lost its ability to send fear into the hearts of Christians, Satan will cause another device to be invented which will threaten to soon bring the mark of the beast into actual use. But, while Christians are preoccupied with a future mark, they miss the concept that their everyday actions and words are establishing their three part testimony which is being recorded in the books of life now, and which will provide the final testimony as to whether you will be designated as belonging to Satan, and will therefore receive his name in your forehead, or that you will be designated as belonging to God, and therefore will receive His name in your forehead.

But Satan does not want you to know this. He wants you to think that you are in no danger of receiving the mark of the beast because you do not see the widespread use of computer chips or bar codes in the flesh of people. This deception is based on the concept of the magician. The magician always wants you to look somewhere else so that you will not see what he is really doing. Satan is the great magician who is trying so hard to make people look somewhere else so that they will not recognize what the mark, name, or number of the beast really is. It is a very simple concept: Prevent people from knowing that the mark of the beast is already here, and then they won't recognize it when they are taking it. So many Christians adamantly claim that they would never take the mark of the beast, no matter what. But many Christians are establishing their three testimonies as to their wickedness by pursuing worldly interests rather than pursuing the interests of God.

When the books of life are opened, they will tell the story of your life. No, not just the life that you presented outwardly to the world, for the book will not only show the outward actions of your body, but will also reveal what kind of spirit was at work in you. Together, these will give testimony that will be two against one to those who are just professing to know Jesus Christ, but who have never made him Lord of their life.

If you want to be free of the mark of the beast, then you must establish a true witness of Jesus Christ, not just in your word, but in truth and in spirit. You can be faked out by the great magician if you want to, and you can boast that you would never take the name, mark, or number of the beast in your forehead or right hand. But, the real proof of your mark is in who you serve every day of your life. What a shame it would be to one day stand in the presence of Almighty God and find out only then that you had taken the mark of the beast without ever having realized it. The deception to God's church is great.