

Are Certain Hand Signs Satanic?

Tim Conway | *illbehonest.com*

Question: This one is from (unintelligible). "In my recent times, I've been hearing about certain hand signals/gestures as being satanic. For example, in rock music rock stars stick their hands up in the air putting both their index finger and their pinky like Spider Man, shooting webs. What I'm asking is that do hand signals really show satanic things and that this should be taken seriously? Or is this really just a dumb superstition that people are making up about? I want to know what hand signs should be taken seriously, or is it that this whole hand signals/gestures really is just something stupid? Please let me know which one it is because I'm really confused about this situation."

Discussion:

Tim: Look. Here's the thing about hand signals. I can do something with my hand right now that would be offensive to you all, and you all could probably imagine what it is. I could do this. It communicates something to you. I could do this. Am I satanic? Am I a rock music guy? Or am I a UT Austin fan? But the thing is, my understanding is people that are Masons have a secret signal. One of the things you have to think about is this: He's saying are there meanings behind it. Well, people have said - what is it? Proves I'm part of the Illuminati because every once in a while this happens to come off my gesture?

James: It comes up a lot more than you realize. People have taken it from all your sermons and made a video with tons of clips with you doing it.

Tim: But here's the thing. People say, does it have meaning or is it superstitious? Well, I would say this, I mean nothing by it. Which means, when I do it, I am not communicating anything to you. Now, if you read something into it, which you might from your background or from superstitions you have or something, but here's the thing. There's a text in Titus that I often think about. It says, "To the pure, all things are pure." What does that mean? Think of something that could be seen as bad that for the Christian is actually pure. Can you think of anything that even Scripture itself speaks about? Eating meat offered to idols - to be even more specific. Okay, here's meat that's been offered to a pagan idol. And you can understand how a weak Christian could be affected negatively by that.

But, here comes a strong Christian. You know what? God made that cow. I'm going to sit down. I'm going to eat that steak, and I'm going to praise the Lord. And basically Paul's saying - exactly. The pagan god it was offered to isn't even a god. He's nothing. There may be demons, but it's just nothing. You're free to do it. You see, to the pure, all things are pure. I think we need to apply to our lives. Now look, there are hand gestures that are considered crude and vulgar. Just about every society has some kind of gesture you do with your hands that is totally graphic and insulting. And so, can you think about any texts that talks about your behavior before the Gentiles? Keep it honorable.

Look, as a Christian, if you're in a culture - and this is something you want to be sensitive of when you go to other cultures. If there's something that you can do, like our soldiers went over to Iraq in the beginning. And Muslim women would do this to them. Well, you know what our guys thought. They're happy we're here. Uh, you guys look that one up on the Internet. You'll find out that's not what they were saying to them. So, I mean, you know there's things that happen with the middle finger here. That immediately sends a signal. And if you as a Christian walk around saying, well, to the pure, all things are pure, you're not keeping your conduct exemplary before the Gentiles who are walking around doing that. We want to be sensitive to cultural propriety.

And you know, I remember - anybody know Richard Bennett? Have you ever heard the name? He for years and years was a Catholic priest before he was converted. What I'm doing with my hand right now - have you ever seen priests do that with their hands? He became so accustomed to doing that that he had to undo it because it projected Catholicism, and he didn't want to do that. See, it had a meaning, and he was trying to distance himself from that meaning. If I do that in the pulpit, none of you are going to think anything. Now you might after today. I mean, things have meanings and so it's kind of like eating the meat offered to the idol. You know what? If I got saved out of that pagan religion, and I'd actually been down there in that temple with prostitutes. I had been there. And now somebody's telling me - I'm a Christian and somebody bought meat from there, and I used to eat that meat, and it brings back memories and it was done in devotion to that god and now somebody slaps that on there and tells me - it's kind of like Richard Bennett, and somebody holding their hands like that. That is associated with something from your background that you want to run from. Now to the guy that didn't come from that background, it's not that big a deal. For me to hold my hands like that is not that big a deal. It doesn't mean anything to me. It doesn't mean anything to you most likely. To him, it's very significant and he wants to distance himself. But see, it's all got to do with meaning. It's got to do with the meaning that an individual believes it has or the meaning that a culture might project to something. So, I guess we would just need to be sensitive there. But the reality is, our hands are our hands. And to do some certain thing with them doesn't carry these mysterious signs if I don't mean them to. Just because my hand happens to go a certain way, doesn't mean you should read all sorts of mysterious signs into it. That's crazy. Any other thoughts on that one?

James: So for you, would there be any application, or meaning, is there a place to try to untrain yourself from doing any hand signs in view of a lot of people in the culture taking it a certain way, just like the Richard Bennett thing? I'm just asking the question.

Tim: See, the thing is, even though I come from a background where I was involved in heavy metal and rock music, I never did that. So, it's not like my hands are used to doing that because I used to do that. It's not that. Here's the thing, if when I preach, something I do is a stumbling block, I would rather not do it. My problem is I don't know when I do that. I know when I have my pen out. Sometimes that's even subconscious, but I've watched myself and I think my wife said,

"Oh, I can hear you clicking your pen." Something has happened and it's like, okay, don't bring my pen out because that distracts people. Or one time when I was first preaching, I would bang my ring against the pulpit. Kyle told me, "You know you bang your ring...?" Okay. I'm going to stop doing that because that distracts people. I didn't know it came up as much as you're saying it came up. So, if I could actually think about it, I'd stop doing it. But I don't know I'm doing it. And it's not like pulling a pen out of my pocket. I can't even imagine myself ever doing it. It's all subconscious, so I don't know how I could stop myself from doing it, when I don't even know that I do it.

James: Because you could say hypothetically that a new believer - they may hear a sermon of yours and be helped, and while they're YouTubing your name, they run into these videos saying you're in the Illuminati. They could actually believe that being naive, you know? They've just gotten saved.

Tim: Do you guys notice me doing that from the pulpit?

(from the room) I do, only because I know it's an issue. We've gotten many emails over the years. I hear you, unless you tape your fingers together for a while so you couldn't... Wear mittens. That would be a bigger stumbling block.

Tim: Right. More people would say, "why is he wearing mittens?" Summer in Texas - you hardly want to wear mittens in the pulpit. Anyway, there is a place not to put a stumbling block. You don't want to put a stumbling block in the way of people hearing the truth. So, it wouldn't be like, oh, people just need to get over it. No, it really is a kind of thing where if a preacher is doing something that is distracting, he really should stop doing it. But as far as is there meaning in it, well, there I would say, "to the pure, all things are pure." (incomplete thought) Whatever hand gestures we do, if it's not violating some kind of cultural standard which I just don't know about that one. Obviously, the middle finger is pretty graphic in this [culture]. In other cultures, like in Iraq, that's bad. You get different things. Showing somebody the bottom of your foot in some of those cultures is really bad. We don't even think about it here. But you want to be culturally sensitive. There's no question about it. But no, I'm not sending forth any sign. It doesn't even register. Okay. Any other last thoughts?

(from the room) I guess getting back to her question, is there anything that's being communicated from that group of people to another? Or is there any sign that's trying to be communicated from that group of people? Something along that line?

Tim: "Is the whole hand signal/gestures really just something stupid?" Or, isn't it? Should it be taken seriously?

(from the room) We understand that there are satanic groups. (unintelligible)

Tim: Well, a lot of it has to do with what you're communicating.

(from the room) Are they trying to communicate something to each other?

Tim: There's a lot of hand signals where people are definitely trying - using the middle finger, you're trying to communicate something to somebody. I guess that's the kind of thing - what is it that something communicates? And because whatever I'm doing with my hand does communicate something to enough people that they're actually wondering, it would be best if I didn't do it. It's not like, oh, I've got Christian freedom. It'd be best just to not do it. I can't say I'm going to walk away today and never do it again, because I don't know I'm doing it.

(from the room) People have a habit of judging people by the external. And that's what the satanic group is trying to communicate, and that's what can be often misinterpreted. But if the question is like is all the stuff on YouTube regarding signals and Illuminati stupid? The answer is yes.

Tim: Oh, there's a lot of stupidity in it. There's a lot of people reading into things that are not meant. (unintelligible) It's not like some craving in myself to go back to my rock and roll days. It's not that at all. That's never crossed my mind. And I'm not any big UT fan either. I'm a Michigan fan and I don't know that they have a sign. Okay.