

When a loved one takes the Mark of the Beast

It is a tragic event when anyone decides to take the Mark of the Beast, especially a loved one. Basically, the closer a person is emotionally, the greater the grieving will be for the follower of Jesus Christ who resists the Mark. But we cannot keep grieving all the time. It is not healthy to grieve too long. Life must go on.

Dealing with most marked loved ones

For most marked loved ones, we simply continue to love and serve them and drop the subject, regardless of their profession of faith, because their choice is irreversible. However, at the same time, it is prudent to not waste too much time on them, because others without the Mark are higher priority. Like in medical triage, it is both compassionate and pleasing to God to focus energies on the people who need our help and can be saved. The Lord Jesus clearly taught that the tables need to be filled for His wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:16-24). This means going out to find people who have not taken the Mark and need salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dealing with a marked spouse

Sadly, in a marriage relationship the dynamics will become more and more difficult. Basically, it is being unequally yoked with an unbeliever (2 Cor. 6:14-18), even if the spouse still professes to be a Christian.

It can also be said that the spouse is guilty of idolatry. In normal cases of wilful sin, like idolatry, adultery and abuse, the prescribed action is to exercise church discipline (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14). The purpose is always redemptive, i.e., to help the person repent and be restored to a proper relationship with God.

But when a spouse has taken the Mark, redemption is no longer possible. The only practical solution is to quietly treat him or her as an unbelieving spouse, as the Apostle Paul prescribed in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. This teaching is in addition to what the Lord Jesus taught regarding marriage:

“If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are consecrated. But if the unbeliever separates, let him separate. In such cases the brother or the sister is not enslaved, but God has called us to peace.”

Therefore, a person whose spouse who took the Mark of the Beast should prepare mentally and emotionally for the day when the spouse might want to separate. Micah 7:5 warns of this situation:

“Do not trust in a friend. Do not put your confidence in a companion. Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom.”

Dealing with unmarked loved ones

Furthermore, we should not assume that all of our loved ones who have resisted the Mark so far will continue. We must continually pray for them, love them, serve them and share truth with them. We also need to pray for ourselves, because we all must endure to the end, and only God can help us to do that!

“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and that you will be able to stand before the Son of Man!” (Luke 21:36)

“Take care, brothers, that there not be an evil, unbelieving heart in any of you, so as to go away from the living God. Instead, exhort yourselves every day, while it is called ‘today’, so that none of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become associates of the Messiah, if, that is, we hold fast the beginning of the endeavour firm to the end, as it is still being said, “Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” (Hebrews 3:12-15)

“Therefore, brothers, be patient until the coming of the Lord. Consider how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and later rains. You also be patient. Keep your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is approaching!” (James 5:7,8)

70 x 7 = 490

Recall that the time of purification for God’s people is 490 years, and the final 3 ½ may start soon (Daniel 9:24-27). Forgiving people during this time is an important part of the process, even if it means forgiving people 490 times (Matthew 18:21-35). It is no coincidence that the process of purification and the extent of forgiveness are both tied to the number 490. The good news is that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back soon! This will pass!