

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 4- Luke 4:31-37** 49- Jesus' Authority Over Demons- Part 4

October 4, 2009

Luke 4:31-37

Now here we have a demon-possessed man screaming out in the middle of Jesus' sermon. Now please let me tell you something. The worst thing that threatens demons is the full and unashamed preaching of the Gospel. The clear and profound and powerful and accurate preaching of Christ and His Salvation causes demons to absolutely panic. And as I said last time- demons do not normally want to show themselves- they would much rather hide and do their damage quietly- but, sometimes they can't restrain themselves as in this case.

The Apostle John said that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and He was doing just that as He preached here, and so the war was on and the victory was Christ's and the demon knew it. He knew it.

Now please turn with me to **Luke 11:17**. In that verse- Jesus said,

Luke 11:17b-20

17 ... "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house *divided* against itself falls.

18 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 by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges.

20 But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Jesus said, *"If I cast out demons by or with the very Finger or the Authority of God the Father- then the Kingdom of God has come."*

In other words- *"If I'm the Messiah- then you'll see Me cast out demons with God's full Authority. And because I can cast out demons- you must know that I'm the Messiah."*

Now Jesus actually did cast out this demon- but we must also know that Jesus didn't even have to cast the demon out to get a response from that demon- all that Jesus had to do was preach the Truth.

The demons do not like the preaching of the Gospel. And while they would rather sit back quietly- sometimes they can't be restrained and here the demon panicked and he screamed out at Jesus.

So we don't need to go all over the place- poking around- trying to find demons and chase them away. I spoke to a dear lady on the phone recently who really wants me to go to her house to chase demons out of her house. But demons don't live in sheetrock, dear friends- they live and dwell and do their worst damage inside of the certain men that Jude talks about who creep into the Church disguised as genuine Christians and then go about to teach false doctrine and deceive the simple. All we need to do today is just preach the Truth and we will liberate the sinner, and the demons inside them will tremble at the Power of God in the Gospel.

If you simply preach the Word of God, if you simply preach the true Message of Jesus, if you will just preach the Gospel of Salvation- you will literally turn the demonic kingdom into a panic. Why? Paul says in **Romans 1:16:**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

The Bible does not say that the Power of God is demonstrated by people acting silly or by falling on the floor or by popping their necks or by screaming and hollering. That is not what Scripture teaches is the Power of God. The Power of God is not following the so-called prophetic anointing that is so popular in our day. The Bible doesn't say that the Power of God is manifested by speaking in tongues or by prophesying new revelation.

No, the Apostle Paul was moved along by the Holy Ghost to pen down these inspired, inerrant, and infallible Words to tell us that the real, true, genuine, Power of God is manifested in the Gospel of Jesus

Christ, and Paul said- "**it**", the Gospel of Christ, is the Power of God unto Salvation.

So I really believe that way too much attention is being placed on us today as it pertains to demons and the casting out of demons. So much so that in many circles today- casting out demons is just another way of puffing up the flesh of the one who supposedly casts demons out so that they will appear to be great and mighty and powerful in the earth.

Listen- I do not believe that demons fear me or that I have some kind of power over demons- I don't even think that is the issue at all. I absolutely understand that the Bible says in **1John 4:4** that:

... greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

... but in that passage - John was not talking about demons at all- he was talking about false teachers in the Church. I also fully understand that Jesus gave authority to His Apostles to cast out demons- but again- that has nothing to do with me because I am not an Apostle.

I believe that demons fear Jesus and I believe that they tremble in abject terror at the Gospel. So only to the degree that I am saved, and only to the degree that I preach the Gospel rightly and fully- that is to the degree that demons fear me. And so it really isn't so much that they fear *me*- it is that they fear Jesus and they fear His Sovereign Authority and they fear His Word.

The Apostle Paul said that the Gospel was the Power of God unto Salvation- so that is what the demons hate the most and that is what they fear the most and that is what they fight against the most because the Gospel rightly preached and rightly understood tears the sinner away from satan; it forcefully steals the sinner out of the demon's control.

David Gooding, the great Irish Bible scholar said this about demons,

"In the fight for man's deliverance from the power of Satan the first and foremost tactic is the proclamation of the supremely and absolutely authoritative Word of God."

You want to confront the kingdom of darkness? Don't run around with cute little formulas or catchy slogans or by throwing a few Bible

verses at demons. Don't you dare try to walk into satan's kingdom with this little, "*I rebuke you satan*", mantra. Because demons don't fear you, bubba- you don't have that kind of authority- and you'll end up like the seven sons of Sceva- the demon will jump on you and you will run out naked and beaten.

No, if you *really* want to confront the kingdom of darkness- then just preach the supremely and absolutely authoritative Word of God. Because the full and correct preaching of the Son of God turns demons into full scale panic. The preaching of the Son of God through the Word of God does the very same thing today as it did back then. David Gooding also wrote,

"It follows that to neglect the preaching of that Word or in any way cast doubt in people's minds as to its authority and trustworthiness is to play directly into Satan's hands and help maintain his bondage over them."

So anybody who comes along and casts doubt on the Bible or anyone who casts doubt about Who Jesus is- is simply aiding and abetting satan in his desire to keep souls enslaved. And that's what ABC News did in their documentary about their search for Jesus. They didn't find Jesus because they did not consult with Scripture. You cannot find Jesus anywhere on earth except in the pages of Scripture. So all that the entire News Department of ABC News did was to just aid and abet the kingdom of darkness because they put forth a "jesus" that was not the one true Biblical Jesus- and all that does is help satan. That is what Newsweek Magazine does every year when they put forth a story about a Jesus that is drummed up by some liberal Yale Theologian who doesn't believe the Bible. And that is all that US News and World Report and the History Channel and MGM do when they put forth a Jesus in stories or so-called documentaries or movies that is not true and Biblical- they simply help the cause of satan in keeping people in bondage to sin- they work alongside of demons to help keep lost people lost.

They encouraged the demons. That is what any misrepresentation of Jesus does- it encouraged demons.

All that Kenneth Copeland and Joyce Meyers and Joel Osteen and Paula White and Fred Price and TD Jakes and all the other false teachers do is they encourage demons; they make the kingdom that is

run and controlled by demons that much stronger; they aid and abet the kingdom of darkness because these people preach another "gospel" that is *not* the Gospel of God.

Now by the way- real sure nuff demons don't have to search for Jesus like ABS News did. They do not look for Jesus or search for Jesus because they know exactly Who Jesus is, they know exactly where Jesus is and they know precisely why Jesus came to this earth. Jesus came to this earth- the Apostle John says in **1John 3:8**- to utterly destroy all the works, all the power, all the effort, and all the desire of the devil- which is why the Apostle James says that the demons tremble.

And as I told you before- I am praying hard that all these false teachers and these false prophets and these heretics and all the pied-pipers who make merchandise of the sheep and who are leading the sheep to slaughter like a Judas Goat will one day rise to the level of believing in Jesus as much as the demons do- because when they do- they, too, will tremble at the Word of God like the demons tremble.

Now there are four New Testament expressions about demon possession and I'm just going to give you these and we'll stop with a couple of comments, but there are four New Testament expressions that describe demon possession. You need to know what they are.

First, there is the phrase "having a demon". The King James Version says, "hath a devil". And that phrase is used 16 times throughout the New Testament. And it's the most common one. The Greek word is *eikon* that is translated into *having a demon*. This phrase simply means that a person is indwelt and controlled and tormented by a fallen angel or a demon. Other similar phrases are "tormented", or "indwelt", or "controlled"- those are the words.

Now keep in mind, dear friends, there is much teaching about demons in the modern Church that cannot be proven by Scripture and is nothing more than pure speculation. And, if God will help me, I am not going to deal in speculation in this Study- only Scripture.

Now this controlling by demons is not something that a person wanted. Now I suppose that it is *possible* that a person could be open to a demon if he chose to be so- and I suppose that there are some people who would like to be tormented by devils- but I have no idea why. This is not a silly little video game, beloved. To be controlled by demons means that you are lost and headed for hell because genuinely saved people cannot be demon possessed, and it also means that those who are

possessed cannot escape their control over your life- unless a miracle happens- so this isn't cute or funny or cool- it is deadly serious.

So the idea behind this particular Greek phrase is that a demon comes inside a person and controls him, and that person cannot resist the control of the demon and the person is therefore tormented by that control. And that shows us that this was not voluntary.

Now keep in mind that this controlling is *not* a form of mental disease- this isn't anything physical- that can be solved by taking medicine. No, this kind of demonic controlling is a supernatural phenomena.

Now as I said before- demons are rational. They are real, living, individual, and personal spirits. They were angels- who fell from their first estate in Heaven by aligning themselves with Lucifer the arch-angel who rebelled against God in Heaven. So demons can talk. Here this particular demon screams out at Jesus. So from that we know that demons can think - they are intelligent beings- who can reason and can possess knowledge. And we also know that demons show fear.

So demon possession is something that was very different from most of the forms of schizophrenia or paranoia or other bizarre mental illnesses that people have today. Remember that demon possession is not a *physical* disease- even though Scripture does teach that there can be certain physical torments *associated* with demon possession.

Most all mental diseases like narcissism or paranoia or schizophrenia stem from childhood behavioral problems such as not having loving parents or having abusive parents or having parents who spoil their children or demon possessed grown people who molest children. That is why Jesus said it was better than you were never born than for a person to offend a little child.

Children did not ask to be born and so it is the duty and obligation and responsibility of grown people to protect and love and nourish and defend and train up the children. And monsters who prey on little children should be dealt with in the harshest ways to keep our children safe.

Child molestation is on the rise in this nation precisely because God has abandoned this country to their own lusts. God no longer Sovereignly restrains the wickedness that is inside of fallen man in the United States- because for the most part- this nation refuses to repent- so God has done exactly what **Romans 1** promises and He has "**given**

them up" to dishonor their own bodies between themselves so that they can receive in their own bodies that judgment which is meet.

And the closer we come to the Return of Jesus to this earth- the worst these things will get. Men will become more selfish, more self-centered, more sinful, more evil, and much more bold about wickedness and evil and ungodliness, and much more open about sin, and they will get much more violent and more brutal- and because God has "turned these people over"- they will be less convicted, less troubled, and less ashamed about these things than ever before. You see, just as demon activity increased exponentially at the *first* coming of Jesus- so, too- demon activity will increase exponentially the closer it gets to His *second* coming.

Now another fascinating thing to know about demon possession that Scripture teaches is that nowhere does Jesus speak of the forgiveness of sins with regard to demon-possessed people. You have all these occasions where Jesus is confronted by demon-possessed people- and where He casts out the demons- but never in any of those cases- not one single time- is there any discussion at all of the forgiveness of their sins, which is very interesting.

However- sometimes when Jesus healed people of *physical* diseases- there *was* a discussion about the forgiveness of their sins. But never after curing someone who had a demon did Jesus ever speak of the forgiveness of their sins. And that serves to teach us that demon possessed people were not necessarily the most wicked or sinful people around.

Now many people today in the modern Church teach exactly this- they teach that demon possessed people got that way because of some specific sinful thing that they watched or were a part of that was evil- but Jesus never said that these people became demon possessed because they were the most wretched, vile, or wicked people in town. That's just flat out not true.

But while it is true that the people who were demon possessed were not necessarily the most wicked people around- it is also true that they also were not the most penitent people either- because in all the Bible- there is never any discussion throughout the entire Bible of any of the demon possessed people ever believing in Jesus or asking for Salvation or of even repenting of their sins- none. It just never happened and it certainly didn't happen on this occasion either.

So the point that we can make of all this is that it isn't about the *man*. It is not about the demon-possessed *person*. That's not where Luke takes this story at all. The point that Luke makes here is that Jesus had power over the demons- that's the point that Luke is making here and it is the only point that he is making.

So the entire focal point of Luke's account here is Jesus' complete and absolute and total Power and Authority over demons to show us that Jesus is well able to break the power of hell and set the prisoners free so he can save their souls.

So even though there are ministries all over the place that seemingly specialize in all kinds of demonology- and they have even made up clever prayers to pray over certain types of demons- there is a whole lot of speculation involved in those ministries and they add many things to their teachings that Scripture simply does not teach- so I cannot agree with them and I cannot recommend them.

So we cannot make the conclusion from anything that Scripture actually teaches that people got demon possessed because they were more wicked than anybody else. That's just not taught anywhere in the New Testament.

And I'll tell you another way that we know that- because there were children- little children- who were demon possessed. And it would be hard to argue that these children were the most wicked of all.

Nor were people delivered from demons here because they repented. In the case of the New Testament- the demonstration of Jesus' Power over demons was simply a matter of Jesus Sovereignly casting out demons to show us that He had that kind of Divine Power and Authority over all the power of satan and his entire kingdom.

So in the time of Jesus and the Apostles- the Apostles were given the power to do that as well as the 70 were. And they could deliver people from demons- but not necessarily see those people saved. But once Jesus and the Apostles passed off the scene- the only way that any sinner will ever be delivered from demons today ultimately is to be saved.

So this dispensation with Jesus going about casting out demons as recorded for us in the Gospels was a special and unique time which was a powerful and glorious and unmistakable exhibition of Messianic Power to give credibility to Who Jesus said that He was. And there is an ongoing exhibition of that very same Messianic Power going on today

among us as true eternal deliverance from demon control occurs every single time Christ comes into the life of a person and He forcefully and violently delivers that person from satan's kingdom through the glorious Power of the Gospel to save their souls.

Now, the second most common phrase concerning demon possession in the New Testament is "demonized", or one who was demonized. And the Greek word is *daimonizomai*- used 13 times and describes the very same thing- a person indwelt by a demon who is exercising control over that person to the point where the person can't resist the control and is, therefore, tormented by it- tormented both mentally and physically.

Now please- as we discuss demon possession- do not ever confuse demon *possession* with demon *influence*- because the two are not the same. Everybody on earth is *influenced* by satan and demons to some degree- but not everybody is demon *possessed*. Remember that satan is the god of this world and he is the prince of the power of the air and the ruler of the world and all of that.

He's got the *kosmos*, or the evil *system* of the world, under his influence and we all feel that influence and are affected by it to some degree every day. But that's different from being demonized. To be demonized does not mean to be somewhat *exposed* to satan's influence simply by living in this world- to be demonized means to literally have a demon or group of demons resident inside of you- literally possessing you and controlling you and tormenting you. But the particular phenomenon of satan demonizing people or possessing people is much more rare than simply being *influenced* by demonic activity.

Now the Scriptures teach that the main way in which demons influence people- saved or lost- is through false teaching. Please turn with me to **1Timothy 4**:

1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;

5 for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

The phrase in verse 1- "doctrines of demons" means those teachings which came from satan himself and which did not come from the Holy Spirit. And Paul teaches here that in the last days- people shall depart from the true teaching of Scripture; they will abandon the once for all given to the saints Faith- and they will give heed or they will pay attention to or they will accept and believe and trust in teachings that come from "seducing spirits"- which are demons and "doctrines of demons".

Now not everybody who says something that isn't quite correct is doing this. But we must be aware that the Apostle John teaches in **1John4** that there are many antichrists already in the world and these evil and ungodly heretics and apostates go about to deceive the simple and ignorant about the ways of God.

Now listen closely to this. Any teaching that attacks Biblical Christianity is of the devil. Any teaching- no matter how popular, no matter how widely accepted, no matter how reasonable it may sound - that tears down what the Bible teaches is of the devil. Those who teach false doctrine are the "seducing spirits" that Paul talks about here and the false teaching that these seducing spirits teach are "doctrines of demons."

The only one who gains by people being deceived is satan. The only one who rejoices that people do not know the Truth is satan. The only one who benefits by people not being forcefully ripped out of the kingdom of darkness by hearing and knowing the Truth is satan. And since only the one true Gospel can violently rescue people out from under the domination of the devil- then it is in satan's best interest to put forth false religions and false teachings and false doctrines that

come straight from the devil himself so that people will be deceived and die in their sins.

I suppose the most widely known doctrine of devils is Islam- which enslaves over 1 billion people today in its lies and deception. Buddhism, Hinduism, and modern Judaism- all are either perversions of the one true Way or they are complete fabrications designed by satan to keep people under the domination of demons.

And then you have Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Roman Catholicism, and Oneness Pentecostalism- all doctrines of devils; all twisting Scripture to allow demons to keep controlling the people. The so-called Messianic groups- deceived into thinking that they can keep the Law- all doctrines of devils. The Health and Prosperity Message- straight out of the pit- to lull people to sleep based on the condition of their pocket book and their physical strength. Any teaching that contradicts or that fights against or that minimizes what the Scriptures actually teach is a doctrine of demons.

So here we can see that demons influence people through false doctrine, and they influence people in immorality, and according to **James 3:13-16**- the Bible says that demons influence us in attitudes of jealousy and divisiveness and pride.

In other words- demons have created a world system that sends temptations toward us every hour of every day. But demonized people were not just *influenced* by these ungodly influences- they are actually *dominated* and *controlled* and *tormented* by these demons. And those are the three words that describe this phenomenon called demon possession:

1. Dominated
2. Controlled
3. Tormented

Now all throughout the Bible- the demons literally spoke through the vocal cords of the individuals in whom they possessed as we find in **Matthew 8:29**, or if they wanted to- they could keep the person from speaking as found in **Matthew 12:22**. The demons caused blindness in some as **Matthew 12:22** tells us, and they gave supernatural physical strength to others as found in **Mark 5:3**; while still other demons promoted nakedness in the people they possessed. So the very first

original streaker was a demon-possessed guy in **Mark 5**. And this nakedness wasn't anything immoral - it wasn't some kind of a prurient thing on his part- it wasn't just lewd conduct- it was an expression of the torment that this person was experiencing. It was embarrassing. It was shameful. It was hideous to be constantly running around naked because you were being tormented and driven to do that by a demon, to say nothing of being cold if it was in the winter.

Now you also have in the New Testament phrases like "entering in," "going out," "came out," "cast out," referring to demonized people. So the Bible describes demon possession as being an "indwelling", or a "control" and a "torment". And these words are unique to demonization. Now please read again **Luke 4:35**:

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm.

Here, Jesus says, "**Come out of him**," which indicates that there was an indwelling and there was control because the demon had taken the man's voice and used it, and there was torment because the demon threw the man down in the middle, although Jesus prevented him from doing any more harm to him.

So demonization is this kind of indwelling, controlling, and tormenting of resident demons who've taken up a place in a person's life. Having a demon, or being demonized, goes along with a third phrase that is "with an unclean spirit."

And it, too, means exactly the same thing as the other two terms- and you see it here in this text- possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, or an unclean spirit of a demon. It's the same thing referring to the very same phenomena. One other phrase associated in the Bible with demon possession is found in **The Acts 5:16**, where it says:

... afflicted with unclean spirits ...

So these people were afflicted or tormented with unclean spirits, and the word "afflicted" looks at the torment side of it...distressed, disturbed, tormented.

So a demon-possessed person is in this terrible condition. It is horrible, it is very real- but it is very rare. And maybe a better way of

saying it is that demon possession may be more common- but the outward, visible manifestation of demon possession shows itself rarely, and that is due to the fact that demons prefer to work behind the scenes and they want to maintain subtlety and be clandestine because it's more effective for their cause that way.

But when it does manifest itself- demon possession shows up only in the ways that we see it in the New Testament. It shows up in these forms of torment on these pitiful individuals and it shows up in fear and terror and panic at the right and full preaching of the Gospel.

Now I want you to turn to a very important passage that is often taught as being about demon possession that is found in **Matthew 12:43**. And you will find that it really isn't about demon possession at all. Here Jesus gives us an illustration about a demon. And in verse 43, our Lord says:

43 “Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

44 Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.”

Now first of all notice that Jesus uses that "go in" and "going out" language here which indicates that the demon is not just *influencing* the individual in a general sense like he does with all of us- but that this person is literally *dominated* or *controlled* or *tormented* by a demon or a group of demons.

Now this is a very fascinating statement by Jesus. This is a sort of a metaphor here or an analogy- a sort of a picture that Jesus gives us here. So what can we get out of this? First of all- the person who is demon possessed is like a house and the demon is like an occupant.

And then in verse 43- Jesus said:

when the unclean spirit goes out of a man ...

Now, Jesus really didn't tell us here just how this demon went out of this man. But from the way that this sentence is structured here- we

can see that the demon either decided to leave on his own or else he was cast out. Either way- he went out of the man.

But from what Jesus says here- the demon spirit is like a man who leaves his home and what does he do? He wanders out in the desert and he's roaming around in a waterless places and he can't find a place to rest. He thought that maybe the grass was greener in some other area rather than inside this person, but there was no water where he went, and so Jesus says that the demon says to himself in verse 44:

... I will return to my house from which I came...

In other words- the demon says, *"It was better for me to be in that house than out here where there is no water, and so I better go back to the house that I just came out of"*. So he returns to the person that he left. But he finds that person different than before. Look at the end of verse 44 again:

... when it comes, it finds *it* (the house or the person) unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

Now how did that happen? Jesus could be referring to these Jewish exorcists who went around like the seven sons of Sceva in **Acts** and did this kind of thing. Maybe this is the result of this person having had the demons called out of him and the demons have obliged and left and said, *"I don't need to deal with this grief, I'll just find another place. Now that they know I'm here- my cover is blown and I'm not going to be as effective as I was- so I'll just leave."* So the demon goes out and he tries to find another place, another person, but he can't find another place that's as accommodating and that suits the demon's purposes as well as the man he just left. And so Jesus says that the demon goes right back to the first person and what does he find? The man has cleaned up his act. He goes back to inhabit and control and torment the very same person as before and he finds that the person is now clean.

Now contrary to what is usually taught about this in the modern Church- the "cleanliness" with which this person has cleaned himself does not forbid the demon to come back, nor does it prohibit the demon from coming back- but rather- it actually *attracts* him. But how could

that be? But isn't it better to be clean than to be dirty? Is Jesus saying that being clean is wrong here? Not at all.

Now many people teach that this man got saved at this point- only he didn't *stay* saved, and these misguided people teach that once you are demon possessed- then you better tow the line or else you will be demon possessed all over again- even though you were saved at one time. But that is not what Jesus is teaching here at all.

Now, in order to understand what Jesus is really talking about in this passage- we have to remember two things. First of all- we need to know who Jesus is talking to, and, secondly, we need to remember that satan's best way of working in the earth is not through open demonstrations of demon possession- but through false teaching that keeps people enslaved.

So remember who Jesus is talking to here. Verse 24 and verse 38 of **Matthew 12** tells us that Jesus was talking to the Pharisees. And the context of the discussion in this passage is that these lost, unsaved, self-righteous, religious leaders were arguing with Jesus about Who He was and how a man gets right with God.

And the beginning of this discussion here in verse 43 is at the end of a much longer discussion about their own lost unsaved condition.

So the man in whom the demon left didn't get saved- he simply got more religious. He became clean only in the sense that these Pharisees thought that they were clean. So this man may have simply sacrificed more animals, he may have washed himself more often, he may have begun to pay tithes out of his seeds of his field. So all the "cleanness" of this man is *human* cleanness- not *spiritual* cleanness. This man didn't actually get clean or saved- no, he simply became a better Jew- he got *superficially* clean through the performance of his own good deeds.

And so what Jesus is actually telling these religious frauds is that demons would much rather inhabit *them*- people who take great comfort in how they have made *themselves* clean and white by what they have done for themselves, than the demon would inhabit other people because satan and fallen angles can do much *more* work through superficial and religious people like them than they can with anyone else.

You see, dear friends, satan and demons would much rather occupy very *religious* people than very *irreligious* people because satan

disguises himself as an angel of light, and his ministers are disguised as angels of light.

So now Jesus says that the demon goes and gets seven more demons who are even more wicked than he is and they all go back together and they find this self-righteous religious man, and he's had a little more superficial cleansing; he's sort of made a bunch of promises to God and kind of cleaned up his act a little bit- but he certainly is not saved.

And what Jesus is saying all this for is not to teach great mysteries about demons or demon possession near so much as he is simply rebuking the Jews for their false religious system of legalism- that is a doctrine of devils. In this passage- Jesus is describing the average first century self-righteous Jewish legalist and how these people really and truly thought that they can become righteous before God by what they do rather than admit that they are wretched sinners and fall on the Mercy of God and beg God for Salvation.

So how does Jesus describe the spiritual condition of these self-righteous Jews? He says that a man who is possessed with one demon is not nearly as bad off as they are. Now you know- it's statements like this as to why the Jews loved Jesus so much. He was always so gentle and loving with these people. Jesus never just came right out and told them they were evil; He never told them that the entire system of religious training and ceremonies and rituals that they had been involved in their whole lives was a gigantic waste of time- did He? No, He just loved on them and patted them on the head and encouraged them to keep on doing what they were doing- right? I mean Jesus was so diplomatic and He went along to get along- right? I mean Jesus never rocked the boat, He was never controversial, He was never blunt in His absolute condemnation of false religious practices was He? He never made anyone feel uncomfortable, He never told anyone they were lost, He never talked about Hell, He never expected anything out of anybody, He always agreed with whatever anyone believed, and He never condemned anyone for doing the wrong thing- right?

Well if you listen to some of these preachers on the Hay, Wood, and Stubble Television Network- that's what you would think about Jesus. But as you actually read the Bible with me this morning- you get a completely different picture don't you? No, Jesus absolutely is rebuking these people for their false religiosity and for teaching

doctrines of devils, and they hated Jesus for it. And make no mistake about it, dear friends, if you stand up and preach this Gospel correctly and fully- they will hate you, too.

Jesus says in verse 45 that this one demon goes and he finds seven more demons- who are even more wicked than he is, and now there's eight demons and they all take up residence inside this man. And Jesus says here that:

...the last state of that man becomes worse than the first...

And then to top it all off and to show His utter hatred for the false religious system that is a doctrine of demons that teaches men that in order to be saved they must do religious things and get baptized or partake of Communion or attend the Mass or go to Confession or speak in tongues or give seed money to some ministry or be anointed with oil from the Garden of Gethsemane or wear a prayer cloth or pray to dead saints or do any other number of other human actions that have absolutely nothing to do with the Glorious Gift of Salvation that is given By Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone- Jesus said this at the end of Verse 45:

That is the way it will also be with this evil generation

To the very same extent that this demon possessed man was in worse shape than before- Jesus is saying that every single human being on earth who tries to go to Heaven by earning it, who tries to work his way into Heaven by doing religious things, who tries to become acceptable to God based on his own inherent human righteousness will be just this bad off.

...the last state of that man becomes worse than the first...

Let me be crystal clear about this, dear friends, if you are in any way trying to develop yourself into being acceptable in God's Eyes by what you do or don't do- then make no mistake about it- your last state will be worse than the first, and Jesus is talking to you here. If you are in any way thinking that by taking Communion or by going to Confession- that you are *being* saved- then Jesus is talking to you. If

you think that because your father was a Pastor or because you know the Bible or because you speak in tongues or because you got baptized that you are on your way to Heaven- then Jesus is talking to you, and a pitiful demon possessed man is better off than you are. If in any way you think that by your obedience to the law of God you can earn a place in Heaven with God- then understand this very clearly- you are deceived and your last state will be worse than the first, and Jesus is talking to you.

Salvation comes by only one way- the Sovereign Mercy of God. You do not deserve it, you cannot earn it, and you cannot work for it. It is a gift of God and that means that it doesn't matter how bad you have been, it doesn't matter how much you have sinned, it doesn't matter how wicked your heart is- Thank God- it doesn't matter.

All that matters is that you realize that you're lost. All that matters is that you recognize that you are a sinner who deserves the eternal damnation of a just and holy God, and all that matters is that you cry out to God for Mercy and beg God to save your sinful soul- that you honestly in your heart believe that Jesus is God, that Jesus is Lord, and that Salvation comes through no other Name other than Jesus, and that you honestly believe in your heart that in order to show His great approval of all that Jesus did by dying on the Cross to pay for the sins of all men- that God actually and literally and physically raised this same Jesus from the dead and you may be saved.

Well, so much for exorcism, right? So much for religious formulas and incantations. Jesus said, "That's how it is with this- what kind of generation?- this *evil* generation."

So if you have never dealt with your sin- if you have never confessed your sin to God and begged Jesus for forgiveness that you do not deserve, if you have never truly repented and trusted in the finished Work of Jesus Christ alone- then you are not saved; you are still lost in your sin and you're never going to be truly delivered- no matter how many demons leave you.

And you still have no control. You might have just one demon, you might have a time when the demon's gone and you might have eight coming back. But you don't have any control over that. That's the way it is to live in a state of being in the kingdom of darkness under the power of Satan. And that is the condition of every single lost person on earth. Will you come to Jesus this morning?

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.