

Who is the Beast? Who is 666?

Running Our Life “Man’s” Way Instead of God’s Way

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“And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads a blasphemous name (nature)...Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of mankind (humanity = anthropos in the Greek); and its number is six hundred sixty-six (666).” Revelation 13:1,18.

The ultimate test in the end will be the test of worship: worship of the Beast power or worship of God. How will one actually “worship” the beast power? The “beast” is a primarily a political power whereas the “harlot” is a religious power. How does one “worship” a political power? By giving allegiance to it, by following its orders even when they are opposed to God’s orders, by following man and man’s ways rather than following God’s ways.

“Hebrews, Chapter 3, is concerned with making these contrasts. Paul has chosen Christ and Moses as examples of faithful and successful service, and ancient Israel for its inexcusable and tragic substitution of human devising in place of divine direction. . . In Bible history, every time men knew and followed God’s ways they experienced nothing but success, whereas on the more numerous occasions when they substituted their own devisings (666 = man’s ways), they were crippled with miserable failure and long delays.” God’s Sabbath Rest, F.T. Wright, pg 45

God, alone, must be our Plan-maker and Problem-solver:

“O Lord, I know that the way of man is **NOT** in himself.
it is **NOT** in man that walketh to direct his steps.”
Jer 10:23

In God’s church - - the TRUE Christian Church - - God ALONE determines all the appointments. In all other churches, irrespective of how loudly they may claim to be God’s people, MEN assume this responsibility.

“And **GOD** has set some in the church, first apostles,
secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles,
then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of languages.”
1 Corinthians 12:28

This Scripture does NOT say that God sets the various offices in the ecclesia *through some form of human agency*. It simply declares that HE does it. GOD makes the decisions as to who should do what! This is NOT for man to determine.

The Bible often compares the church with the human body. As the body has many different members but only one head, so has the true ecclesia of God. That one Head is Jesus Christ, through whom God works His will in the ecclesia. The true believers are the members of Christ’s body, the ecclesia. The body, when directed by a Single Head - Jesus Christ, becomes a truly effective instrument in God’s hands.

Then WHY do Christians decide what THEY want to do, rather than take their orders from Jesus Christ and the Bible?

Notice also that, in a human body, the head ALWAYS tells the members what to do. The eye does NOT tell the foot what to do, nor does the knee tell the hand what to do. Therefore, NO OTHER MEMBER of the body of Christ has the right to tell some other member what to do. ALL orders come DIRECTLY from the Head - Jesus Christ!

“When Paul chose the human body’s harmonious functioning under one efficient head to illustrate the relationship between the various members of Christ’s body and its living Head, he was obviously thinking in terms of a body freed from sin’s dominion. In such an individual, every member obeys the head which is under Christ’s command. No member, from the smallest to the largest, moves unless the head commands it. The hands are not found giving instructions to the heart, nor the legs to the lips. No member has jurisdiction over any other. Such a body provides a fitting illustration of the co-working between Christ and His people.

“In the man dominated by sin, the situation is very different. Appetites, passions, and affections are in command, with the result that the head is bypassed, its authority overridden. A master other than that appointed by God has taken command, so even though, as in the case of the *Romans 7* man, the mind desires to obey the true Head - Christ - this proves to be impossible.” God’s Sabbath Rest, pg 51

“Christ is the head of the ecclesia.” Eph 5:23

Christ is the Head of the ecclesia. He is likewise the Head of each individual in the Church. Christ gives us the orders, not the “church.”

“Now you are The Body of Christ, and members individually.” Eph 12:27

And Christ is “the head over all things to the ecclesia.” Eph 1:22

God GIVES the orders, and we TAKE the orders!

“God is inflexibly committed to His order of government, not because He has arbitrarily rejected all other systems, but because His is the only one who can operate successfully. Man does not have the capacity to be a safe and effective plan-maker. Therefore, he can never be a head. For God to give man the headship of the church would be like giving the control of a human body to the little toe or some other unintelligent member, and a body cannot operate successfully under that kind of leadership.” God’s Sabbath Rest, pg 58

“We have not wisdom to plan our own lives . . . Let God plan for you.”
We must get ALL of our orders from the Lord, both general AND specific.

Moses:

Moses was aware, to some extent, that he was to be the deliverer of his people. He understood the general order but he didn’t ask God about the specifics. Instead he assumed that he would deliver by military means - by force. So he killed the Egyptian who was assaulting the Israelite. This was NOT God’s plan! Moses had to flee.

God couldn't use Moses until Moses learned that he had to depend on God for not only the general orders, but the specific orders as well. In slaying the Egyptian, Moses had fallen into the same error so often committed by his fathers, of taking into their own hands the work that God had promised to do. It was not God's will to deliver His people by warfare, as Moses thought, but by His own mighty power, that the glory might be ascribed to Him alone.

Abraham:

After God promised Abraham a son, Abraham decided that the "specific" orders were up to him.

Rebecca:

When Rebecca was told by God that Jacob would get the birthright, she did NOT leave to God the specific way it would be done. Instead, she decided on the "specific" plans herself.

"Faith without works is dead" according to James 2:20, but the works must be the right kind of works. They must be God's works, works planned and ordered by God, not devised by man. "The presence of human planning means the absence of the divine. Therefore, even though there may be a great deal of human activity aimed at achieving what God has promised, in God's eyes there are no works at all." God's Sabbath Rest, pg 77

God is the teacher of His people. It is God who instructs His children in their daily duties and how to perform them. As the Teacher of truth, it is His responsibility to decide just what shall be taught, through whom, and when.

Let's look at some illustrations in the Bible of individuals who allowed God to make the specific plans.

Joshua:

1) When the children of Israel were finally ready to enter the Promised Land, Joshua left the full responsibility for the invasion plan with God. He did not form a committee to develop a military plan. To the human mind, God's plans for the fall of Jericho were illogical and foolish (Joshua 6:1-27). No general in history has ever accepted or implemented such a plan, even after the successful operation of it at Jericho. There was not one bit of human devising in the plan, yet it worked perfectly because the Israelites believed God and carried out His commands exactly as He gave them.

Shortly after the tremendous success at Jericho, Joshua was planning to overtake Ai. Instead of again relying on God, Joshua made the plans himself. He sent two spies to "case" the city and followed their advice to send only a small number of soldiers. But because it was man's plans and not God's, the Israelites met a terrible defeat.

Joshua appropriately fell to his knees, asking for God's help with the problem, rather than blundering along trying to get HIMSELF out of a terrible mess.

"God has made Himself available as the Problem-solver not only of great and desperate problems, but for everything. He is therefore not the last, but the FIRST and ONLY resort to whom the Christian is to turn. God does not leave His children to solve 'easy' situations while He takes care of the 'difficult' ones." God's Sabbath Rest, pg 111

Church Organizations

The ONLY ecclesia that is safe is the one over which Christ is the one and ONLY Head, and the one in which Christ, Himself, gives ALL the orders. All others end up as Babylon.

A.T. Jones spelled out the principles involved, in *Lessons from the Reformation*, pg 138,139.

“Be not ye called Master; for One is your Teacher, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.’
‘Neither be ye called masters; for on Is your Master, even Christ.’ Matt 23:8,10

“There is no exercise of authority, there is no place for domination among Christians: neither by Christians upon other Christians, nor by Christians upon people who are not Christians.

“For it is written: ‘The princes of the Gentiles (unbelievers) exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall NOT be so among you.’ Matthew 20:25

“Note that it is ‘the princes of the Gentiles’ (unbelievers) that exercise dominion and authority over people; and it is ‘them’ - - the Gentiles (unbelievers) - - over which this dominion and authority are exercised.

“And even though dominion and authority be exercised by men in ‘the ecclesia,’ they are still ‘princes of the Gentiles’ (unbelievers) if they do it. Christians do NOT do it, for, ‘It shall NOT be so among you.’

“It is none but princes of the Gentiles who do it; it is none but Gentiles (unbelievers) over and upon whom they do it; and it is none but Gentiles who allow it to be done over and upon them, in the ecclesia.

“No man can be loyal to Christ, nor true to His word, who allows any man in ‘the ecclesia’ or in the field of religion and faith to exercise dominion or authority over or upon him. For Christ has commanded, ‘It shall NOT be so among you.’

“Whosoever among Christians exercised such dominion or authority puts himself in the place of Christ. And whosoever allows it to be done to him, allows man to be to him in the place of Christ.

“You are bought with a price; do NOT be the servants of men.” 1 Corinthians 7:23

“It is a fundamental principle of the Reformation that ‘the ecclesiastical power is exercised only by the ministry of the Word.’

“Any ecclesiastical power ever, anywhere, that is exercised in ANY way other than ‘only by the ministry of the Word’ is not Christian, is not Reformation, but is papal.

“Among Christians the only government in which man has any governing to do is self-government. Each one governs himself only, in the realm of his own spirit. And ‘He that

is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit than he that taketh a city.' " Proverbs 16:23

It is God who must be the Plan-maker and Problem-solver, not us nor those who wish to rule over us. Again, we must allow God to give the general orders AND the specific orders. When God makes the plans, everything goes well. When we make the plans, it may appear to go well for a while, but eventually it will all go bad.

Look at Abraham and Sarah. "Abraham's unquestioning obedience is one of the most striking evidences of faith to be found in all the Bible. . . Relying upon the divine promise, without the least outward assurance of its fulfillment, he abandoned home and kindred and native land, and went forth, he knew not whither, to follow where God should lead."

When Abraham was promised a son, "he and Sarah prayed and waited for the fulfillment with intense longing, yet decades passed without any evidence that God would ever keep His word. The longer the delay, the greater the pressure Satan was able to exert on them to carry out God's work in their own way.

"What every child of God needs to understand here, is that the deeper the devotion of this godly couple, the more intensely they desired to see the promise fulfilled and God's work advanced; and the greater their spirit of sacrifice, the more they were in danger of taking steps whereby they would attempt to do God's work **in their own way**. God's Sabbath Rest, 307

After Ishmael was born, Abraham was thrilled and apparently never doubted that God accepted this son as the true fulfillment of the promise. God remained silent for **13 years**, so naturally Abraham believed that God had approved of his actions. Yet Abraham should have known that God makes the plans, and He would never approve of Abraham committing adultery in order to "help" God fulfill His promise.

Neither Abraham nor Sarah could fathom how God could give them a son at their advanced age. It wasn't "humanly" possible. They, like so many Christians today, cannot believe God can accomplish His promises, when we see no possible "human" solution.

But God spoke to Abraham again, telling him that he would have a son with Sarah, and letting Abraham understand that Ishmael was NOT the son of the promise. What a heartache for Abraham! He reaped what he had sown by taking matters into his own hands. Not only did it break his heart to send his first-born son away, but thousands of years of fighting between the Arabs and the Israelites has been the result of Abraham and Sarah's lack of faith.

Gen 17:21,22 Why did God establish the covenant with Isaac rather than Ishmael? Because Isaac's birth was the result of following God's directions, following God's way. Ishmael was the result of following MAN'S way! **Living faith must be combined with correct procedures.** It is not enough for Christians to have different objectives from the world, they must have different procedures, their procedures must come directly from God.

"God's work can NEVER be advanced by human methods." God's Sabbath Rest, pg 310

Let's look at some episodes in the life of David.

When David's wives and children were abducted along with the families of all his soldiers, when their houses in their city of Ziklag were destroyed and burned, David called on the Lord asking what he should do. David left both the general and specific plans in the hands the Lord. The Lord assured him that He would be with David's pursuit of his enemies to retrieve their families and possessions. All this happened successfully and miraculously and their families and possessions were re-captured without any loss. They even carried additional "booty" home from the Philistines they slew.

However, when David got into terrible trouble with Bathsheba, instead of giving the mess over to the Lord, he tried to solve the problem on his own. First, he had Uriah brought home from the battlefield, hoping Uriah would sleep with Bathsheba and think that her baby was his. When that didn't work, David decided to have Uriah killed on the front lines, hoping no one would connect Uriah's battlefield death to David.

David repented of his sin ONLY after it had become known to Israel, and Bathsheba had become his wife. Every effort that David made to conceal his guilt proved unavailing. He had betrayed himself into the power of Satan; danger surrounded him, dishonor more bitter than death was before him. There appeared but one way of escape, and in his desperation he was hurried on to add murder to adultery.

What a fearful harvest of punishment David and others were obliged to bear because he failed to fulfill the conditions that would have saved him from much, if not all, of the trouble. Of course, he ought never to have got into the predicament in the first place, but, once there, it was imperative that prompt repentance be accompanied by his total committal of the problem into God's care. Any other course could only lead to terrible complications and further tragedies, which did, in fact, happen.

"The innocent and noble Uriah lost his life.

"David had to face the terrible shame heaped upon him as the whole nation became aware of his transgression. "He lost a great deal of parental and regal authority as the respect of family and nation was withdrawn. And throughout the land, sinners were encouraged to act out the dictates of their evil hearts.

"God's work was retarded and doors were opened for the advancement of that terrible apostasy which marred Israel's history in later years." God's Sabbath Rest, 303

The life of David is indeed a valuable lesson book.

Both Abraham and David individually, at various times in their respective lives, exhibited the false reasoning so common to man. They failed to understand that every antichristian religion is a system that seeks to build God's kingdom in **MAN'S WAY!** Those who are involved in such efforts are usually very dedicated, studious, self-sacrificing and zealous individuals. But by their very acts, they are establishing and fostering a false religion.

We are nothing more than the vehicles used by God to transmit to others the information God has given us, but we should ONLY do it in the EXACT WAY God tells us to do it.

Jesus said, "**I am the WAY**, the truth and the life!" John 14:6

Jesus IS the truth! He is also the WAY to give out the truth. Jesus is not only the Way to Father but, in addition, when He says HE is the WAY, He means **we must do it HIS WAY!**

The national anthem, the theme song, for the Beast power - the Antichrist power, is Frank Sinatra's rendition of "I Did it MY Way!"

We must STOP making our own plans and let God run our life. Anytime we follow our own plans, or plans devised by some other human being, **we become 666! Because we do it MAN'S way rather than GOD'S way!**

Anytime a church organization or a denomination tells a member what to believe or what he should be doing for the Lord, that organization becomes 666!

That position, the Head of the Church, belongs ONLY to God! God gives ALL the orders! He makes the plans, He solves the problems! It's ALL of Him!

Every child of God can rest assured that when a problem appears, it is already solved. We do not need to be anxious, but only to cast our cares upon Him and joyously anticipate a remarkable display of God's proficiency as a Problem-solver.

In every difficulty God has His way prepared to bring relief. Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. . . Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision.

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