

Understanding Revelation – Topic 21

# **The head or the hand?**

**The mark to be forced  
on every person**

**An exposition of Revelation Chapters 13:16-17 & 14:9-10**

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## Introduction

The *mark of the beast* is introduced in Revelation 13, where the crisis that confronts God's people before the Second Advent is brought to view. In Revelation 14 we find special messages delivered by three angels. These are the last messages of God to the world before the return of Christ. This topic focuses on the third angel's message.

## A solemn warning

The third angel declares:

***If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. Revelation 14:9-10***

This fearful warning, the most terrible in all Scripture, is given to the last generation of the world, the generation that will be guilty of worshipping the beast and his image and receiving his mark.

Our God is a reasonable God, and he would not issue such a threat if His people did not have some means of understanding what constitutes the *mark of the beast*. Many claim that they do not understand the Book of Revelation and they maintain that no one else can understand it either. If that were true, then the warning that God gives to the last generation of earth has been given in vain. The invitation to God's people is to *seek and find*, and when we search the Book of Revelation we find that it tells us what the *mark of the beast* is.

## The mark of the beast

In Topic 19 the identity of the beast of Revelation 13:1-10 was revealed.<sup>1</sup> Recall that a beast represents a kingdom. In Revelation Chapter 13 there are at least fifteen points that identify this kingdom. Down through the centuries most Christian scholars have been agreed that this beast can represent only one power - the Papacy. Every single identifier fits and no other power in all history even begins to align with these features.

***He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Revelation 13:16-17***

It has already been demonstrated that *the mark of the beast* will become a sign of submission on the part of the majority of the earth's population<sup>2</sup>. It follows then that the *mark of the beast* is a mark which demonstrates submission to the Papacy. In the coming crisis it will be legislated that the mark must be enforced upon all. Anyone who does not comply will be boycotted or persecuted. Therefore it is important that we

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<sup>1</sup> A.P. Cooke, *The Great Antichrist. His Rise, Reign, Ruin and Restoration*, (Sydney: Self published, 1985) .

<sup>2</sup> A.P. Cooke, *When Religious Persecution Returns*, (Sydney: Self-published, 1985)

understand what form the mark takes so that we might know how to prepare for its eventuality and how to escape its consequences when that great crisis comes. We will first examine some significant historical events.

## Significant historical events

### Protestant Reformation

The marvelous event known as the Protestant Reformation opened the eyes of millions of people to God's truth as they gained access to the Word of God. The basic principle of the Reformers was *the Bible and the Bible only*. This was their foundation. This is what they preached. The application of this principle brought blessings and joy to those who embraced it.

### The Counter Reformation and the Council of Trent

At the time of the Protestant Reformation, the concept of *the Bible and the Bible only* hit the Papacy like a bomb, shaking her to her foundations. Protestantism's stand hung like a menacing cloud over the Church of Rome, forcing her to react. In response the Jesuit order was especially created to counter the Reformation and to destroy Protestantism. The Jesuits initiated the Counter Reformation. It is important to remember this fact because the destruction of Protestantism is still the purpose of the Jesuits: sadly they have almost succeeded.

To bolster the Counter Reformation a great council was called by the Papacy. Its purpose was to find a way to weather the storm caused by the rise of Protestantism. This was known as the Council of Trent, and it ran – though not continuously - from 1545 to 1563. Many authorities have recognized that the Council of Trent was the greatest council held by the Roman Catholic Church to that time.

The Papacy, with her reliance on tradition, was on the defensive. Among Christians, there was a move to return to the Bible. The main issue was whether the Church would continue as it had through the centuries or whether it would adopt the principle of *the Bible and Bible only* by which Protestantism was impacting so greatly on the religious and political world. Year after year the Council continued the weighty discussion and debate so that Rome might know what to do about her desperate situation. The Schaff Hertzog Encyclopedia referring to the Council of Trent, states:

*From a doctrinal and disciplinary point of view it was the most important council in the history of the Roman Church, fixing her distinctive faith and practice in relation to the Protestant evangelical churches.*<sup>3</sup>

After eighteen years the Church of Rome made her momentous decision. Tradition was paramount. Cardinal Pole, the Papal Legate at that time declared:

*Our beliefs and our worship in their entirety depend upon tradition.*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Franz Sales Trenkle, "Council of Trent", in *New Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, Edited by Samuel Macauley Jackson, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1912).

<sup>4</sup> Cardinal Pole, speech in a debate in 1546 Acta i.60 in B.J.Kidd, ed. *Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 355.

Other scholarly statements specifically related to the decision made by the Council were in the same vein.

Lessing (in Nampon):

*'Tradition, not Scripture', Lessing says, 'is the rock on which the Church of Jesus Christ is built'.<sup>5</sup>*

The Reverend J. Faa di Bruno:

*Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truth. Though these two divine streams are of equal sacredness, still, of the two, tradition is to us more clear.<sup>6</sup>*

J.H. Holtzman:

*Finally at the last opening session on the 18<sup>th</sup> January, 1562, in the Council of Trent their last scruple was set aside. The Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that 'tradition stood above scripture.'<sup>7</sup>*

Collier (in Nampon):

*Without tradition we could not prove that the Old any more than the New Testament contains the Word of God.*

*Tradition, not Scripture, is the rock on which the church of Jesus Christ is built.<sup>8</sup>*

This momentous decision was made by the Council of Trent when the Church of Rome had reached a crucial juncture. It is vitally important to note the basis upon which the Church's decision was made:

*Finally, at the last opening on the 18<sup>th</sup> January, 1562, all hesitation was set aside. The Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the church therefore, could not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures because the church has changed Sabbath into Sunday, not by command of Christ but by its own authority.<sup>9</sup>*

The fact that carried the day, the overwhelming evidence that convinced that great assembly in the hour of its crisis that it could and should stay with tradition and reject the position of the Protestants, was the fact that she, of her own authority, had changed a plain command of God. She had changed the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week. The change of the Sabbath was evidence of the Papacy's authority.

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<sup>5</sup> Collier, in *Catholic Doctrine as expounded by the Council of Trent*, Edited by A. Nampon, (Philadelphia: P.F. Cunningham & Son, 1869),157.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Faa di Bruno, *Catholic Belief* (London: Burns and Oates, 1911) 45.

<sup>7</sup> H.J. Holtzmann, *Canon and Tradition* (Ludwigsburg, Germany: 1859) , 263.

<sup>8</sup> Collier, 157.

<sup>9</sup> H.J. Holtzmann, 263.

At the time of the Protestant Reformation there were many disputes between Protestants and Catholics. There was one debate in particular in which Luther engaged Dr Eck at Leipzig and which he did not win because of the challenge that Dr Eck issued to him. Dr Eck declared:

*The church has had power to change the Sabbath of the Bible into Sunday.... If you...turn from the church to the Scriptures alone, then you must keep the Sabbath which has been kept from the beginning of the world.*<sup>10</sup>

Luther could not answer this challenge. If Rome changed the Sabbath on her own authority as she claims, then Protestants who claim to adhere to *the Bible and the Bible only* are in error in observing Sunday. The Lutheran church in its primary confession of faith – the Augsburg Confession - acknowledges this.

*Attention is hereby drawn to the fact that the Sabbath has been changed to Sunday, contrary to the ten commandments and no example is held up so high, (by the Catholics) and so forcefully pointed to by them, as the change of the Sabbath, and in this way, they desire to prove that the power of the church is great, because they have interfered with or dispensed with the ten commandments and have altered somewhat thereof.*<sup>11</sup>

Here is striking evidence of the importance of the Saturday-Sunday issue. Here is the answer to any who claim that the Sabbath is not important. It was so important to the Papacy that in the great hour of her crisis, the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday was the deciding factor. The Augsburg Confession states that

*...no example is held up so high by the Catholics and so forcefully pointed to by them as the change of the Sabbath.*

Over the years, in the many verbal and literary clashes between Protestants and Catholics, the Church of Rome has usually triumphed in spite of her teachings being largely erroneous and unscriptural. Her tactic has typically been to come back to the Sabbath question. She would challenge Protestants with:

*If you follow the Bible and Bible only, why do you keep Sunday?*

One leading Catholic publication issued the challenge,

*The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the Ten Commandments; you believe the other nine are still binding; who gave you (Protestants) authority to tamper with the fourth?*<sup>12</sup>

Another Catholic publication declared:

*It was the Catholic Church which transferred this rest to the Sunday, thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants, is an homage they pay in spite of themselves to the authority of the Catholic Church.*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Johann Eck, *Enchiridion Locorum Communium (Tr)* (Ada MI: Baker Book House 1979) 78-79.

<sup>11</sup> Philip Melancthon, *Augsburg Confession of Faith (Tr)*, trans., F. Bent & W. Dau (Augsburg: Triglot Concordia, 1530) Article 28.

<sup>12</sup> *The Library of Christian Doctrine*, (London: Burns & Oates) 4.

<sup>13</sup> Mgr Louis Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today* (Boston: Patrick Donahoe, 1868) 213.

Another Catholic spokesperson wrote:

*Sunday is an institution of the Catholic Church and those who observe the day observe a command of the Catholic Church. It is well to remind the Presbyterians, the Methodists and all the other Christians that the Bible does not support them anywhere in the observance of Sunday.*<sup>14</sup>

The Catholic Church has used this argument repeatedly and convincingly.

## The mark identified

Rome's change of the Sabbath has been the great mark of her authority and she lays claim to this in her official published statements. In a Catholic catechism written by the Reverend Keenan we find the following exchange:

*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 other 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.*<sup>15</sup>

In 1895 the leader of the Catholic Church in the United States of America, in answer to a question regarding whether the act of changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday is recognized by Rome as her mark of power responded with these words:

*Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act; it could not have been otherwise, as none in those days ever dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual or religious without her and the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters.*<sup>16</sup>

It is plain that the change of the Sabbath to Sunday is the mark of the Papacy. This leading Catholic authority declared it thus and published this fact. In the Catholic Record, printed in London, Ontario, Canada, resides another statement:

*Sunday is our mark of authority. The church is above the Bible, and this transferring of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact.*<sup>17</sup>

Those who have concluded that Sunday observance will be the *mark of the beast*, including Seventh-day Adventists, are justified in doing so. It is an entirely logical conclusion. However Seventh-day Adventists do not teach that those who currently keep Sunday have the *mark of the beast*. The application of *the mark of the beast* is yet future. When it is enforced by law on behalf of the Church of Rome, Sunday keeping will become the *mark of the beast* and it will be used as a means of enforcing world government.

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<sup>14</sup> Father James I. Brady, as published in the Elizabeth (NJ) *News* of March 18, 1903.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism* (New Providence NJ: PJ Kenedy, 1876)

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Cardinal Gibbons, 11 November 1895, through his chancellor responding to an enquiry by J.F. Snyder, of Bloomington, Ill., asking if the Catholic Church claims to have changed the Sabbath.

<sup>17</sup> Cardinal Gibbons, "Letter," in *The Catholic Record*, 1 September, 1923

The *mark of the beast* will be a spiritual mark and it will be revealed by the observance of the day that the Papacy has foisted upon the Christian world. All who accept the mark will be counted as having submitted to Rome.

It is easy to understand why most Protestants oppose the claim that the *mark of the beast* will be characterized as Sunday observance. They have refused the light of truth regarding the Sabbath. However in spite of the refusal of Protestantism to acknowledge the facts concerning the mark, Rome herself confirms it. Rome has claimed and continues to claim that Sunday is the mark of her authority. No one has ever produced a satisfactory alternative identity for the *mark of the beast*.

## The seal of God

In the third Angel's message of Revelation 14 we read:

*If anyone worships the beast...and receives his mark...the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God. Revelation 14:9-10*

This text reveals the attitude of heaven in regard to the Sabbath issue. Anyone who receives the *mark of the beast* will experience the wrath of God. Revelation 15:1 declares that the wrath of God is comprised of the seven last plagues which will fall prior to the Second Advent of Christ upon members of earth's last generation.

The Book of Revelation also reveals that there is another mark. God has a mark, and He will place His mark on the foreheads of His servants prior to the Second Advent. This mark is brought to view in Revelation 7 in a prediction concerning the latter days:

*After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Revelation 7:1*

Winds in prophecy denote war, strife and commotion; the judgments of God.

*Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads". Revelation 7:2-3*

This mark is called *the seal of God*. Before the judgments of God fall upon this earth, God is to seal His servants on their foreheads. In Scripture the words seal and sign are synonymous. Every kingdom has its seal, every government has its seal and every law must have its seal in order to be valid.

There are three elements in a seal. For example, the seal of the Queen of Great Britain contains her name, her title and her territory or dominion: Elizabeth II, Queen, of Great Britain. These three elements in the seal indicate sovereign identity, what constitutes their role, and where their jurisdiction prevails. Just as every law must have a seal in order to be valid, so it is with God's seal, which contains each of these same three elements. As Isaiah declared:

*Seal the law among my disciples. Isaiah 8:16*

When the Ten Commandments are scrutinized, the seal is discovered right in the heart of that divine law. Furthermore, the three elements of the seal are found in only one commandment – the fourth commandment – the Sabbath commandment. The name of God is evident in the first three commandments, yet it is only in the fourth commandment that God's name, His title and His dominion is specified.



*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: ...” For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Exodus 20:8-11*

In the fourth commandment we find:

**God’s name** – *the Lord thy God.*

**His title** – the Lord who made heaven and earth, the *Creator*.

**His territory or dominion** – *heaven & earth, the sea and all that is in them.*

Throughout Scripture the true God is designated by the fact that he is the Creator.<sup>18</sup> This distinguishes the true God from all other gods. The third element of the seal embraces the whole universe.

With the Sabbath commandment then, there is more than meets the eye. It is more than a command for humans to rest and set aside a day for worship. Within it is embedded God’s seal declaring who He is, what He is and the extent of His dominion. According to the prediction of Revelation 7, in the last days a special message about the true Sabbath is to be proclaimed, implanting in the foreheads, the minds, of God’s servants the lost truth of the Sabbath.

In the last days then, during the coming crisis, the issue will take the form of two marks, two signs - two Sabbaths. One Sabbath will be the sign, the seal of Jesus Christ the Creator and Re-creator of all things. The other ‘Sabbath’ will be the sign or mark of the antichrist – the creature which seeks to usurp God’s authority. Other scholars have recognized a similar significance in the Sabbath.

Dr Everts, a Baptist scholar, states:

*The Sabbath was made a seal of God’s covenant with Israel, an ordinance so essential for the maintenance of religion, it actually became a proof and measure of it, not only for them, but to all ages.*<sup>19</sup>

James G. Murphy in his commentary on the book of Exodus notes:

*The observance of the Sabbath connects man with the six days of creation and with the Creator himself. The Sabbath thus becomes a sign by which the believers in the historical revelation are distinguished from those who have allowed these great facts to fade from their remembrance.*<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Psalm 96:3-5; 95:3-7; 121:1-2; 146:5-6; Jeremiah 10:10-12; 51:15-16; Isaiah 40:18-22; 25-26; Acts 14:15; 19:22-29.

<sup>19</sup> W.W. Everts, *The Sabbath. Its Permanence, Promise and Defence* (New York: EB Treat & Company, 1885) 34-35.

<sup>20</sup> James G. Murphy, *Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (London: T. & T. Clark, 1866) 143-144.

The godly Anabaptists in their German Sunday Book have written:

*Blessed are they who bear God's sign. As truly as the Sabbath is the sign of the covenant between the true God and his people, so truly must this sign be found with those who belong to God's people.*<sup>21</sup>

These scholars confirm that the seal of God, found in the heart of the Ten Commandments, is the seventh-day Sabbath. Today God's mark, *His seal*, is being proclaimed throughout the world.

## Placement of the seal of God

We may wonder why the seal of God is described as being placed only in the forehead and not in the hand. Note that the Sabbath commandment begins with the word *remember*:

*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Exodus 20:8*

The memory involves the frontal lobes of the brain situated in the forehead. In these last days God is placing in the mind and memory of His people the truth of the Sabbath.

*Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. Revelation 7:3*

There are millions of God's servants around the world who as yet are unaware of God's seal, unaware of the Sabbath truth. To them must come the message concerning the true Sabbath which calls them to remember to keep the Sabbath holy and to hallow it. The prophet says:

*Hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. Ezekiel 20:20*

To merely cease labour during the Sabbath hours does not constitute a proper observance of the Sabbath. True Sabbath-keeping is primarily an act of worship. It is a tangible recognition on the part of His creation of the fact that the God, who created in His followers a clean heart and a right spirit by His grace, is also developing in them a new character and a new life similar to that of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the significance of Sabbath keeping.

*Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. Ezekiel 20:12*

*Sanctification* is holiness of character. So, according to Scripture, the divine sign of holy living is the *genuine* observance of the seventh-day Sabbath.

## Placement of the mark of the beast

It is predicted that the *mark of the beast* is to be placed either in the forehead or in the hand of those who follow the beast. This will be fulfilled when the Papacy reaches the peak of its power and the nations agree to enforce papal policy. It will become evident in mandatory Sunday observance.

Once this law requiring Sunday observance is enacted, millions will obey knowing within themselves that they are paying homage to Rome. Their decision means that they will

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<sup>21</sup> "Sunday Book," in *Sonntagsbuch*, 1866 29-38.

receive the *mark of the beast* in their foreheads. At the same time, there will be millions of people who are disinterested in religion *per se*, yet will comply when the requirements of the law for Sunday observance are enforced, thus receiving the *mark of the beast* in the hand - the hand being the symbol of labor. Thus all the unsaved will be involved in the worship of the beast.

## The crucial last day issue

In the coming crisis the crucial issue will revolve around two days of worship: two Sabbaths – Saturday or Sunday. There will be a clash of authorities, the authority of Jesus Christ or the authority of the Anti-Christ; between the commandments of God and the traditions of men; between truth and error. The response of true believers will be to leave the traditions of men and go to the side of the commandments of God. As Father Enright once challenged:

*The Bible commends you to keep the Sabbath day. Sunday is not the Sabbath day, no man dare assert that it is. The Bible says as plainly as words can make it, that the seventh day is the Sabbath, that is, Saturday, for we know Sunday to be the first day of the week. The observance of Sunday is solely a law of the Catholic Church. The church changed the Sabbath to Sunday and all the world bows down and worships on that day in silent obedience to the mandates of the Catholic Church.*<sup>22</sup>

If we are to be true to Jesus Christ, the only response we can make is to leave the traditions of men and the authority of Rome, and to stand on the side of Jesus Christ. Describing His faithful people in the last days, the Lord says:

*Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:12*

The faith of Jesus goes hand in hand with the commandments of God. Thus, although some may question what difference a day makes, the correct response is that the Sabbath is more than just a day. It is an issue about which God, and at which altar, we choose to worship.

A man holds in his hand a piece of blue cloth. He treads that piece of cloth underfoot and no one pays any attention. He then takes a piece of white cloth and likewise treads it underfoot and no one takes any notice. He also takes a piece of red cloth and treads it underfoot and again no one is concerned. However if that man was then to take a piece of red, white and blue cloth, sewn into the flag of our nation, and tread that underfoot, one would rightfully object because that flag represents something. That piece of cloth represents both your identity and that of your nation. Its significance derives from what it represents.

So it is with the Sabbath, the true Lord's Day. It is more than just a day: it represents Jesus Christ, the Creator. Sunday is also more than just a day. It is the false Lord's Day. It represents the Antichrist. It is his mark, his day, his sign - his flag. As a consequence there are two flags, two authorities, two Sabbaths - the true Sabbath of God and the false Sabbath of the Antichrist.

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<sup>22</sup> Father Enright, "The Sabbath Day," in *The American Sentinel*, 1 June, 1893

## No neutrality

In these last days God's special message calls us to come and stand under the true flag of Jesus Christ and to turn our backs on the flag of antichrist. There can be no neutrality in this issue, for Christ declares:

*...If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God... Revelation 14:9-10*

In times gone by, for most Christians, the Sabbath was not a test. In these last days it is to be the great test and all will be judged according to their reception or rejection of this truth. Some will fear becoming ostracized by their families and loved ones if they take a stand for the truth. This will be one of the unfortunate and difficult circumstances many will face. However, the Lord says that if we place those close to us before Him we are not worthy of His friendship.

*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Matthew 10:37-38*

Others will object that business prevents them from honouring the Sabbath as they should, or that their occupation involves working on the Sabbath. Consider, however, that if an individual was called into the Armed Services to defend their country, they would have to leave their normal activities, including their employment, behind them. So it is when Jesus Christ calls us to His cause. Everything else must take second place. God promises:

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (our occupation, business, family, etc) shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33*

The Lord never forsakes His people.

*...those who honor Me, I will honor.... 1 Samuel 2:30*

By honoring God, we are to honor His day and honor His commandments. If we conclude that it is too difficult or restrictive to obey His commandments, we need to remember the situation which Jesus faced. He was a man of sorrows who had nowhere to lay His head, who was crucified on our behalf. He trembled at the prospect of what He had to face, but He trusted God and accepted what must come to pass. *Not my will, but Yours be done*, He said. And He says to us:

*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Matthew 16:24*

This is the call of Christ and if we love Him we will respond positively. We will serve the Creator and not the creature; we will choose truth and reject tradition. We will keep the commandments of God and turn our backs on the commandments of men. We will submit to Jesus Christ and reject antichrist. We will accept the Sabbath, the seal of the living God, and reject the mark of the beast.

## Conclusion

There was once a man who was the foreman of a welding gang. When he heard God's Sabbath message, he was convicted that he ought to obey Jesus Christ. He went to his boss to seek freedom from work on the Sabbath. His boss would not listen. He pleaded with him, but to no avail. In the end, he was led to give up his job. For three weeks he sought work but could not find any. Someone suggested that he start up a business of his own, which he did successfully.

Before long there sailed into the harbor a ship laden with munitions. While it was being unloaded, one of the laborers accidentally dropped a lighted cigarette into the hold but said nothing about it. Soon a wisp of smoke was seen floating up from the hold. The authorities sent for a welding gang to cut a hole in the ship's side to allow the sea to flow in and quell the flames. Out came the very gang this man had been the foreman of. They had hardly started work when suddenly there was a terrific explosion and parts of the ship were scattered far and wide. The bodies of the members of the gang were never recovered. When this occurred, the man who had been unable to obtain Sabbath freedom now knew why he had not been successful. The Lord did not want him in that job or in that place.

When we serve Christ with all our hearts, God leads us to the place where He wants us to be. His way and His leading is always the best even if it may not seem so at the time, for often God tests us. But when we are true to Him, He never lets us down. May God help us to make the right decision, the decision which will lead us into His Kingdom.

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