



The Gospel According to Luke

Wk. 55 “Shedding Light on the Kingdom of Darkness”

By Pastor Jody May

Luke 11:5-13 ESV

Jesus and Beelzebul

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,” ¹⁶ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; ²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. ²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

Return of an Unclean Spirit

²⁴ “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ²⁵ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.”

Introduction:

1. The beauty and danger of being Neutral...

In 1515 after suffering a miserable defeat to France, Switzerland declared its' neutrality in the world. Then in 1789 Napoleon forces their allegiance to France but again in 1815 the “Treaty of Paris” is struck making Switzerland the first and



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still to this day a Nation of Neutrality providing stability in the middle of Europe; a buffer zone between Germany, Italy and France. Because of this stance their borders remain open, and they prosper when other nations use their financial systems for their banking. It really is a good strategy in living in a world that is a hot mess. To tell you the truth this is how most people would rather live, we would rather have a “do no harm” stance against people unless one is acted upon in an offensive and aggressive manner and we would rather prefer to work with everyone. Picking sides in a conflict is always a risky business. As good as this sounds though this is not a choice you have when the Gospel is presented to you.

In the text today, after two years of demonstrating His power Jesus finally draws the line in the sand. He has just had an ignorant, offensive, irrational, and blasphemous conversation with Jewish leaders that thought they spoke for God. It is as if Jesus finally has to make a distinction between the work that they think they do for God and what Jesus KNOWS He does for God. And He makes a very serious statement that we need to take hold of today, because, if it is in the Bible then God meant for that statement to have implications for our lives as well.

²³Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

If you are not with Jesus, not with how He sees things, you don't agree with His teachings, then you have refused to work with Him in making disciples of Him. That therefore means, you have worked against Him, you have actively moved people away from following Him, and therefore you are culpable for that sin. There is no neutrality when it comes to the Kingdom of God, there is no Switzerland, no neutral stance, no keeping safe, no being a buffer zone for good or bad people. **If you are not working at brining in the harvest, then you are working at scattering it.** You have declared yourself an enemy of the Kingdom.

2. The Folly of Opposing Christ

Jesus at this point in His ministry has spent time with the Pharisees, they know Him. They have been watching Him for some time. He has obviously gotten them



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not to like Him, but Jesus’ intention is not to cast out of the Kingdom yet but to preach the gospel to His people, and that even includes the Pharisees. They have had multiple opportunities to talk with Him, about what He was teaching, and they have witnessed all the miracles He has been doing. Instead of winning them over though, here’s what He receives from them, you’re a monster Jesus you work for the Devil – that’s BLASPHEMY!

Jesus has just healed a man, much like that little boy we met a few weeks back, that could not speak either and was cut off from the real world. This demon was possessing this man at a deeper level than most, the man spoke after it was gone, and the people marveled, adding evidence to the intensity and longevity of the possession. Instead of praising God for rescuing a child of Israel they accuse Him of fraternizing with the enemy, ¹⁵ But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,” Beelzebul; the Lord of the Flies, the Devil himself. Others still wanted Him to prove this was a sign from heaven, well Jesus rises up to the challenge and proves with simple logic that what they are seeing is of God.

The Pharisees are using a philosophical argument with Jesus but they have made an error called a **Casual Fallacy** more specifically a *non causa pro causa*; that’s what happens when you **make a conclusion without enough evidence**. Jesus’ intellect sees the fallacy and goes after it.

¹⁷ But he, **knowing their thoughts**, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?

A Power cannot act against itself or it would fall. Jesus states a self-evident Truth, that is a well-known fact that would be shared by all educated people in that day. If this is the case here, and Jesus is working for Satan and at the same time working against him, then this would point out that Satan and the powers of darkness are fallen. Rome and the Herodian Dynasty (the physical manifestation of Satan’s presence) should have no power over the Jews, the Jews are now back in charge, meaning the Pharisees would have power over Gentile and Jew alike in



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that area, but wait, no that has happened because the Pharisees have no authority over them nor Jesus...

AND ¹⁹ **And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.** That is to say, your disciples that practice exorcisms (see Acts 19) when they are not successful would mean they are just for show, their **charlatans FAKES**, OR that Satan is more powerful than God (shown by me casting them out if I am working for the devil) meaning your disciples are unrighteousness because your theology of living by the rules did not earn enough of God’s favor. So, either I am more powerful in my evilness than your God OR I am more powerful in my righteousness than you, and in both cases you and your disciples are less than what you thought you were and really having no power at all... Careful how you answer for their lack of ability for it is what you will be judged by.

So, like the ultimate lawyer Jesus has stopped them cold in their tracks, and even warned them you don’t want to go down this road for you will be finished if you do. ²⁰ **But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.** Finger of God synonymous of the Spirit of God, God Himself is acting here meaning you have witnessed the Kingdom of God, and I am the harbinger of Him. All that to mean, **if that is true then you immediately, because you want to do the right thing, should stop what you are doing, blaspheming God, get behind me, and start teaching the people of God how to follow me by faith. It is truly a thing of folly not to follow Jesus.**

3. The Danger of not Picking Sides

²⁴ “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ²⁵ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.”



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Jesus is pointing out in the text that those that are against Him, those that scatter, are in serious danger **because what they teach never lasts**. Their semblance of truth holds little power and what helps the scattered at first will fail for the devil will come back in force against that person. As a matter of fact, in Mat. 12:45 Jesus adds to this story and states that it will be this way for a whole generation.

I thought a lot this week on how do we submit to this passage of scripture, how does it apply to our lives? What does it look like for us to be on the side of Jesus, to gather instead of scatter? Much like those days when Jesus was ministering on earth there are those that claim to be on the side of God, and they will even claim to be followers of Jesus. The difference is that they work against Jesus by either adding to or taking away from the revelation of God, His Word. There are people right now in churches we know that preach watered down truth and it is crippling people, and it is beginning to blind a whole generation.

The good news is there is an answer for this dilemma. See here in Paul’s warning for Timothy as he was beginning to take on more leadership for the church in that day as he was responsible to correct bad doctrine:

2 Timothy 4:1-4 ESV

4 I (Paul) charge you (Timothy) in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ²preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

^{1st} Jesus is the Judge of the Living and the Dead, not us. You or I don’t get to say what is good enough for man to be acceptable to God, that’s Jesus’ job.

^{2nd} If that’s true then we want to discover by what criteria Jesus judges by.

^{3rd} Paul gives the answer because he tells Timothy **preach the word**, that is the OT and what was becoming distributed around the church in those days the gospels and the epistles.



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4th the Word has an effect on people, it causes them to repent because it is used to rebuke and reprove, meaning the person hearing changes they don't stay the same.

5th you preach the Word, not your opinions, because its' inspired authority will be the only thing to reach people that go to teachers that assuage their conscious.

6th you preach the Word, because it is the only thing that battles cultural myths, ways to be good or to get along in the world.

Here's where I think we need to begin:

1st and foremost we have got to protect the belief of the infallibility and inerrancy of the scripture, *Sola Scriptura*.

LBCF 1689 on Scripture:

Chp1.1

The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience...

Chp. 1.10

The supreme judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved...

The attack against the inspired and inerrant Word of God is a repeating pattern guys, because the **Devil knows if he can tear down the authority in God's Word then he can tear down your life.** What has always reformed the church and helped her along is the arguing and debating over God's Word. Here's been the cry of the church for over 500 years that took us the first 1500 years of church history to learn – Sola Scriptura, by the authority of God's Word alone which means we believe as did Paul that all of God's Word, based in its' authority and infallibility, is for the church for her Salvation.



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It is a cycle to expect over and over again, in the 1600-1800s with the enlightenment and the rise of Protestant Liberalism, to the liberalistic push from Mainline churches in the 1900s as the SBC fought for the Bible in the 70s and it is coming around again. So how do we protect it? **We begin with this value, work with churches that hold the same value, we are wary of those that don't, and rebuke those that preach otherwise.**

2nd Because we hold to *Sola Scriptura* and the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible then **we need to accept all of scripture as God-breathed and profitable for teaching, correcting, and rebuking (2 Tim. 3:16-17).** All scripture has a place in our culture. **Culture does not dictate what is correct about the Bible the Bible dictates what's wrong with culture.** Simple things like male eldership, male preachers, any sexual classification other than being born a biological man and woman is wrong, the practice of anything outside of heterosexual marriage is wrong, being spiritually yoked with unbelievers is wrong. **Scripture is very loud and clear on many issues today that people in churches not 5 minutes from us ignore it.**

We also must refrain from the elevation and adoption of cultural ideas, when you study history that is always the first push against the Bible. Scripture is sufficient for all of life it doesn't need your or mine help to bring people into confession, that's the job of the HS through the Word. There is a growing belief that the Bible needs help for it does not answer on how to deal with cultural perceived wrongs, so the church adopts cultural perceived truths like that of the theory of ***intersectionality*** and ***critical race theory***. The Bible does address it, the Bible calls us to live in peace with our neighbors (**Rom. 12:18**) and that by the testimony of our changed lives we help our neighbor see the sin in theirs, which comes by choosing to love others first.

3rd **we need to make it a point to begin teaching to our next generation not only a biblical standard for life but how do they defend and explain it to others, in love.** The reason we come here to HCC is not to find a church that gives us a watered-down gospel that helps us coexist with the world, like Switzerland. But we come to HCC expecting to fight against culture, how it wants our children to



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be raised, we anticipate the pushback from the world and some churches, and we prepare our youth for the job ahead of leading people to Christ. Here’s what I am saying, this church is not about what you are getting out of her now it is about what the world will be getting from her in the years to come, dedicated and prepared leaders for the work of the Gospel.

Now, I want to leave you with where this gets us if standing up to the world is a little scary.

4. The Blessing of being on Jesus’ side!

²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe;
²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.

In closing I want us to check out this picture that Jesus is painting for us, especially if this task can seem daunting.

Jesus is telling us ‘yes’, the devil is a strong man and he knows how to keep his captives and keep his kingdom. **BUT I have come (v.22)**, the stronger man, I have attacked him, I take his armor, I tear down his defenses, his lies, and I am and will take his spoil, the people, and make them my own treasure. So now v. 23 is not so daunting:

²³ **Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.** It’s not that we have to stand up to the world, pick a fight and win it, Jesus did that already, we just come behind Him in His path of destruction when He stomped a mud-hole in the devil and walked it dry!

My family, we are fighting in a war that has already been won! You don’t have to try and convince anyone of the truth, Jesus does that through the Spirit, you just got to deliver it. Deliver to the world the declaration that your children are not for sale, declare to the world that the people in this church are worth fighting for by showing the world how you care for each other, AND make a decision not



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to remain neutral like Switzerland and deliver the declaration that God's Word is still all we need.

PRAY

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father, that has blessed us with His Word that can always be trusted to reveal who He is by seeing the Son.

Go in the name of the Son who has defeated the strong man setting the captives free.

Go in the name and the power of the HS that will give you the words, found from God's Word, when you need to declare the truth.