

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

September 1, 2019

“Holy Spirit Testimony”

8:00 ~ Service - Communion is for all Christians

9:30 ~ Fellowship & Adult Sunday school

10:30 ~ Service with the King's Kid's - Communion is for all Christians

NEWS

Church Camp August 23rd to the 25th

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ www.myaetheia.com ~ Hear a sermon at

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1) What is the problem with celebrity?

2) What is the primary mission of the Holy Spirit on earth ever since the Baptism of Christ?

3) Why is “Blasphemy against the Spirit” unforgiveable?

MATTHEW 12:15&16 ~ ¹⁵NASB But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all, ¹⁶and warned them not to tell who He was.

There was an impasse. Jesus knew it. Instead of _____ with people who were beyond hope, Jesus left them and _____ to people who were receptive.

When it devolves into an argument, you've been _____ by Satan, into making it about _____ and your _____.

“Warned,” is ἐπιτιμάω (ēpē-tē-mä-ō), meaning to rebuke, to censure, to reprove... Jesus wasn't kidding. But, why?

Yes, amazing things were taking place - but it was to testify to Jesus' _____, not to turn Him into a _____.

Matthew 17:5, John 6:29, Mark 8:38

MATTHEW 12:17-21 ~ ^{17NASB}This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: ¹⁸“Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My soul is well-pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. ¹⁹“He will not quarrel, nor cry out; Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. ²⁰“A battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He will not put out, Until He leads justice to victory. ²¹“And in His name the Gentiles will hope.”

Matthew was able to use Isaiah 42:1-4 here, because of the connection in verse 19. Jesus did not quarrel. He didn't come to endlessly _____ those who had hard hearts.

The idea behind the statement, “Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets,” means that He wasn't going to _____ His mission, or His Message. Beyond that, a true judge doesn't need any fanfare - his _____ speaks for itself...

That's the tie-in, but Matthew's bigger point is the rest of the quoted Passage. Particularly the fact that God's Holy Breath resided upon Jesus since His _____. Matthew 3:17.

Twice the passage refers to the Gentiles. Through Jesus the “Nations” would be blessed, but not at the _____ of His “Beloved Servant Israel.”

God's “Judgement” and His “Justice” are _____.

“Battered reeds” and “Smoldering wicks,” representing _____, are seen as useless and not worth salvaging. The _____, unlike everyone else, would not “Break them off,” or “Put them out.”

MATTHEW 12:22-29 ~ ²²NASB Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. ²³All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, “This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?” ²⁴But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.” ²⁵And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶“If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷“If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? For this reason they will be your judges. ²⁸“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹“Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

The people were so stunned they began considering the _____ of the Holy Spirit in spite of their very different expectations.

The religious leaders, however, were so _____ of themselves and their expectation they had to find another explanation.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

1) Internal strife will ruin any unified entity. What king would allow it?

2) Pharisees accepted demon possession and exorcism as real. If a proper Jew, were to do what Jesus did, from where would he get the power?

3) If Satan’s Kingdom was pillaged, then the Kingdom of Heaven was near.

MATTHEW 12:30-32 ~ ³⁰NASB“He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. ³¹“Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. ³²“Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

The one and only unforgiveable _____, is “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” It not only will not be forgiven by God - it cannot be forgiven by God. Why?

Quite literally, the reason the sin is unforgiveable is because, by definition, it is a refusal to accept the salvation God offers through Jesus as His Christ as evidenced by the _____ of the Holy Spirit.

Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

_____ I want to talk with the pastor about _____

_____ I want prayer for _____

_____ I want to volunteer to _____

_____ I want more information about _____

_____ Other _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 12b ~ 090119

Welcome Friends

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW
A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

Two weeks ago, we explored the first part of Matthew chapter 12. We saw where Jesus violated the Pharisee's interpretation of Scripture by miraculously healing a man in church, just before the service was to begin, right in front of their eyes. Their response in verse 14? Because, in their minds, it was the wrong day to heal... "The Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him." The NET renders it that they, "Went out and plotted against him, as to how they could assassinate him." Now verses 15&16...



Matthew 12:15&16 ~ 15NASB But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all, 16and warned them not to tell who He was.

Jesus “Withdrew from there.” This is a very short and simple statement (two words in Greek), and yet, it is one that yields much for us to consider.

Jesus was well aware of their plotting and scheming, their conspiratorial machinations to “Destroy,” to murder, to “Assassinate” Him. Jesus was also well aware that their hostility towards Him was not going to be altered, or even curbed, by anything He could say

or do, short of saying and doing things that were impossible for Him, as Truth, to say and do.

There was an impasse. Jesus knew it. Instead of fighting with people who were beyond hope, Jesus left them and ministered to people who were receptive.

Can you see the principle?

It is a mistake to see this as Jesus fleeing from them or in any way secretly hiding from their wrath. “Many people followed Jesus” and He openly healed them. He was not difficult to locate, if you wanted to hunt Him down. It wasn’t like He was living in a cave on the Musselshell with a mountain lion.

It is also wrong to see this as a tactical retreat until the time was right for Him to be killed. Many scholars suggest that as the reason for Jesus’ withdrawal. It wasn’t yet His time. God would protect His Messiah until the correct time regardless. Jesus later entered Jerusalem triumphantly and ministered openly in the Temple.

This statement isn’t about hiding from the fight or even delaying the fight for another day. This disengagement

with the Pharisees was about doing what was productive for the Kingdom.

Nothing was to be gained from arguing with people who had already made up their mind. Please realize what happened... Jesus walked away from them. In order to do that Jesus first had to turn His back on them. He turned His back to them, and He walked off.

There comes a point where a person's continued refusal to accept Jesus will harden their heart enough that, in effect, for them, Jesus has turned His back and He has walked away. Jesus has left the building.

Please don't put yourself in that boat.

Since most, if not all, of you are not in that boat, and are, in fact, ones who follow Jesus... Then be like Him. Be wise enough to see when continued engagement with a person is counterproductive and so, disengage from them. Shake the dust off your feet and go minister where there is receptivity.

I'm not saying avoid all resistance. Everyone resists to some extent - that's a fundamental part of ministry -

dealing with people's resistance. But when a person has set themselves firmly against you, walk away.

The reputation of Jesus, the Glory of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, is never served by you losing your temper in a situation that was no-win from the start.

As I have said many times, when it devolves into an argument - you've been goaded, tricked, maneuvered by the forces of Satan, into making it about you and your pride, rather than about Jesus and their salvation.



“Many followed Him.” As I said, if anyone wanted to find Him, they could easily track Him down.

“He healed them all,” means that, as many as came to Him for healing, were healed. There were no failed attempts.

When a person has a problem of any kind and they are supernaturally healed at the touch, or at the word, of an intermediary, it is human nature to talk about that. Jesus ordered them not to talk about it.

In fact, the word translated as “Warned,” as in Jesus “Warned them not to tell who He was”, is ἐπιτιμάω (ěpē-tē-mä-ō), meaning to rebuke, to censure, to reprove, to speak very sternly to. Jesus wasn’t kidding - keep your mouths shut about what we’re doing out here. But, why?

Miracles & Healing
NIGHT
SPECIAL SERVICE

APRIL 11TH
7PM

40 COLVILLE ROAD,
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PASTOR BILLY BURKE
GUEST SPEAKER

MARCUS & EVELYN MARTINEZ
SENIOR PASTORS [HOST]

Left to the natural course, talk about healings turns the Healer into a celebrity. Jesus would have become a celebrity healer like an ancient version of Kathryn Kuhlman, Benny Hinn, or Billy Burke.

Jesus healed people as part of the Messianic mission and as a witness to His authority. Yes, amazing things were taking place - but the Voice in the cloud said, “Listen to Him!” (Matthew 17:5). Yes, people were being healed, but Jesus said the work of God was to “Believe in Him.” (John 6:29). Yes, demons were sent packing, but the Bible repeatedly tells us to “Follow Him.” (Mark 8:38).

Jesus never wanted to be a celebrity. Scholars say He was uninterested in self-promotion. Sure, but why?



Celebrity is a bizarre phenomenon. Once, I was a speaker at a Christian concert. The main event was a famous singer-dude. A large group of overly excited fans were in the mosh pit at the front of the stage. I recognized a handful of the folks - all of them, brief acquaintances, or past church members - none of whom would have even acknowledged me at Costco or City Brew. I mean, perhaps a casual nod in my direction, but none of the people cared about me in any meaningful way.

Because I was on the billing, I assume they knew I would be speaking. I came out of the celebrity's tent and walked by the mosh pit, where I was overwhelmed with an outflow of love from those people. Here I was, recently in the vicinity of a superstar, I declined to talk to him, getting ready to go on stage, replete with my official pass, and they swarmed me, hugged me like there was no tomorrow, begged me to let them take a picture with me and let them introduce me to their friends.

What was so obvious to me that I can't possibly overstate it, was that none of them cared about me at all. Every one of them acted like weirdos, because they wanted to elevate their stock by being associated in some personal way with the show.

Celebrity is not about the famous person; it is about the fan who feels more important with a connection to a famous person... People feel a rush being part of the excitement - in the mix of things - it's exhilarating to them. They can later brag about how they participated in something bigger than everyday life. Jesus wasn't interested in such nonsense.

Beyond the strange celebrity self-elevating phenomenon itself, there would also be further restrictions on Jesus due to larger, more frenzied, crowds. His ability to move around, His personal privacy to pray, and His time to teach, would all be hampered.

Add to that the reality that the mega-church type of celebrity, creates its own buzz and excitement, which feeds an emotional need in people. Many folks who get involved in such things, because of how it makes them feel, rather than because it's truly what they want and so, because it has become who they truly are.

Jesus healed, and He cast out demons, and He performed all manner of miraculous and supernatural feats, and all of it was exclusively designed to enable people to genuinely "Listen to Him," to "Believe in Him," to "Follow Him."

Jesus wasn't interested in numbers. He wasn't interested in how many people could be whipped up into an emotionally charged confession - He was only interested in genuine repentance.



THIS IS MY
BELOVED SON,
WITH WHOM I
AM WELL
PLEASED;
LISTEN TO HIM!

Matthew 12:17-21 ~ 17NASB This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: 18“Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My soul is well-pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. 19“He will not quarrel, nor cry out; Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. 20“A battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He will not put out, Until He leads justice to victory. 21“And in His name the Gentiles will hope.”

At this point, Matthew shares the longest and most comprehensive Old Testament Messianic Prophecy in his Gospel.

It is Isaiah 42:1-4, but there is a generalizing in the quotation that indicates the whole chapter and beyond, is in view.

Matthew was able to use it here, because of the connection in verse 19. Jesus will not quarrel. He will not cry out. His voice will not be heard in the streets. Jesus didn't come to endlessly debate those who had hard hearts.

Jesus was never interested in winning arguments, nor was He ever interested in trying to convince people through an aggressive sales pitch, or an emotionally charged appeal.

The idea behind the statement, "Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets," is not literal, but metaphorical. It means that He wasn't going to be a snake oil salesman peddling his wares in every street and back alley. He wasn't going to cheapen His mission, or His Message with any kind of showmanship, self-promotion or flamboyant style.

Beyond that though, a true judge doesn't need any fanfare - his authority speaks for itself... That may

seem like an odd thing to say. We haven't gotten there yet, but we will. For now, suffice it to say, that the "Servant" functions as the Judge. A true judge doesn't need to raise his voice. Captain H. versus Colonel S. - real power and authority.

That's the tie-in, or transition here, but Matthew's bigger point is the rest of the quoted Passage. Particularly the fact that God's Holy Breath resided upon Jesus in a unique anointing since His Baptism. It points us back to that event.

Here in verse 18 we have God saying, "Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My soul is well-pleased." At the Baptism recorded in Matthew 3:17, 17bNASB "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." And, of course, at His Transfiguration as noted on the slide.

I don't want to bog you down in details - so I'll just say that originally God was talking about His child, Israel, as a whole. As the descendants of Abraham, they were to be the beacon of Truth and Justice in the world.

Through further revelation, the Jews came to understand that their failure in accomplishing that

mission would be invested into one perfect king coming from their ranks - a Chosen and Anointed One - A Son of God - A Messiah. Most of them focused on the part about restoring Israel's fortunes, but the larger role was always there.

That's why it is perfectly legitimate to paraphrase Servant as Son - it then becomes God saying, "Behold, My Son, My beloved Son, whom I have chosen and with whom I am well pleased to the very core of My being - to My soul."

That's actually the gist of what God the Father did proclaim as Jesus was Transfigured and earlier as He came out of the water at His baptism and the Holy Spirit descended as a dove and rested upon Him.

The overarching point is that Jesus was the Beloved, One and Only Son, selected by God to be the Anointed Messiah and it was the Holy Spirit Himself who constantly testified to that fact. That's critical as we proceed, so let me say it again. "It was the Holy Spirit Himself who constantly testified to Jesus' identity."

Before we fully explore that overarching point, we need to see a few other things.



Twice the passage refers to the Gentiles, simply meaning non-Jews. At the end of verse 18, it says that Israel, now manifested as the Messiah of Israel, as the Word of God made flesh, as Jesus, will bring “Justice to the Gentiles,” contextually, to “Proclaim justice,” means to bring it about - establish it for them. Then verse 21 says that the “Gentiles will hope,” in Him. Contextually, “In His Name,” means in Him.

The translation, while reasonable, gives the wrong impression. Many translations sidestep the problem by rendering it “Nations,” instead of “Gentiles.” That’s

probably better in avoiding an anti-Jewish misunderstanding.

Over the centuries Christians have seen this as the Messiah Jesus condemning the Jews in favor of a Gentile only Christianity. That's wrong.

The Messiah was Jewish and through Him, not only would the Jews be saved, but also the rest of the world. God can cast a salvation net that went beyond Israel to the entire earth - that's the point.

The child of God was the nation of Israel - they were placed at the crossroads of the world at that time. As I said earlier, they failed in their mission to be a blessing to all the nations around them, but God would accomplish His goal through the perfect child - Jesus. Through Him the "Nations," or "Gentiles," would be blessed, but not at the exclusion of His "Beloved Servant Israel."

Obviously, that doesn't mean that all Jews, or all Gentiles will be saved - it just means salvation is big enough to save all.



I mentioned before, that the “Servant” functions as the JUDGE. Touchy-feely people prefer the concept of God’s “Justice,” over the concept of God’s “Judgement.” The word used twice in our passage is κρίσις (k`rē-sēs). It is almost always translated as “Judgement” and that would be far more appropriate here as well.

The passage is ultimately talking about the final disposition of all things and so judgement is better - but beyond the semantics - please realize that with God, His “Judgement,” and His “Justice,” are identical. It may feel better to say justice, but it means the same thing as judgment regarding God.

Whether “Judgement,” or “Justice,” no one will survive it without God’s Mercy that comes only through His Messiah Jesus.



Finally, verse 20 says 20NASB “A battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He will not put out.” People get confused with this bit. A “Reed,” was very useful - every house had several. They were used for many things and they were super cheap - you could go out and collect a bunch anytime they were growing, and when they weren’t, you could easily afford to buy several from someone else’s surplus. A “Battered reed,” was something no one put up with - why would

you? It was defective and since reeds were so common, it would be discarded - thrown away - burned up - cast off.

Similarly, a “Wick” for an oil lamp was very cheap too. Every home had oil lamps and a supply of wicks to go with them. When a wick began burning inefficiently as evidenced by it smoking or smoldering, it would be trimmed. It was a near everyday task. Once trimming no longer worked, the wick was removed, trampled underfoot to completely extinguish it, and then it was thrown out as useless. Another wick was quickly pulled from the pile and put in its place in the lamp.

“Battered reeds” and “Smoldering wicks” were not tolerated - they were of little or no use and they were common enough that no one tried to fix them - they were simply discarded and replaced.

The two examples refer to people, who are seen as useless, and not worth salvaging. Here’s where people miss the point. It is not the “Servant,” whether Israel as a whole, or now the Messiah as the perfect manifestation of God’s child Israel, that is a “A battered reed,” or “A smoldering wick” in this place and in this sense.

Because of other places and contexts, people jump to that conclusion - it's wrong here. Jesus is not the "Battered reed," or the "Smoldering wick," we are!

The point here is that the Anointed One of God would not be like everyone else and dismiss those who are lowly and downtrodden. He would not "Break them off," or "Put them out." Jesus came to save those no one else would bother with and He's still in that business today.

What the Pharisees of Jesus' day and the people of our day do not realize is that every person, no matter how awesome they think they are and no matter how many people see them as valuable - all human beings are really "Battered reeds" and a "Smoldering wicks." Praise be to God that He is so loving, patient and merciful.

Of course, only those who truly understand what they were can fully appreciate what they now are in Him.



Matthew 12:22-29 ~ 22NASB Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. 23 All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?" 24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons." 25 And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? 27 "If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? For this reason they will be your judges.

28“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29“Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

This event sets us up for the point of this section of Matthew we’re investigating today. The healing exorcism is dramatic and the exchange that follows is interesting. While we’ll discuss it - we don’t want to lose sight of the overarching point. Remember I said that through the quotation of Isaiah, and the reminder it provided of Jesus’ baptism, it was Jesus Who was the Beloved One and Only Son, selected by God to be the Anointed Messiah, and it was the Holy Spirit Himself who constantly testified to that fact.

The man had a lot of problems both physical and metaphysical. Jesus supernaturally healed him in both arenas. We see in this very abbreviated story, once again, the difference in reaction to Jesus.

The people are stunned and are actively considering the testimony of the Holy Spirit through Jesus that He is, in fact, the long-awaited Messiah. The title, “The

Son of David,” is another way of saying Messiah or Christ.

They are unsure, because Jesus is nothing like the “Son of David,” they all expected, but they were being persuaded by the testimony of the Holy Spirit.



The religious leaders however were so sure of themselves and their interpretation of the Scriptures that they knew for certain that Jesus could not possibly be the Messiah.

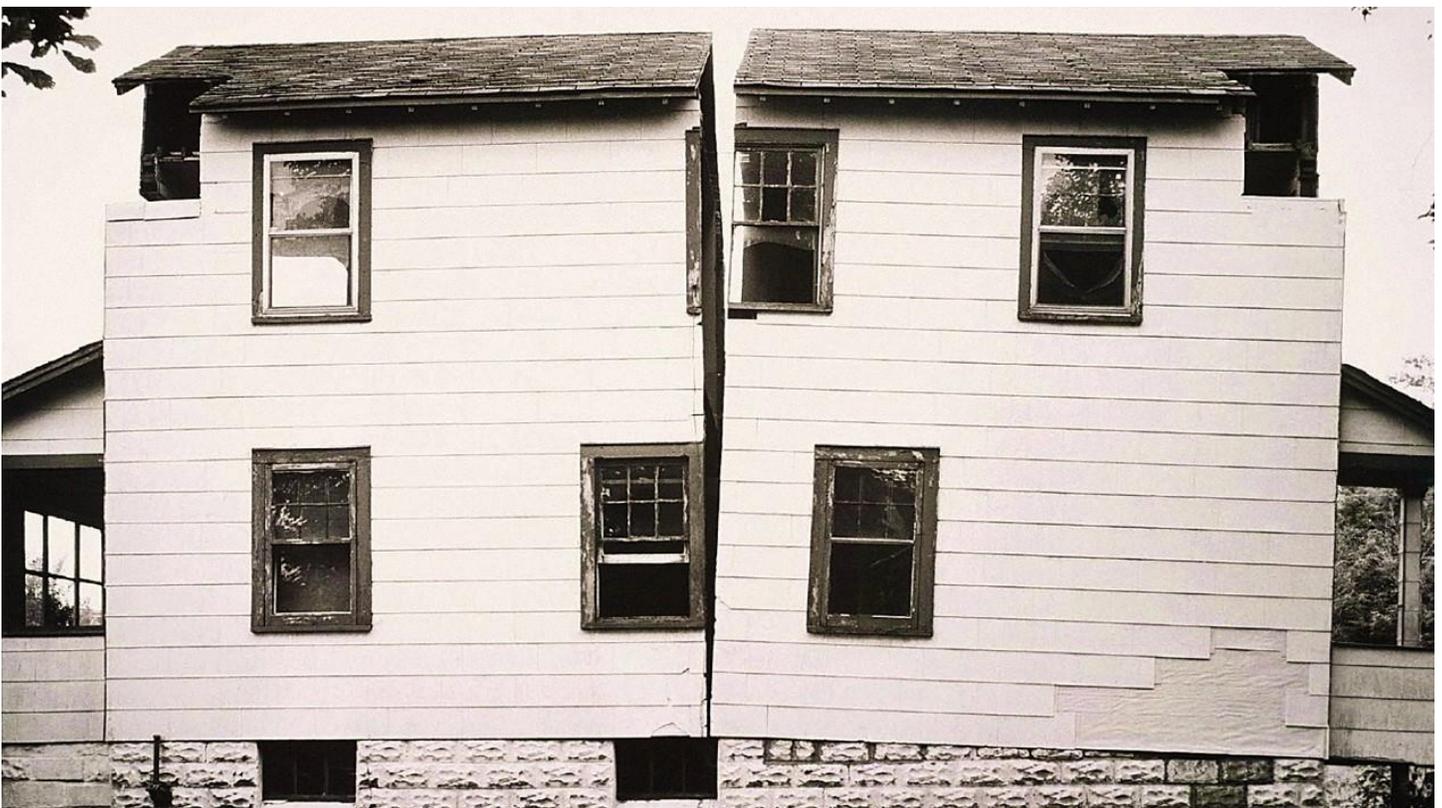
Their arrogance led them to conclude that the miraculous signs - the supernatural healing and

exorcism had to be the work of evil, not of the Holy Spirit. It was the only explanation they could accept.

If it wasn't that - then they were wrong, and Jesus was the "Son of David." Impossible!

Jesus cast out demons by the king of demons.

Jesus provided them with a very simple question with the goal of getting them to realize that the solution to the problem they refused to accept was the more likely one.



It is the concept that internal strife will ruin any unified entity. God Himself would be ruined if there was internal strife. God is perfectly unified in love - there are no divisions or differences of opinion within Him. That's why we can rightly say that the Triune God is One.

Everything affected by the Fall is tainted by strife. We have strife within ourselves, within our marriages, within our homes, within our churches, within our communities, within our nation and within our world.

Internal strife destroys unity. If Satan is fighting himself, his kingdom is compromised. Ask a demon if Ole Clubfoot - Beelzebul - the Serpent of Old, allows dissention in the ranks.

To fully get Jesus' point, you have to realize that He reveals that there are only two possible kingdoms. There is a Kingdom of God and there is a Kingdom of Satan and the two are interlocked in open warfare. Everyone is a full-fledged member of only one of those kingdoms.

We know how it ends - never fear, it isn't a war where the victor is undecided, or the victory is in jeopardy. Nevertheless, it is two opposing sides, and everyone is

on one side or the other. Jesus' point is that no one on Satan's side fights against Satan's side and vice versa.



Jesus' second point is that the Jews (except the Sadducees) accepted demon possession and so exorcism of demons as real. That's important, because people read way too much into this argument.

Jesus didn't say that Jewish ministers were actively casting out demons in the same way that Jesus did. He was simply saying that in Judaism a Jewish minister could theoretically cast out a demon - if that were to happen... By what power would it happen?

To the Jews, the only answer could be, by the Spirit of God. Whether it was happening in the first century is beside the point - the question is if a Jew performed a true exorcism as Jesus had done - how would that have been achieved.

Only through the power of the Spirit of God... So, then Jesus is asking, how do you really think that I did it?

The Jews who had, through the Spirit of God, cast out demons in Israel's history, stand as proof that Jesus did it by that same power.



Jesus' third observation is that in order to pillage Satan's Kingdom, one must first conquer Satan.

That means that the Kingdom of Heaven has already arrived - at least in part. They needed to recognize that fact to which the Holy Spirit was testifying.



Matthew 12:30-32 ~ 30NASB“He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. 31“Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32“Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

I want to spend a little more time on this set of verses next time - but I read it today to conclude the overarching point of today's verses.

The one and only unforgiveable, or unpardonable sin, is “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” It not only will not be forgiven by God - it cannot be forgiven by God. Why?

I hope you can see that the sin no one can survive is the sin of disbelieving the testimony of the Holy Spirit regarding Jesus as the One and Only means of salvation.

Quite literally, the reason the sin is unforgiveable is because, by definition, it is a refusal to accept the salvation God offers through Jesus as His Christ as evidenced by the testimony of the Holy Spirit.