THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Tonight's message: the Mark of the Beast. Enemy of God, passport to hell. Ladies and gentlemen, would you please pray about tonight's message. Sometimes the truth is hard. But it must be told.

The Bible declares that those who get the "mark of the beast" cannot be saved. That's why it's important to know what it is. I want to assure you as always, that I bring God's message only in hope of enlightening those who will be saved. I want to make no attack on anyone. I just want the truth of God to be plain. Don't you?

I'm reading Revelation 13:15-18. "15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 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:

17 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.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

Now score is twenty. Three times twenty is sixty. So the number is six hundred and sixty six. You got that. Now I have already suggested to you that those who get the mark of the beast are going to hell. Now I want you to listen to Revelation 14:9-11. "9 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,

10 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:

11 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."

Now that's hell. They're gonna burn up who have the mark of the beast. Is that clear? Now the next verse, verse 12, is a transition. After John had seen one crowd burned up, then he looks at those who remain, and he says, 12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. Would you say Amen. This is very clear. One group gets the mark of the beast and is destroyed. The other group keeps the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The other night we preached to you about who changed the Sabbath, and from Daniel 7 we read concerning the beasts that came up from out of the sea. Daniel 7:17 says, the beast which thou sawest are four kings. Four what? Four kings referring to nations. They were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Now that explains the symbol of a beast in prophecy. In Daniel 7:25, Daniel says that this power would emerge, after four kingdoms are passed away, he said there grew on the head one of those beasts ten horns. And then the Bible says, the ten horns are ten kings. Isn't that right! Then Daniel said, another arose which was diverse from the first. Diverse simply means different. And he said this one had a mouth speaking great things against the Most High, and he would think to change times and laws. Now that's in the book of Daniel.

I'm going to the book of Revelation 13:4 and I want you to notice the similarity of this prophecies. 4 And they worshipped the dragon … Who is the dragon? Revelation 12:9 says, 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan …. So who is the dragon? Now let's go back to our verse: Revelation 13:4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped

the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?
5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.
6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.
7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: … you got that.
Daniel 7: 25 said, he would wear out the saints of the Most High. John said power was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. Now this power was diverse or different from the others in that the others were purely political. But this power is a religio-political power. It is both a spiritual and political power. Daniel said this power would speak against the Most High. John said he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. Daniel said he would wear out the saints of the Most High. John said it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. You got it.
Revelation 13:5 says power was given unto him forty and two months. That's forty two month. The Jewish month contained thirty equal days. Forty two times thirty is 1260. And the Bible says in reckoning prophecy: a day for a year. 1260 years., the exact period of the dark ages. 538-1798 A.D.
The Bible says, 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.
7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
Now these two chapters, Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 13:4-9 point out a power that would rise up and oppose God, speak blasphemies, kill saints, and think to change God's laws.
I. PAGAN ROME.
Ladies and gentlemen, When Christ first left earth. Pagan! Pagan Rome began to kill Christians. Now _____ pg 8 last line unclear those other Caesars tried to stamp out Christianity. But Jesus had said, I'm building my church on a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Jesus had told his disciples they were gonna be persecuted. But He said the gates of the grave would not shut out my church.
Edward Gibson, the great historian, in his book *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, wrote every time they'd kill a Christian, ten would join the Church. Pagans fear one thing more than anything else, and that's death. And that's why they used death to try to force men to do what they wanted. They would put you to death if you didn't give up your faith. But when they brought these Christians into the stadiums to die, instead of seeing people crying and scared ___pg 9 last line unclear Christians walked out boldly to die. And when they turned the lions and bears a loose, and when they turned the bulls a loose, when they burned them at stake, they saw people dying with smiles on their faces. And these pagans who came to make fun went home disturbed. And they wanted to know, what makes these people die with a smile. And they began to investigate, and they found that Jesus takes the sting out of death. And when they discover this, they wanted to know more and more, so that when one died, ten would join.
Well the Devil finally saw that he couldn't stamp out the church. Jesus had already told him that. But he thought he could. And finally in 303 A.D., the darkest period of Pagan persecution took place, it lasted for ten years, from 303 - 313 A.D. under

Emperor Diocletian. During those years he tried to stamp Christianity from the face of the earth. And during the same ten years, more pagans became Christians than ever before. They were not allowed to have churches, they worshiped in catacombs (underground graveyards).

Around 313 A.D., the Devil and the emperor saw they were fighting a losing battle. As a matter of fact, so many people became Christians by then, that the empire was just about to turn Christian. The balance of power was beginning to be with the Christians instead of the pagans. And all of a sudden comes out of the pages of history an emperor named Constantine. And Constantine rode personally through the empire declaring, "Stop killing Christians!" In 321, Constantine, under the pressure from the new leaders of the church, passed the first Sunday law. Two years later while he was riding into battle, he claimed that he saw a cross in the sky, was knocked down, like Saul of old, and he was converted. Ladies and gentlemen every historian said this was a fake conversion. Constantine did this in order to join the majority and stand with the largest crowd in terms of power.

And when the emperor joined the church, everybody was ready then. And they came flooding into the church. And they brought with them their festivals, their holidays, many of their pagan practices, they were all brought right into the church.

And the Christian church was so elated over this great swell in membership that they let everybody in, and then did what they could to make everybody comfortable. So they began to take pagan festivals and Christianize them by tying a Christian idea and a pagan idea together. And that's how we got Christmas and Easter. Nobody knows when Jesus was born. He was not born in December. Now it's alright to celebrate a day in memory of His birth. But what has Santa Claus, and candles and bulbs on a tree have to do with Christ's birth?

Now these round bulbs you hang on Christmas trees, represent the planets. These were the emblems of astrology, long before Christ was born. And the church reached out and grabbed it and said let's put this with the birth of Jesus so we all can be together. Now I love Christmas, I'm not against it. But we need to understand what we are doing!

Now Easter the same thing. They had a day they wanted to use to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus. The pagans had been worshiping Tammuz, and Diana and Apollo and Nimrod over the years. And they had been worshiping Eostre, nad that's where you get the word Easter. She was the goddess of reproduction and fertility, and ---- rabbit and the chicken. Now all that was paganism. And the church said bring it on.

When the Devil saw he couldn't kill the church, he joined the church. You know the old adage, if you can't beat them join them. And when the Devil came in. the church developed into the apostate church. And many people wouldn't go along with this. They were branded as heretics. And the church began to kill people by hundreds of thousands, because they would not go along with all these pagan rites and festivals. Great arguments developed, certain arms of the church split up. And let me tell you something good about Black folks. The Ethiopians as a nation refused to go along with this and the Sabbath was preserved in the lands of Ethiopia, where it was not preserved anywhere else during the dark ages. Amen!

II. PAPAL ROME.

Now, all these came into the church. And the church developed from PAGAN Rome into PAPAL Rome, or the Papacy.

Revelation 14:12 says at the close of this wickedness, a company will be left, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. So these with the mark of hte beast cannot be commandment keepers.