

# Marked

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## Sermon Synopsis

This episode of World Impact, filmed on the campus of Oral Roberts University, explores what it means to be truly marked by the presence of God. Dr. Billy Wilson begins by reflecting on the spiritual atmosphere at ORU—shaped by prayer, worship, and longing for God—as the backdrop for a teaching that asks believers to consider whether their lives carry the stamp of God’s presence or the emptiness of His absence.

The message draws deeply from Scripture, beginning with Ezekiel 9, where God instructs that a mark be placed on those who grieve over sin, signaling His favor and protection amid judgment. This theme of God’s presence marking His people continues through Moses in Exodus 33–34, where intimate encounters with God leave Moses’ face radiant. Jacob’s wrestling with God, resulting in his new identity as Israel, illustrates how an encounter with God can change both destiny and character. In the New Testament, Stephen’s shining face and the boldness of the apostles further demonstrate how the Spirit’s presence is visibly evident in those who walk with God.

Dr. Wilson contrasts this divine mark with biblical examples of absence. Cain, condemned to wander after killing Abel, symbolizes the restlessness and loss of purpose that comes from separation from God. Samson, who did not realize when God’s presence left him, serves as a sobering reminder that outward appearances can mask spiritual emptiness. These stories form a call to self-examination: Do our lives reveal God’s transforming presence, or do we carry the marks of wandering without Him? Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 3 emphasize that through Christ, the veil is removed, and believers are invited into ongoing transformation that reflects God’s glory.

The sermon is interwoven with testimonies, including Dr. Wilson's own story of being transformed from rebellion to a Spirit-filled life. He emphasizes that God's presence renews, empowers, and equips believers to live with clarity of purpose and to influence the world around them. Student accounts of prayer and worship on campus add a personal dimension, illustrating that the reality of God's nearness is not confined to biblical times but is available now to all who seek Him.

At its core, the message is an invitation to pursue intimacy with God and to live so deeply in His presence that His mark becomes unmistakable in daily life. It challenges viewers to surrender fully, trust God's transforming power, and embrace the privilege of being set apart as vessels of His glory.

## Sermon Highlights

- Being marked by God's presence is a divine distinction that brings rest, clarity, and purpose as seen in Moses' radiating face after meeting God face to face (Exodus 33-34).
- God actively marks those who repent and seek Him, preserving them from judgment, exemplified by the man clothed in linen marking the repentant in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 9).
- An encounter with God's presence transforms lives profoundly, as demonstrated by Jacob (Israel) whose wrestling with God changed his name, person, and posture permanently (Genesis 32).
- Living outside God's presence leads to restlessness, aimlessness, and judgment, portrayed by Cain's exile marked by God's absence and labeled as a restless wanderer (Genesis 4).
- Believers are called to remove veils that hide the fading glory of God in their lives and to live transparently, enjoying face-to-face intimacy with God that leads to transformation and shining like the Messiah (2 Corinthians 3:13-17).

## Scripture Verses

### Ezekiel 9:3-4

"Now the glory of the God of Israel went up above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the Lord called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side and said to him, 'Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it.'"

### Exodus 33:14-16

"The Lord replied, 'My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' Then Moses said to him, 'If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?'"

#### Exodus 34:34-35

"But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would remove the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see that Moses' face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord."

#### Genesis 28:12-19 (summarized)

Jacob dreamed of a ladder resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, with angels going up and down on it. When he awoke, he declared, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it.' He called the place Bethel, meaning 'House of God.'

#### Genesis 32:24-30 (summarized and paraphrased)

Jacob wrestled with a man until daybreak. When the man asked to be let go, Jacob refused unless blessed. The man changed Jacob's name to Israel, meaning 'he struggles with God,' because he had struggled with God and prevailed. Jacob said, 'I have seen God face to face, yet my life is preserved,' and named the place Peniel.

#### Genesis 4:14-15

'Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.' Then the Lord said to him, 'Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.' Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.'

#### Genesis 4:16

So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

#### 2 Corinthians 3:13-18

"Unlike Moses, we have nothing to hide. Everything is out in the open with us. He wore a veil so the children of Israel would not notice that the glory was fading away—and they didn't notice. They didn't notice it then and they don't notice it now. Even today when the old covenant is read, the veil remains unlifted because only in Christ is it taken away. Whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is removed, and there they behold the Lord face to face. And with unveiled faces we all reflect the Lord's glory, being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

#### James 4:8

"Come near to God and he will come near to you."

#### Jeremiah 29:13

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

## Quotes

- You can be marked by God's presence or marked by God's absence, and you choose which it will be. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- Your presence with us is our distinguishing characteristic. It is the thing that makes us different, identifiable as your people. - Dr. Billy Wilson
- When you really encounter God, He will change your life. - Dr. Billy Wilson

# Bible Study

## Objectives

- Understand the difference between being marked by God's presence and by His absence.
- Recognize God's desire to mark His people with His glory and presence.
- Reflect on biblical examples of God's marking—Moses, Jacob (Israel), Stephen, Cain.
- Examine the personal impact of being marked by God's presence through intimacy and repentance.
- Encourage renewed commitment to face-to-face relationship with God to experience His transformative presence.

## Reading and Reflections

- Ezekiel 9:3-6—to see God's angel marking those who mourn over sin in Jerusalem to save them.
- Exodus 33:14-16—Moses' plea for God's presence as distinguishing sign among peoples.
- Exodus 34:29-35—Moses' radiant face reflecting God's glory after intimate communion.
- Genesis 32:22-31—Jacob wrestles with God, is renamed Israel, and marked physically by a limp.
- Genesis 4:1-16—Cain's rejection by God, murder of Abel, and being marked as a restless wanderer.
- 2 Corinthians 3:13-17—Paul explains the fading of the veil and the freedom in face-to-face intimacy with God.

## Key Observations

- God actively marks those who sincerely seek Him and grieve over sin with His presence and protection.
- Being with God changes reputation, identity, and direction—as with Jacob becoming Israel and Moses' radiant face.
- God's presence brings rest, clarity, purpose, and distinction from the world.
- Absence of God's presence results in aimless wandering, restlessness, and lack of purpose, exemplified by Cain's story.
- A face-to-face relationship with God requires intentionality, repentance, and continual renewal.
- Human attempts to hide fading glory (veil) reveal the need for authentic restoration in God's presence.
- God's presence is powerful and perceptible, changing environments even without words, like Smith Wigglesworth's story.

## Personal Reflections

- Am I aware of the presence of God in my daily life, or have I grown accustomed to His absence?
- Where in my life might I need to remove the veil, the facades, or distractions hiding my true relationship with God?
- Like Jacob, am I wrestling with God for a deeper blessing and transformation in my life?
- Have I experienced God's marking in how my life and reputation reflect His glory?
- What areas cause restlessness and wandering, indicating I may be outside the full experience of God's presence?
- How can I be more disciplined, genuine, and intentional in seeking God's presence this week?

## Lessons for Daily Life

- Pursue God's presence as your primary distinguishing mark, beyond achievements or status.
- Be honest in repentance to invite God's protective and transformative mark on your life.
- Own the spiritual changes God is making in you, even if they are uncomfortable, like Jacob's limp.
- Recognize that authentic spiritual life requires continual renewal—don't allow your glory to fade.
- Allow God's presence to shape how you interact with others—letting your life witness without words.
- Guard against becoming a restless wanderer by staying close to God's presence.

## Practical Applications

- Set aside dedicated time daily for face-to-face communion with God: prayer, Scripture meditation, worship.
- Identify and remove veils—patterns or behaviors that mask your true spiritual condition.
- Begin a journal noting evidences of God's presence and moments when you feel marked by His glory.
- Engage in corporate worship and prayer fervently, like the prayer sets at Oral Roberts University, to foster God's presence.
- Seek accountability or fellowship with others longing for God's presence to encourage each other.
- Be intentional about responding to God's conviction promptly and sincerely.

## Challenges for the Week

- Daily confess areas of sin and ask God to mark you with His holy presence.
- Remove one 'veil' in your life that keeps you from being transparent with God or others.

- Spend at least 15 minutes each day in uninterrupted prayer seeking God's intimate presence.
- Witness or share your personal story of transformation by God's presence with someone this week.
- Be alert for God's presence around you in unexpected places and moments—pause to worship.
- Reflect on whether your life reflects brightness and glory or restlessness and wandering.

## Further Study

- Study the life of Moses in Exodus 32-34 to understand the direct effects of God's presence.
- Reflect on Jacob's life narrative in Genesis 28 and 32, focusing on encounters with God.
- Explore the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 for insights on sin's consequences and separation from God.
- Read 2 Corinthians 3 for Paul's teaching about the veil and the Spirit's transforming work.
- Examine the ministry of Stephen in Acts 6-7 for an example of life marked by God's glory.
- Explore teachings on the Shekinah glory and God's presence throughout the Old and New Testaments.

## Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You that Your presence is not distant but desires to rest upon us and mark our lives with Your glory. Lord, help us to seek You earnestly and to be marked by Your presence, not by absence. Remove every veil that hides us from Your face. Just as You were with Moses, Jacob, and Your faithful servants, be with us today. Fill us anew with Your Holy Spirit that we may walk boldly, shining with Your radiance, breaking chains, and becoming world changers for Your kingdom. Father, take us out of the land of wandering and give us clear purpose, peace, and intimacy with You. May our lives be testimonies of Your transforming power, and may we be vessels of Your love and light in a world desperate for You. In Jesus' mighty name we pray, Amen.

# Daily Devotionals

## Day 1

### Scripture Verse

Ezekiel 9:3-4 (NIV): "Now the glory of the God of Israel went up above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the Lord called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side and said to him, 'Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it.'"

### Reflection

Have you ever wondered what it means to be marked by God? The prophet Ezekiel reveals a profound truth—God marks those who grieve over sin, those who repent and seek Him earnestly. This mark is not merely a physical sign but symbolizes God's favor and protection. It sets them apart amidst a world engulfed in judgment and decay. In our daily lives, being marked by God's presence means carrying His glory visibly through our actions, attitudes, and inner peace. Just as at Oral Roberts University, where the campus is alive with prayer and worship, the presence of God becomes tangible to all who enter. This is not happenstance; it is the fruit of intentional seeking, fervent prayer, and a hunger for fellowship with God. Consider Moses, who pleaded with God in Exodus 33:15-16 that God's presence must accompany the people or they would not proceed. Moses understood that God's presence distinguishes God's people from all others. When God's presence rested on him, his face shone with radiant glory, signaling to the Israelites that God's favor was upon him—a visible mark of spiritual intimacy. Like Moses, you too can be marked by this divine presence. It is not by physical strength or human effort but by a surrendered heart longing for God's nearness. Just as Jacob wrestled with God at Jabbok (Genesis 32), holding on until he was blessed and transformed, our spiritual wrestling and persistence lead us to a face-to-face encounter with God that changes us forever. After that encounter, Jacob's very identity changed; he limped with a wound that reminded him of the divine touch. Today, ask yourself: Are you marked by God's presence, allowing His glory to shine through you, or are you wandering aimlessly, like Cain who was marked by God's absence? The world is full of distractions, busyness, and pain that can pull us away from God's intimacy. Yet we have the invitation to seek Him wholeheartedly and be marked for His glory. Reflect on your own life—where do you sense God's presence? What steps can you take to cultivate a deeper, more radiant relationship with Him? Remember, God's presence is not distant; it is a living, breathing relationship that can transform you from the inside out and make you a light in the darkness.

### Prayer

Lord, mark me with Your glorious presence. Help me to grieve over my sin, seek You earnestly, and be transformed by Your intimate nearness. May Your radiant glory shine through me and set me apart as Your beloved child. Amen.

## Day 2

### Scripture Verse

Exodus 34:29-30 (NIV): "But whenever Moses entered the Lord's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord."

### Reflection

There is a powerful story in the life of Moses about being changed by God's presence so deeply that even his face became radiant. Imagine that—an ordinary man, with flaws and fears, transformed so profoundly by God's intimacy that it shone visibly to all. But Moses also had to put on a veil, because the brightness of that divine encounter was astounding and, for some, intimidating. I invite you to reflect on the veil in your own life. What are the things that hide the radiant glory God wants to reveal through you? Perhaps it is fear, shame, or a broken past. It could be busyness, distractions, or the facade you put up so others won't see your true struggles. Just like Moses, the veil can hide not only God's glory but also the fading of that glory when we drift from Him. The apostle Paul speaks to this in 2 Corinthians 3:13-17, reminding us that unlike Moses, we have no need to hide behind veils. When we turn to God fully, the veil is removed and we see Him face to face, allowing us to be transformed into His likeness. This transformation is not instant but progressive; as we seek God, His glory brightens our lives gradually, reshaping us into reflections of Christ Himself. Consider the story of Smith Wigglesworth, a man so filled with God's presence that people felt convicted of their sin simply by being near him—even without a word from him. His radiant life changed the atmosphere wherever he went. This kind of proximity to God, this marked presence, is available to you today. How does your life reflect God's presence? Are you hiding behind a veil, or stepping out into the light of God's glory, letting Him shape your character and purpose? The choice is yours. Like the students at Oral Roberts University who pray fervently, you too can cultivate a daily discipline of intimacy with God, drawing near so He draws near to you. Let today be a moment to lift your veil, to allow God's transforming presence to shine brightly through you, illuminating your identity as His beloved and calling you to a life set apart for His glory.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, remove every veil that hides Your glory in my life. Help me to live openly in Your presence, transformed daily into the image of Christ. Let my life reflect Your radiant love and truth. Amen.



## Day 3

### Scripture Verse

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 (NIV): "But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

### Reflection

Freedom. Transformation. Glory. These are the gifts that come when the veil is removed and we stand face-to-face with the Lord. This scripture captures the essence of what it means to be marked by God's presence in our 21st-century lives. Many people wander in the darkness, feel restless, or live as aimless wanderers like Cain, who was marked by God's absence and banished to the land of Nod—a place of wandering and aimlessness. But God's desire is for us to walk in His presence, marked by purpose, peace, and divine direction. In real life, this often looks like people who are filled with the Holy Spirit radiating joy and peace despite challenges. Think of someone you know whose life naturally uplifts others simply by their presence—like a good friend who brings warmth and calmness into the room. Dr. Billy Wilson shared how God transformed his life from rebellion to leadership, marked by God's presence so unmistakably that his reputation changed completely. This is the fruit of intimacy with God, which includes moments of surrender, prayer, and seeking His face earnestly. Just as the students at ORU experience the tangible presence of God through continuous prayer, you too can live after this pattern. Freedom comes when we no longer depend on our own works but rest in the completed work of Jesus—the Lamb whose blood was shed to cleanse us. The presence of God empowers us to become world changers, not merely surviving but thriving in the purpose He has for us. How about today? Have you experienced this freedom? Are you contemplating God's glory with an unveiled face, allowing Him to transform you continuously? Begin each day seeking God's presence intentionally—through prayer, worship, and reading Scripture—and watch how He marks your life, setting you apart as a vessel of His glory. Let your life be a bright light in a dark world, a testimony that God's presence is not just a concept but a reality to walk in daily.

### Prayer

Spirit of the Lord, remove every veil and fill me with Your freedom. Transform me daily into the image of Christ so I may reflect Your glory and purpose. Empower me to be marked by Your presence and to be a light in this world. Amen.

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