



Service times:

9:00am - Blended Worship
Livestreaming
Find link on Facebook or
www.willrogersumc.org
10:15am - Sunday School

July 10, 2020 ~ Will Rogers United Methodist Church

H O L Y S P I R I T W E E K E N D
WORSHIP WITH

WITH
BRAD
CLIMER

Love
Poured
Out

GEORGE
THOMAS

DANETTE
DILLON

WILL ROGERS
UNITED METHODIST

J U L Y 1 7 - 1 9 , 2 0 2 0
F R I & S A T @ 7 P M S U N @ 9 A M
L I V E S T R E A M @ W I L L R O G E R S U M C . O R G

When we experience God's love, we come to understand in a powerful way how much God loves us. And that love is poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Come and experience God's love through physical and inner healing and be refreashed in your heart and mind.

10 WAYS YOUR KIDS CAN SHARE
GOD'S LOVE
During the Pandemic

Check it out @ www.willrogersumc.org/WRkids



The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.¹⁶ It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads,¹⁷ so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.
Revelation 13:15-17 (NIV)

I sometimes get into trouble when I teach the Book of Revelation. One time when leading a Bible study on Revelation, I had a member of my church threaten to leave because I didn't believe the Bible. I assured her that I did believe the Bible, I just didn't believe the interpretation that has pervaded the US society was the correct interpretation.

Once again, I find myself at odds with the cultural interpretation of Revelation. Many social media posts are equating the wearing of facial masks in public due to COVID-19 as a prelude to a future vaccine for the disease being a cover for receiving the "mark of the beast" mentioned in Revelation 13. And many of those posts contain references to violent action the person is willing to take to prevent this along with profanity even though violence and profanity are not among the fruit of the Spirit.

So, what do I believe the "mark of the beast" is if it's not a part of some government conspiracy related to COVID-19 and computer microchips? I'm glad you asked.

First a reminder about Biblical interpretation overall. Scripture has both meaning and significance. The meaning of a text is what it meant to the original intended audience. And the important thing to remember is that a text cannot mean something today that it did not mean to the original hearers and readers. We cannot add something to the text that the first audience would not understand.

Once we have done our homework in the historical and societal contexts that a Bible text first had meaning, we are ready to come to the significance of that text. Unlike the meaning, the significance of a text will be different for us today than to the original hearers. But the modern significance of a text cannot be contrary to the original meaning.

With that in mind, I will spend the remaining space I have looking at the meaning of "mark" and in the next issue I will look at the significance of that meaning for us today.

The Greek word in Revelation for "mark" is charagma. It's first meaning is that of a stamp or imprinted mark such as that used to brand a horse. The Greek cavalry was known to brand their horses to identify ownership or breeding.

In Acts 17:29 we find a second meaning. Here, charagma is translated as "image" in reference to an idol made by human skill. The notes for this verse in the NET Bible also adds that the word can mean "likeness." And these two words remind us of Genesis 1:26 and how God set out to make human beings in his image and likeness. But in Acts, it refers to a false image or likeness that people have turned to worship.

And with these two definitions we come to the meaning of the text. The first readers would have understood the word "mark" to be an image or likeness as a brand of ownership. This understanding fits the larger context of Revelation 13. The verses leading into Revelation 13:15-17 are about the worship of the dragon and the beast of the sea (Revelation 13:1-10). And since you become what you worship, the "mark of the beast" is the image or likeness being branded onto those who worship the beast. It is the spiritual opposite of those who have received the seal of God (Revelation 7; 14:1-5).

Next week we will explore the significance of this meaning.

In His Grace

Pastor Brian

Online giving anytime from your smart phone. Simply scan the image or go to www.willrogersumc.org and locate the online giving page.





Catch-22

The next time you fly on a commercial airline, check out the safety instruction card that is usually found in the seat pocket in front of you. Here's what one United Airlines card said:



If you are sitting in an exit row and you cannot understand this card or cannot see well enough to follow these instructions, please tell a crew member.

Obviously, those directions present a slight problem. If people can't understand the card or see the instructions, how can they be expected to tell a crewmember about it? Sounds like a Catch-22.

Believe it or not, the Bible is a lot like that safety instruction card. Many people read Scripture without understanding it. It makes absolutely no sense to them—not because they lack eyesight or reading ability, but because they lack faith. As Paul wrote, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18).

In other words, unless you have faith, you won't understand the Bible. But unless you understand the Bible, you won't have faith. Sounds like another Catch-22.

That's why we have the Holy Spirit. When we come to the Bible with a willingness to learn, God sends his Holy Spirit to reveal what it is saying—even “the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10). Whenever you study God's Word with an open heart, the Holy Spirit helps you understand it and grow stronger in your faith.

God also uses people like us to explain the Bible to unbelievers. When someone tells you they don't understand the Bible, that's like an airline passenger telling a flight attendant they don't understand the safety instruction card. It's up to us to make it clear.

Join us for the Holy Spirit Weekend, July 17-19!

Pastor Greg



THOUGHTS TO PONDER #3:

“There Is A Way” by Helen Rush

Let us not be distressed or frightened by the undesirable circumstances or events that seem to crowd into our days but let us endeavor to keep an unwavering faith that there is a way to overcome every obstacle.

If we allow ourselves to become tense with anxiety and worry we are incapable of receiving the help necessary to combat the problems that arise.

It is in making the right use of the present moment by accepting proper guidance and applying spiritual principles as they are revealed to us that lifts us above the events and conditions that cause concern.

Steve

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15am
in the Well.....



MASK & SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED

NO SUNDAY EVENING YOUTH FOR THE MONTH OF JULY!!!!

July 15th - Youth 5:30-7:30p July 22nd - Youth 5:30-7:30p
July 29th - Youth 5:30-7:30p

Join us in person this Sunday @ 9:00am
or online Livestreaming.
Find the link on Facebook or our website.

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