

Msg #130 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

“Right Hand, Left Hand”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about a concept in Scripture which you very seldom, if ever, hear about in church. I'd like to talk to you about your right hand. In Scripture the right hand is recognized as the hand of authority. It is the hand which is used most often, and it is dominant over the left-hand. The exception to this is for left-handed people. However, most people are right-handed. The actual description in the original Bible language indicates there is a dominant side of the body and also a subordinate side of the body. In Scripture your right hand is considered to be dominant over your left hand.

Now, before we get too far into this, just think of it this way. If you are a right-handed person, and someone offers something to you, chances are you will reach out with your right hand to take it. Whenever you pick up a small object, you will most likely use your right hand. When you pick up a pen or pencil to write, you will use your right hand because humans are generally right hand dominant. Also, your right hand is stronger than your left hand. There are some exceptions to this, but generally I think you can see that this is the way it works.

So, now that you have this information you might say to me, “so what, Randy, what’s that got to do with the Bible?” Well, this is one of those symbolic representations that the Bible gives in order to give understanding to God’s people. Jesus continually used parables as he taught the people, but not everyone understands parables. Parables are meant to be useful to those people who have eyes to see and ears to hear. As you grow in faith, and as God teaches you line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, you grow in understanding. The more you understand of God, the easier it becomes to understand parables and symbolic form in the Bible. The concept of right hand and left hand, once you begin to understand it, helps you to

understand some of the teachings that Jesus gave, and also helps you to understand some of the prophecy the Bible gives. Let me give you an example.

Matthew 6:3 says, “But when you do alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand does.” Now, first of all, don’t make the mistake of thinking that Jesus didn’t know what he was really saying. Nothing Jesus ever said was by mistake. Every time Jesus said something, he said it just the way he said it for a very specific reason. Now, it’s real easy to skim over this verse and miss what Jesus was trying to tell us. People who skim over the Bible miss a lot of things. When you read your Bible, just do it the best you can, but try real hard not to skim over the surface. Remember, it’s beneath the surface where you find the meat. The milk of the word is on the surface, but the real meat of God’s word takes some digging.

Now, Jesus said that when we give offerings, we are supposed to keep the left hand out of it. Jesus was saying that the left hand should not be involved in the giving, but that giving should be done solely by the right hand. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to realize that left hands do not have a brain of their own. So, Jesus wasn’t suggesting that the right-hand could keep a secret, or that the left hand had to be held behind your back when you give money to the Lord. What he was trying to tell us is that the right-hand is the hand that deals with matters of the heart and the left-hand is the hand that deals with matters of the flesh.

This concept is referred to by King Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes 10:2 says, “A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart is at his left.” Now, this might seem confusing, but what King Solomon was trying to say was that the right hand is that hand which is the dominant hand, and it is therefore the hand which usually takes. The left hand is a supportive hand, and takes a subordinate role in relation to the right hand. Therefore, if you wanted to properly provide for your heart, which is scripturally symbolic of the spiritual things of God, you would assign that task to your right hand. Your heart is the most important part of you. Yes, your fleshly man needs to be fed and clothed, but your flesh is not going to inherit the kingdom of God. It is your born-again spirit man, that part of you that is deep in your heart, that is going to be part of God’s eternal kingdom. Therefore, it is your heart that must be provided for at all costs. Your flesh is only needed to carry you about on this earth for a few years until you reach that point where your spirit man goes on into eternity. So, as Solomon said, a wise man will provide for his heart with the hand that is the strong hand, the hand that most usually takes. He will use his left hand to provide for his flesh because his flesh is not as important as his heart. He said that only a fool would be foolish enough to let his heart rely on the weaker hand. In essence, Solomon was giving words of wisdom by indicating that the things of your heart should be of the utmost importance, and your flesh should be less important. Your strong right hand should not be busy with the things of this world, but with heavenly things.

You see, the heart is considered to be the seat of spiritual emotions. It is where righteousness should abide. As the apostle Paul said in Romans, “In my flesh dwells no good thing.” The flesh is sinful, for it is in our flesh that sin finds it’s occasion. Matthew 12:35 says, “A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, brings forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil

treasure, brings forth evil things.” This is why we must guard our hearts. Solomon’s verse tells us in symbolic form that the right hand must be assigned to the heart because the right hand is strongest. If the right hand, the dominant hand, is assigned to the flesh, and the left hand, the weaker hand, is assigned to the heart, then the flesh will be strong and the heart will be weak.

Now, let’s take a look again at the statement Jesus made about not letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing. When Jesus spoke this simple concept in parable form, he was actually saying that it was the right hand that is considered to be connected with the good spiritual things of God, and it was the left hand that is considered to be connected with the evil things of the flesh. The right hand is connected with heart things, and the left hand is connected with fleshly things.

So, now, see if you can comprehend this. When you give an offering to the Lord, it should be from a pure motive of love for God, and not for any other reason. Because the Bible associates the left hand with carnal things, therefore Jesus was saying that if your left hand, the hand that is equated with your fleshly man, was to get involved in your giving, then essentially your gift would be corrupted. Instead of giving out of a pure motive of love for God, you might be giving just to be seen by others. In other words, if your left hand is involved, then your fleshly man is involved. Your motive of giving might not be for love of God but for love of self. You might like to give just so people will look at you and think you’re special.

In Matthew 6:2 we read of how the hypocrites would have trumpets sound before them as they made their way into the synagogues and gave offerings. The previous verse quotes Jesus as saying, “Take heed that you do not give alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” Now, let’s face it. Giving tithes or offerings, and doing it in order to draw attention to yourself, is just plain old pride. Jesus is saying that the left hand is symbolic of the flesh. Therefore, he is saying that when you give money, keep your flesh out of it.

But you know, pride of life is a very strong fleshly temptation. Sometimes we Christians get to the place where we realize the need for money for the Lord’s work. So then we start giving to the church and to people who are in need. Then along comes Satan who sees that he has a problem. As the devil looks the situation over, he realizes that this person who is giving can’t be stopped. So, Satan uses another tactic. Instead of trying to stop the person from giving, he tempts them with pride of life, and then the person still gives, but instead of giving out of a pure love for God, he begins to give out of fleshly reasons, to puff himself up. People around this person will start to hear things in his conversation like, “Yeah, I gave a \$1000 to this cause, and I gave \$500 to that cause, and I gave more than \$30,000 to the church last year.” But, you know, it doesn’t make a bit of difference how much money he gave, because it isn’t how much you give, but how much you are giving from your heart. Once again, Jesus emphasized this by the statement he made concerning the widow and the two mites she put into the treasury. He said that the two mites, which were equal to about half a cent, was actually a greater sum than what all the other big shots had put in together.

Now, I'm sure you've heard the story of the widow's two mites before. That's a very popular sermon text. But most importantly I'd like you to recognize not just that giving has to be from the heart, but that it is the right hand and the left hand that represent the heart and the flesh respectively. When you realize that the right hand of a man is the hand that most often takes because it is the dominant hand, then you move one step closer to understanding that this same concept of the right hand taking more often than the left hand is central to understanding the prophetic scriptures in Revelation concerning the mark of the beast. Let me explain what I mean. You may not be able to comprehend this, but give it a try.

In Revelation 13 it talks about people being marked as belonging to Satan. This mark, as most Christians are aware of, is put in either the forehead or in the right hand. Now, to be designated as belonging to Satan is of course the ultimate destruction. But the point I want you to see is that some people are marked in their foreheads, but others in the right hand. It is the right hand that I want you to focus on today. As I previously said, it is the right hand that is the dominant hand, and it is the right hand that usually is the hand that takes. Therefore, the essence of what Revelation 13 is referring to is this. Now, listen carefully, and I'll try to go slow so that you won't get lost in the shuffle.

What the apostle John is saying in Revelation 13, is that first of all there are two places you can be marked with the mark of Satan. The one place is the forehead, and the other place is the right hand. Notice, if you will, that it isn't just on a hand, but the right hand. The right hand is the hand that usually takes. Now, here's the significance of the two places. The forehead is just simply the location for designating those individuals who make a conscious choice. Whether someone accepts or rejects Jesus Christ as Savior, they will be marked in the forehead with either a mark of ownership by Satan or a mark of ownership by Jesus. In scripture the forehead was always used to designate the people of God in order to separate them from the wicked. In Revelation 13, it is the wicked people of earth who receive the mark of Satan in their foreheads. Just as Christians consciously accept Jesus Christ, there are those who consciously reject Jesus Christ. The forehead is representative of a conscious decision of the mind.

But now, even though we know there will be both believers and non-believers in this world, and that the non-believers will be designated as belonging to Satan and the believers designated as belonging to God, there is a third group on earth. This is the group of people who claim to be Christians, but aren't really Christians at all. Jesus said in Matthew, chapter 7, that in the day that he comes again in the clouds of heaven there will be many people who will claim to be Christians. They will claim that they believe in Jesus Christ. They may even claim to have prophesied in the name of Jesus, or claimed to have done many wonderful works in his name. But Jesus will answer them and say, "Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you."

This is the ultimate defeat of so-called Christians. This is the calamity for all those people who claim to be Christians but who love the world and the things in the world instead of loving God and the heavenly things above. The churches are full of people who claim to have accepted Jesus

Christ as Lord, but who don't actually make Jesus Lord of their life. They say they love God, and they say that their affections are set on things above, and not on things of the earth, but when it comes right down to the bottom line, their right hands tell the actual story.

Now, listen carefully. See if you can get this. Many people claim to believe in Jesus Christ, and they claim to accept God's word as truth, and they claim Jesus Christ to be their Lord, but they don't act like it. Here, let me read a scripture. It is Colossians 3, verses 1-2. Listen closely to this. It says, "If you, then, are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

Now, did you get this. It says that if you truly are risen with Christ, then you should seek those things which are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God. It says to set your affection on things there in the heavenlies, and not on the things of this earth. But for those who falsely claim to be Christians, this is exactly what they are doing. They are setting their affection on things on this earth instead of on things above.

Let me read one more scripture which also goes along with this concept. It is Galatians 6:7-8. It says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap. 8 For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Do you see this? If you call yourself a Christian, but you have more affection for the things of this world than you do for Godly things, then you are a false Christian. If you claim to be saved, but your true desires are for fleshly things, then, as it said in verse 7, God is not mocked. Whatever you're sowing to yourself, you will reap. If you're sowing seeds of worldliness, then you will reap the world. If you sow seeds into the kingdom of heaven, then you will reap eternal life. There definitely are those who make a conscious decision for Christ, and there definitely are those who make a conscious decision to reject Christ. But, there are also that third group of people who will claim to be Christians, but who will actually be making an unconscious decision to serve Satan. These people think they are Christians, but as Jesus says, he never knew them. And the way these people are recognized for what they truly are is by how their hand takes. If a person truly loves Jesus Christ, then they will take strongly of heavenly things. But, if they truly love the world, then they will take strongly of worldly things. God is not mocked. He knows what is really in the heart of a man when he sees what he is taking for himself everyday. If the person truly loves God, then he will surround himself with things which are heavenly in nature. But, if the person doesn't really love God, but actually loves the world more than he loves God, then it can't be hidden. All God has to do is to look at all the things that the person has surrounded himself with. If a person continually takes of worldly things, and surrounds himself with the delicacies of earth, if the life of the person is filled with earth's baubles and trinkets, then there's no question. When the dominant hand has stopped taking the things which make the heart strong, and have started to take things to stimulate the flesh, then the only judgment left is that the person belongs to Satan. The mark they receive is not given in the forehead, because it isn't really a conscious decision. The mark is given in the right hand, because it is the dominant right hand that has demonstrated that the flesh is more important than God.

You know, through the years the teachers of prophecy have continually changed their interpretation of what the mark of the beast really was. At first it was just an outward mark or tattoo of some kind in the skin. Then as technology came along, the prophecy teachers began to teach a different kind of mark. Some people thought that the invention of the telephone was the mark of the beast. Some thought that it would be a bar code. Then some taught that it would be a mark which showed up with ultraviolet light. Then some taught that it would be something under the skin which could be read electronically. Then there were those who thought it would be a silicone implant, and of course those who taught that it would be a computer chip. But, none of these correspond to the scriptures. In scripture the mark is given to Christians in their foreheads by angels. I doubt that God's angels use computer chips. And, besides, whether you belong to God or belong to Satan isn't determined by whether someone captures you and forces you to be implanted with a computer chip. As Romans 10:10 says, it is with the heart that man believes unto salvation. Your heart will determine how you will be marked.

Revelation 13 is prophetic. It is filled with symbolic imagery. It cannot be reduced to mechanical means. Therefore, we must take an honest look at the concept of both Christians and non-Christians being marked. And, just as God's people are marked as belonging to God, Satan's people are marked as belonging to Satan. You yourself will make that choice, but some of you who are listening may find that the designating mark you receive may not be in your forehead, but will be found in your right hand. In this case, it will be the right hand which will clearly demonstrate which side of the fence you're on. But, you see, this is not such a huge mystery. All you really have to do to see which mark you are going to get, is to look around you and see where your affections are placed. If your strongest hand has been taking things for your heart, then you're in good shape. But if your strongest hand has been taking things for your flesh, and you are surrounded with the delights of this world, then, as Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 10:2, you are a fool.