



World Christian Fellowship

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Black or white, no Grey!

Luke 11:14-23.

Luke 11:14-23, *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marvelled. ¹⁵But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." ¹⁶Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. ¹⁸If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. ¹⁹And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. ²²But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armour in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. ²³He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.*

Matthew 12:20-40, Mark 3:20-30, records the same incident.

There are so many religions, philosophies, world views, and theories that the world has concluded that there really is no such thing as absolute truth.

The world has finally reached the pinnacle where we tolerate anything and everything.

We are applauding this grey world in which we live and affirming everyone's right to believe whatever he or she wants to believe. We have abandoned the once precious controlling and motivating conviction that there actually is such a thing as truth.

The mantra of the post-modern world is the whole world is grey. There's no black and white.

Everyone is entitled to his opinion, or her opinion.

Your truth is your truth,

My truth is my truth.

Everybody having the right to believe whatever they want to believe.

We are more than ever comfortable with the notion that this spectrum of concepts is legitimate and beneficial and right, whatever right is.

The world falls into only two categories.

Whatever you may believe, whatever you may think, whatever you may imagine to be your options, everyone in the world falls into one of two categories.

Jesus said it!

V23, *He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.*

You are either with Christ or against Him.

You either are with Him and contributing to His kingdom, or

You are against Him and fighting His kingdom.

Your eternal destiny is determined by which of the two.

There are only two religions in the world.

- Those who are with Christ and
- Those who are against Him.

- Those who are God's and
- Those who are Satan's.

- Those who are in the kingdom of Light, and
- Those who are in the kingdom of darkness.

- ❖ There are those who are righteous and

- ❖ Those who are unrighteous.
- Those who are saints, and
- Those who are sinners.

This is unmistakable, clear, precise, definitive, determinative, and it leaves out no one!

First time that Jesus hinted at this axiomatic reality.

Luke 9:50, *But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side."*

There are only two options in the world.

You are either supportive of the Messiah, supportive of His work and His kingdom or you are against it, and there is no middle ground.

There is no third option.

There is no other category.

There is no neutrality.

God is not stuck with trying to figure out what to do with the people who are neither for Christ nor against Him.

God is not sort of in the dilemma of all that middle group who on the one hand didn't know about Jesus or on the other hand

knew about Him but didn't know what to do and so did nothing.

They are not in some middle group that must be brought under Trinitarian God to determine their destiny.

If you make no decision, you are against Him as much as the most fervent Satanist.

You are not different than a Satan worshiper if you are not with Christ.

There is no possibility of neutrality.

In the war between God and Satan, between good and evil, between light and darkness, between truth and lies there is no middle ground.

There is only heaven and hell which crystallizes into permanency the decision and the choice made here.

The person who does not believe in Jesus Christ, does not receive Him, does not follow Christ with all his heart, does not join in building Christ's kingdom is in partnership with Satan as much as if he were a Satan worshiper.

- It is not necessary to oppose Jesus Christ to be against Him.

- It is not necessary to attack His deity.
- It is not necessary to attack His Word.
- It is not necessary to attack His character.
- It is not necessary to attack His gospel.
- It is not necessary to discredit His church.
- It is not necessary to persecute Christians.
- It is not necessary to interfere in His work, to slander His name, or to hate His kingdom.

All you have to do is nothing about Jesus Christ and you are in the same category with Satan worshipers, in fact you are one. You have made your choice.

If you are not involved in the work of gathering souls into the kingdom of God, you are guilty of participating with those who scatter them.

No decision concerning Jesus Christ is a decision. No participation with Christ is to be against Him, against His work, against His Word and against His kingdom.

All people are either Christ's or Satan's.

- They're either children of God or children of the devil.
- They either belong in the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness.
- They are either headed for heaven or headed for hell.

- There are no exceptions.

This is crystallized in the words of Jesus in verse 23, and this marks a definitive moment in the ministry of our Lord in Judea. It is only months before the cross.

Luke 9:51, *Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,*

Jesus on His way to Jerusalem for the last Passover where He would die and He would be the final and only sacrifice for sin. He is headed toward His death, only months away now.

The Galilean ministry is in the past. In these final months, He along with His twelve and the seventy and the rest of His disciples are hitting every town and village in Judea. Going everywhere proclaiming His messiahship, affirming the reality of that and His deity by signs and wonders and miracles, healings, casting out of demons.

All through Judea, from town to town and village to village they go, day after day after day. The days are filled with miracles and teaching and calling for repentance and faith in Him as the Messiah.

He puts His divine power on display, and He even delegated it through the seventy so that they went out and even had power over demons which had been delegated to them for this period of time.

Through His presence, His preaching, His healings, and His power over demons, He is bringing the force of the kingdom of God into the little towns and villages throughout Judea.

The people are being confronted with the reality of who He is. Therefore, they are being confronted with the decision of all decisions.

What are you going to do with Jesus Christ?

Only two options:

You are either with Him or you are against Him!

No middle ground.

Up to this point Luke has been presenting the record of the revelation of the Son of God.

- Angelic announcement comes to Zacharias.
- Elizabeth going to have a child.
- The child will be the forerunner of the Messiah.
- Angelic announcement comes to Mary.
- Mary is going to give birth to the Messiah.
- The virgin birth.

- Genealogy places Him in the Messianic line.
- John the Baptist proclaims Jesus is the One.
- Jesus's ministry unfold great power over.
- Jesus preaches the kingdom of God.
- Jesus forgives sin.
- Jesus calls for repentance.
- Jesus affirms that He is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Everything Jesus ever said was proven, verified, and attested by these signs and wonders. They were multiplied through the twelve who went out two-by-two.

Here they reach a point where it's decision time.

Nothing more can be said.

Nothing more needs to be done.

The facts are there.

The evidence is there.

What is your conclusion?

They have seen it all, heard it all, the miracles, the call for repentance, the offer of forgiveness, the promise of the kingdom.

What is left?

Only a decision.

After this we see the Lord move towards confrontational!

Luke 11:29, *And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.*

Luke 11:39, *Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.*

He raises His response to a more confrontive and condemning level.

Luke 11:53-54, *And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, ⁵⁴lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.*

V 29, the crowds are increasing.

Luke 12:1, *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.*

Jesus is talking to more people than ever.

The crowd is getting bigger and bigger.
Yet Jesus is getting more confrontive and more condemning.
The warnings are stronger, more lethal.

It is time to make a decision and basically the decision has been made. The decision in general is to reject Him.

That decision is fixed, and it's settled with only a very brief and hypocritical respite at Palm Sunday in which they gave Him the honours as if He were the son of David and spun around on their heels a few days later and called for His blood.

So, the attitude toward Jesus is fixed.
The tragic reality is they concluded exactly the opposite of the truth.

What did they conclude?

V 15, *But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

They us that,

- He is from hell, not heaven.
- He represents Satan, not God.
- He is a liar, not the truth.
- He's the source of death, not life.
- He's from the darkness, not the light.

They concluded the exact opposite of the truth. Opposition then to Christ had really reached the fixed point.

The leaders of Israel, the Pharisees, and the scribes, who launched this propaganda to the nation against Jesus.

The people bought this lie because it suited their self-righteousness. That is the reason the nation rejected Jesus.

The people didn't just sort of stumble into this, they were led into it by their false leaders. It wasn't just the scribes and the Pharisees that wanted Him dead. Eventually the whole crowd screamed, "Crucify Him."

They had been sufficiently brainwashed over months and months, even over a couple of years to buy the party line against Jesus.

Jesus does a miracle of casting out a demon which also involves a healing.

V 14, *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marvelled.*

Something that Jesus did all the time.
There is nothing unusual about this.

Remember John the Baptist sent some of his disciples to ask the question.

Luke 7:20-22, *When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'"* ²¹*And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight.* ²²*Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

So, this was routine, but it surfaces the reaction and the response that has become the general attitude.

Initially the multitudes marvelled because this is a healing. It is like all the healings of Jesus instant, complete, no rehabilitation.

In the flow of Luke's gospel happens in Judea, the southern part of Israel. They accuse Him of doing by Satan. He responds with the words that, if Satan is divided against himself, he would be pulling down his own house.

The response of the people to this miracle and the response of Jesus to their response and what He says are very, very similar,

almost identical to an incident that is recorded **Matthew 12 and Mark 3.**

There are many Bible commentators who feel that what Luke is giving us here is just another edition of the Matthew 12, Mark 3 incident, that Luke is just giving his version, as the synoptic gospels do very often where you have the same incident in the three gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

After all, it was a healing by the casting out of a demon. They said He did it by Satan's power. Jesus responded the same way. Yet there are some differences. The material before and after is different. There's no discussion of the blaspheming of the Holy Spirit, which is the main thing in Matthew 12. It's not here. It comes later in Luke. Jesus says that later.

Is this the same event or a different event?

This is a different account.

It is in Galilee where the first one took place.

Luke is giving us the chronology and we know Jesus is in Judea.

Why would Luke import something out of His Galilean experience to try to show us the developing attitude in Judea?

All He is doing is saying the same thing that happened in Galilee, the same final rejection that brought Jesus' ministry in

Galilee to an end is the very same thing that's happening in Judea.

Here is a parallel.

You may say to yourself, but isn't it's kind of odd that they would have the very same reaction as the people in Galilee?

The people in Galilee said He did what He did by the power of Beelzebub.

Now the people in Judea are saying the same thing.

Isn't it somewhat of a strange coincidence that at two different times months and months apart in two different locations they would come up with the same thing?

Luke's passage this man was only deaf and mute.

Matthew's passage the man was blind as well.

So that could indicate a different situation.

But more importantly, this is very interesting evidence that the systematic campaign to discredit Jesus as a demon-possessed agent of Satan had been effective everywhere.

What we find out here is the party line coming down from Jerusalem, the party line of the Pharisees and the scribes was we have to discredit Jesus. We have got to get rid of Jesus, because Jesus was dismantling their hypocritical religious system, their self-righteousness. They hated Him for it.

What is the worst thing that you could ever say?

They say that is the representative of Satan.

That was the party line.

This wasn't invented this day in Judea in some coincidental fashion as it had been stated in Galilee, not at all. In fact, this has been a growing perspective that the leaders have been doing everything they could to establish everywhere they went, dogging the steps of Jesus.

John 7:20, *The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"*

John 8:48, *Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"*

They were like parrots repeating the same thing that He's demonic.

John 10:20-21, *And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"* ²¹*Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"*

Where is this idea that He's demon-possessed coming from?

These are not the teachings of an insane man.

These are not the teachings of a demoniac.

These are not the insanities of a man running out a tomb slicing himself up.

Where is the source?

Matthew 12:24, *Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

Matthew says that it came from Pharisees.

Mark 3:22, *And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."*

First, they started sowing the idea that He is demonic.

Then they just raised it to the peak and said He is doing not just by any demon but by Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

This was their propaganda from Jerusalem was sending down and disseminating through the crowd. The witless people bought it all and parroted it back.

V 15, *But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

They had their phony Jewish exorcists.

They had their people who purported to be able to cast out demons, who could not do that in the power of God. They knew the difference.

They had never seen anything like it and yet as soon as the crowd begins to marvel, the propagandists blurt out, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."

They are sowing that same lie. They sowed it in Galilee and it was successful. Now they are dogging His steps with it in Judea.

What would have been nice would have been if verse 15 said this, "But the people gathered around and rejoiced with the man who could hear and talk."

Wouldn't that have been nice?

How would you feel if you had just been healed and they said, it was by satanic power? They didn't care about Him.

Because there can't be a kingdom of God unless the Messiah can conquer Satan.

V 16, *Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.*

Do these people just need more information?

No.

It wasn't about getting information.

It was to test!

The same thing they said at the foot of the cross.

Matthew 27:40, and saying, *“You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”*

That's why Jesus called them as wicked generation.

Luke 11:29, *And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.*

Never enough!

V 15, *But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”*

You understand how many years the Jews sat in wait for the covenant promise to be fulfilled in the arrival of the Messiah?

We understand that because in the gospel of Luke how every mother longed to the Messiah's mother, how every father longed to have his children know the messianic kingdom.

How they waited for the fulfilment of all that had been promised to Abraham and David, and all of the New Covenant realities to be brought in and how Zacharias had given glory to God in his Benedictus in which he celebrated the glories of the Abrahamic Covenant and of the Davidic Covenant and mostly of the New Covenant.

How all of history culminated in the coming of Jesus Christ?

Here we come to this culminating reality that Christ has given a full manifestation of Himself.

Their conclusion is that He is from hell.

This is absolutely staggering.

Is there any wonder that Jerusalem was destroyed?

There could be no more revelation, there was nothing more.

All the prophecies had been fulfilled.

All the evidence had been manifest.

The Jews did and they screamed for His blood. They didn't take His life without the complicity of the Romans, but they hated Him.

They didn't even use the word Satan, they used the word Beelzebub. That goes way back into the Old Testament.

Meaning lord of the flies.

Why?

Because it also meant lord of the dung, lord of the manure, a very popular term for the prince of demons, Satan.

It was so well known and so well established that it doesn't need to be interpreted.

Both in Galilee and in Judea it was used by the crowd and it was the party line that had come down from the top, Jesus is an agent of the dung-god.

You talk about blasphemy, that's some serious blasphemy.

The title became a common term for Satan like Belial, and it needed no explanation.

- They called the highest and holiest one the lowest and most evil.
- They called the one who was pure good, pure evil.
- They called God the devil.
- They called perfect holiness wickedness.
- They called incarnate truth a liar.
- This is the extreme opposite.

Hebrews 6:4-6, *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

This mocking, sneering, slanderous taunting that went all the way to the cross where they taunted Him as He was hanging there.

They were religious and their hatred and their hostility shows the reality of their apostasy, the ugliness of spiritual pride.

Is there anything more ugly than spiritual pride?

Is there anything more cruel than satanic religion?

They had nothing but self-righteousness and ceremonial virtue, outside white, inside full of stinking dead men's bones.

The holy Lord of heaven receives from their lips the vilest possible slander and blasphemy. They use the worst name they can think of to identify Satan, the lord of the dung.

You say, "I would never do that.

I think Jesus is a good person and I would never say that about Him.

If you are not with Him, you are against Him.

You don't have any options.

There's no harmonizing, patronizing middle ground here!

Don't come to Jesus with any of your patronizing nonsense about the fact that He's a good man, a good teacher, meant well. You don't have that option.

Jesus is either God or He's the greatest blasphemer who ever lived.

He either speaks for God or He speaks for Satan.

That's it.

He is either the Son of God, or He's not.

- If He's not, then He's the biggest liar that ever lived and the biggest blasphemer that ever lived who pulled off the biggest deception in history.

- If He is not God, they knew there was only one other conclusion. If He is not who He says He is He is an insane, demon-possessed deceiver. Those are your options.

- If you do not embrace Him as Lord, then you stand with those who call Him a satanic blasphemer and you have no other alternative.

- If you do call Him a satanic blasphemer and stand with those who do and He is God, then you are guilty of the worst blasphemy and eternal hell will be your punishment.

This is a heart-breaking moment in this gospel.

Couldn't we have wished the story had unfolded differently with the loving, gracious, magnificent Christ revealing Himself.

Jesus offered them a kingdom and forgiveness and joy and love and hope and heaven.

Are you surprised?

That Jesus didn't speak to them out of existence on the spot.

That He didn't just blow fire on them as the sons of thunder had earlier called Him to do on that village that wouldn't accept them.

It would have been a just judgment.

V 17, *But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls."*

They weren't necessarily saying this so He could hear it, though they were saying it. The crowd might have been pretty large. They weren't saying it so He could hear it.

John 2:24-25, *But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.*

- Your blasphemy is irrational.
- Your blasphemy is inconsistent.
- Your blasphemy lacks wisdom and common sense.

Satan can't cast out Satan and survive, that's an absurdity. They can't say of My casting out Satan it's by Satan, but your Jewish exorcists do it by God when it's so obvious the difference between what they attempt to do and what I have done.

Jesus is pleading with them.

Conclusion:

You can't look at the life of Jesus and reasonably conclude that Satan was working through him.

Jesus calls you one more time, "Be with Me, embrace Me as your Lord and Saviour."

Prepare your heart through fear.

What fear?

Fear of eternal judgment, that's necessary heart preparation.

What do you need a Saviour for if there's no hell?

If there is a hell, then you need a Saviour.

The cultivation of a prepared heart cultivates fear, fear of judgment.

Cultivate humility, brokenness, contrition, a sense of unworthiness, a sense of wretchedness.

Cultivate repentance.

Then believe in the facts of the gospel because you have a heart prepared to receive.

All that Jesus did and called for, telling them of judgment to produce fear, telling them that they had to humble themselves and reject their self-righteousness, calling them to repent, prepared the heart to then believe the truth and be saved.

You can't be saved by praying a little prayer.

There's no guarantee God will have to answer your prayer.

He is sovereign, after all. But when the truth is embraced in prepared hearts, salvation takes place.

Jesus here and again and again until He gets to the cross is in this sad time, recognizing that the rejection of the people is fixed and yet extending mercy all the way to the very end.

At the last rescues one thief and mercifully takes him to paradise.

He is the same Lord today. While rejection is being hardened all around toward Christ, mercy is still being extended.