

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

100- Jesus' Authority Over Disease; Disabilities; Demons; and Death- Part 11

Church June 09, 2024

Matthew 9:32-38

32 As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.

33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

34 But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

38 "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

The Holy Bible is THE single most *contested* Book of all Time. And while we, in our modern world, take for granted the abundance of Translations and the ease in which we buy, read, study, proclaim, and defend this Book- there was a Time- not so very long ago- when the men, who taught or even read the Bible- were arrested, imprisoned, beaten, and killed- without Mercy.

Since the Resurrection of Jesus- the Bible has become THE most "blood-stained" Book in all of human History. Believers have fought over it; been burned alive; been imprisoned; beaten; and even buried alive for it. For example, in 1536- William Tyndale was strangled to Death- and his dead body was burned- for the horrific "crime" of publishing the Bible in the English language. I wonder sometimes what Tyndale, who was martyred for giving us the Bible in a Language

we can understand, would say to those modern American “christians”, who say they are simply too busy to read the Book that cost him his Life.

And 89 years BEFORE Martin Luther nailed his “95 Thesis” to the front door of the Church at Wittenberg and ignited the Protestant Reformation- John Wycliffe- who had been martyred for proclaiming that the Scriptures and NOT the pope was the “*final Authority*” in the Church- had his dry bones dug up- 14 years AFTER he had died; his bones were put on Trial; his bones were found guilty; and they were sentenced to an Eternity in Hell- by people, who laid claim to represent Jesus- the Prince of Peace.

So, today- approximately 2,024 years since Jesus was literally and physically raised from the Dead by the Glory of the Father- I have the high Honor and the distinct Privilege to stand before you this morning and herald the glorious Gospel as written by the Apostle Matthew- verse-by-verse!

Now last Time, we found out that even though this is NOT the *first* time that Jesus cast out demons- I thought it wise to use this Passage as the “spring- board” to give to you all a short History from the Bible- concerning satan and the fallen hordes of Angels called, “Demons”. And I told you then that I will teach:

- Demons are real
- They are “fallen” Angels
- They dwell on the earth
- They are purely “spiritual beings”
- They can literally *possess* unsaved human beings
- They fight against the Church
- They know and understand God’s Word
- They CANNOT love God
- They CANNOT repent
- They know there is a Day coming when they will be judged by God
- They are terrified of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit
- They can ONLY do what God *allows* them to do
- God uses them for His own Glory
- They are Liars
- They are NOT Invincible- even though they are mightier than Humans
- Their Power lies in their Craftiness and their Deceivableness
- They CANNOT *force* anyone to sin
- They will spend all of Eternity in the Lake of Fire

... and we also found out that satan was an archangel in Heaven named, “Lucifer”. And Lucifer was beautiful and musical and powerful- but evidently, when God made him- He gave Lucifer and even other Angels the ability to either obey or

rebel against God. And so, they did. And Lucifer also deceived 1/3 of all the Angels of Heaven and they waged a War against God for Supremacy.

Now I don't think we can hardly call what Lucifer did- a "War" because God solved the Problem in a very brief Instant. In **Luke 10:18**, Jesus said,

I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

... and that is when Lucifer BECAME, "*satan*" and when the Angels Lucifer deceived BECAMED, "*demons*". And so, Lucifer as well as 1/3 of all the Angels were cast out of Heaven where they will dwell until God casts them into Hell.

As I have told you before- demons do NOT *primarily* want to be seen. They want to work in the background. And so, the *primary* Way in which demons operate in the earth is by helping lost and unsaved people create and then propagate false Teaching and even entire false Religions. For example, the false Religions of Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the many other "isms" that exist in the earth today are the Product of demonly motivated people- writing down what the Apostle Paul called, "**Doctrines of Demons**" (**1 Timothy 4:1**).

But much of what goes by the Name of "Judaism" also fits within this Category- because what is being taught in the Synagogues of our Day- is NOT a true exposition of the Old Covenant- but rather a *mimicking* of what the Levitical Priests developed during the "*400 years of Silence*"- that Time-frame between Malachi's "Burden" and the production of the **Gospel of Matthew**.

Now how do I know this to be true? How can I say that what goes in the name of Judaism today is NOT a true exposition of the Old Testament? Because of what Dr. Luke infallibly wrote in **Luke 24:27** when Jesus met with the two men walking on the road to Emmaus:

Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Now when Dr. Luke wrote that Jesus,

... explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures

... the "**Scriptures**" He was referring to- was NOT the 27 Books of the New Testament because NONE of those Books had been written at the Time this Event took place. The good Doctor was referring to the 39 Books of the Old Testament that had already been published and was in wide circulation around the "known world" 200 years BEFORE Jesus was born.

So, from **Genesis** to **Malachi**- the Old Testament is about Jesus! And now that Jesus has come; and lived; and died; and risen again- ANYONE who reads the Old Testament and does NOT *see* Jesus; or who does NOT *come* to Jesus; or who does NOT *embrace* Jesus- is simply NOT reading the Old Testament correctly. There is a spiritual “veil” over their minds and hearts.

Now back in the 1st Century- the overwhelming majority of Jews did NOT see, nor come to, nor embrace Jesus. But even today- the Jew *categorically* refuses to bow before the Lord Christ. And so, the Passage in **2Corinthians 4: 3&4** applies to the modern Jew:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

So, until that “veil” is sovereignly removed through the Miracle of the New Birth- the spiritually blind Jew- as well as the spiritually blind Gentile will NOT be able to see, “**the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**”- and he will NOT be saved. But who is it that has blinded the Minds and Hearts of the lost Gentiles as well as the lost Jews?

... the god of this world...

... who is satan.

So, unlike what Hollywood produces, the *primary* Way in which satan and his demon hordes operate in the earth is NOT by turning little girl’s heads around; or causing them to vomit green bile; or making people go through horrific gyrations. It is in the creation; the development; and the propagation of false Teaching. It is in working to keep lost people- lost. And it is in bringing Disrespect and Disillusionment to the visible Church on the earth.

For example, when the largest and most wide- spread child-abuse Scandal- in the History of the world- was exposed in the Roman religious System- they lost whatever Credibility they ever had. When Josh Harris- the former Pastor of Covenant Life Church and the author of “*I Kissed Dating Goodbye*”; and a well-known Teacher- *renounced* his Faith; *divorced* his Wife; and *abandoned* his Family- this was a *demonically* motivated Event. And over the last several years, we have seen a literal plethora of famous Pastors of large mega-Churches- do similar things and resign under the cloud of great Scandal. Even Ravi Zacharias’ Hypocrisy was exposed after his Death.

Now satan did this- to bring Disrespect and Disillusionment to the visible Church on the earth. And that is *exactly* how the lost world saw it. And so, they wrote things like this from an Editorial in the *New York Times*, “... *these things prove that the people of the Church are NO different than anybody else- because they suffer from the very SAME things that everybody else does. And so, obviously, there is NOTHING about the Bible that we need today.*”

But we have to realize that the Reason behind WHY the lost world reacted that way- was NOT because they are the “arbiters of godly Morality”- because they are all wicked Sinners, too. The lost world did this- because by revealing the Sin and Hypocrisy of many in Leadership in the Church- they could then judge the Bible as being worthless and nothing but a collection of Myths- which would relieve them from having to bow to its Authority.

So, the Goal in exposing all of these Scandals was NOT to simply destroy the men themselves but to bring Dishonor and Disrespect to the Word of God- which those Church Leaders claimed to represent. And this is why God told the lost and unsaved Jews this from **Ezekiel 36:23**:

I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.

So, how do God’s people cause the Nations of the world to blaspheme and profane God’s Name? First of all, we need to go way back in **Exodus 20:7** when God told Moses,

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

So, just what is God’s “*Name*”? And how do human beings take the Name of the Lord, “*in vain*”? The word, “**Name**” here signifies God’s own pristine “*Reputation*” of both WHO He is and WHAT He alone has done. In other words, God’s “Name” is the *summation* of all God’s Attributes and Characteristics as well as ALL His mighty Acts that He alone has done in the earth. So, God’s Name is WHO God is. And that is *why* God told Moses,

... I AM WHO I AM ... (Exodus 3:14)

The “*Covenant Name of God*” (Yahweh) is built on the verb, “**I AM**” and signifies God’s absolute Being. So, “I AM” shows us that God had NO Beginning;

NO Ending; NO Becoming; and has NO Dependence on ANYTHING outside of Himself!

The meaning of this phrase, “**in vain**” in **Exodus 20:7** is really quite plain when you just look up the uses in the Old Testament and then cap it off with a word from Jesus. Listen to these uses:

Jeremiah 2:30a: “In vain have I struck your sons; They accepted no chastening.”

Jeremiah 4:30: “In vain you make yourself beautiful. Your lovers despise you.”

Jeremiah 6:29: “In vain the refining goes on, But the wicked are not separated.”

Jeremiah 46:11: “In vain you have multiplied remedies; There is no healing for you.”

Malachi 3:14: “You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge?’”

So, the phrase, “**in vain**” means: *futile, empty, pointless, wasted*: You spank the children- but there’s no Correction. You put on makeup- but there are no Lovers. You put the wicked through the refiner’s Fire- but there’s no Repentance. You take the medicine- but there’s no healing. You serve God- but there’s no Profit in it. It all happens in vain!

So, when God’s people do this; or when they think like this; or when the people- who carry God’s Name- genuinely fell like this- this is the Work of demons! But it doesn’t simply affect God’s people- it also causes the unsaved people of the world to Blaspheme against God.

So, when God’s people think or act or believe or talk no differently from the lost pagan world- the people who are NOT saved reason to themselves and say, “*Why should I repent? And why do I need to be saved? Those people say they are saved and look at how they’re acting; listen to how they’re talking; and look at what they’re doing! They are NO different than I am! There’s NOTHING to their Book and there’s NOTHING to their Jesus! Jesus can’t help me- because He obviously hasn’t helped them!*”

Now what those people say about God and Jesus and the Bible is Blasphemy! It is wrong; it is a Sin; and they will be judged for saying those things. But the people of God- who do NOT obey God gladly- have CAUSED the lost world to blaspheme God’s Name! And God will judge His own people for that!

Now when we see Church Leaders publicly exposed for their hidden Sins- we MUST remember that God is Sovereign. And so, what is actually happening is that our sovereign God is sovereignly exercising His sovereign Rights over His Church- and using satan as a Tool to do it! In other words, God is publicly and

powerfully and unmistakably “cleaning house”! He is moving unsaved and false Teachers out of the Way- to make room for genuine godly men who will love the sheep that they lead! Because neither the Good Shepherd Himself (Jesus) nor the many “under-Shepherds” who operate in His Name and to His Glory- would never harm a little defenseless sheep. Because they remember what Jesus told Peter in **John 21:15-17:**

15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

... and they remember what God told the Shepherds in **Ezekiel 34:**

1 Then the word of the Lord came to me saying,

2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?

3 “You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock.

4 “Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.

5 “They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered.

6 “My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek for them.

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

8 “As I live,” declares the Lord God, “surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock;

9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

10 ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.”’”

11 For thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

12 “As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.

13 “I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

14 “I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

15 “I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest,” declares the Lord God.

16 “I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

17 “As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.

18 ‘Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet?

19 ‘As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!’”

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them, “Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

21 “Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

23 “Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

24 “And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.

25 “I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

26 “I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

27 “Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

28 “They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make them afraid.

29 “I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore.

30 “Then they will know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people,” declares the Lord God.

31 “As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” declares the Lord God.

... and all of this is what motivated the first Pastor of the Church in Jerusalem to infallibly write this in **James 3:1-12:**

1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

4 Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.

5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!

6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.

8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

So, while it is true that satan thought he could destroy the Christian Church- it is also true that God sovereignly *restricts* satan to the degree that, in Reality, the ONLY thing that suffered Disrespect and Disillusionment was the false Doctrine those unsaved men were peddling. So, God used satan to do two *wonderful* things:

1. Removed unsaved and ungodly men from Church Leadership
2. Verify that the Church belongs to Jesus

Now some in the modern Church say that satan brought about those Scandals by *publicly* exposing the ungodly men and their ungodly actions. But that isn't true. Satan was active while those men were sinning secretly. That's when satan was moving- behind the scenes; in the darkness; and hidden in secret- *tempting* and *enticing* lost and unsaved men to act out on their fallen and sinful Passions. That is when demons were active.

And God gave those men "space to repent". God held back what James said was "**a stricter Judgment**" and did NOT immediately expose and judge them. But there came a Time when God would no longer allow sinful men to lead in the Church that Jesus is building and over which Jesus is Head. And so, in His righteous Might- God publicly and unmistakably moved to expose the Hypocrites before the entire world! And the Message that God was giving to the entire world was:

"See what I will do in My own Church; and with the Leaders of those Churches; and with all those who say they belong to Me! And from that you should know that I am God! And I am absolutely Sovereign over all things pertaining to My Church! And I will NOT hesitate to 'clean house'! But, I want you to know that I am watching you, too. Because I know about your secret Sins and so, I am giving you space to repent so that I will NOT have to expose you, too!"

The Point I am making is that satan did NOT expose the Hypocrites- God did. Satan and demons were moving on that individual while he was sinning; while he was abusing God's people; while he was abusing children; and while he was fleecing the sheep and becoming wealthy off their labor. But in each case- satan was moving the MOST when that Leader was teaching false Doctrine; while he was leading the Sheep astray; and while he was helping to keep lost people- lost.

But, in each case- God was faithful to give those men "space to repent". And it was only when they were determined to *continue* on in their Sin; and when they *refused* to repent that God said, "*Enough!*" and exposed them. Now last time, I asked you a Question: "*Casting out demons is a good thing- right?*"

... and I answered that Question myself when I said,

"It was when Jesus did it."

... and the Reason I answered the Question like that- is because of a strange Passage that Jesus spoke in **Luke 11:24-28** that says:

24 "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

25 And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

26 Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

27 While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed."

28 But He said, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."

Now, back when we were on our verse-by-verse "Journey" through the **Gospel of Luke**- I preached about this Passage very deeply. So, you may want to go back and get those Sermons. But suffice it to say that when I was a new Christian back in the early 1970's- the usual Way in which this Passage was preached was that it dealt with "*Exorcisms without Salvation.*"

And even today- many, if not most teach that what Jesus said here deals with casting out the demon from the person who is possessed- without that person being saved. And in verse 25- the demon, who was cast out...

... goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

... and that is why Jesus said this in verse 28:

... blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.

Now there are, in our modern world, people and groups and organizations that supposedly *specialize* in casting out demons. And I say it like that- because many of those people and groups think the Problem is solved when the demon is cast out.

Now they correctly teach that demons are practically *useless* unless they inhabit people. So, demons are *primarily* useful ONLY when they possess a human being- to either torment that person or use that person to develop Doctrines of demons.

So, in the first part of verse 24, the demon is cast out- but then in the rest of verse 24 and all of 25, Jesus said the demon,

... passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

Now when Jesus said the demon, “**passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any**” He was speaking metaphorically. But this does illustrate how demons are primarily useless unless they are possessing a human being.

But then Jesus shows us how dangerous it is for people to cast demons out of unsaved people and then, thinking that the job was done- do NOT preach the Gospel to those people to allow God to save them. They haven't done those people any Favors, because then the demon,

... goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there ...

... and then Jesus gave us the terrifying Warning when He said,

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

But I see an even *greater* Danger here. I see that this Passage deals with one of the most common Ways that satan moves in the earth. So, this Passage deals with a great Deception that has captured the minds and hearts and souls of hundreds of millions of people throughout the world. And that is the Distinction between *outward* humanly engineered “Morality” and the *inward* Miracle of the New Birth. It is about lost people striving to be moral- or morally pure- WITHOUT actually being saved. So, this has to do with what I call,

The Problem of Righteousness

... which is actually the “Problem of Legalism”.

And this is a Distinction that we, as Believers, must ALWAYS understand and speak and teach and believe. Because the lost, pagan World that surrounds us does NOT believe what the Bible teaches about this Subject. And that is why the Institutions of this great Nation are all deceived and wrong about this Issue- everyone from the public school System to the Federal Government. They all say and believe and teach the very SAME thing. And what they say and what they teach and what they believe is diametrically Opposite from what Scripture teaches.

But this Passage also deals with demons- Jesus called them “**unclean spirit(s)**” here. So, let’s go over this Passage to see what our Lord was talking about. First of all, as I said, this Passage deals with the main Way in which demons operate in the earth- and that is, when people try to become Moral without experiencing the New Birth. It is when unsaved people try to become morally righteous- WITHOUT God and WITHOUT Grace.

This Passage answers the Question, “*What happens when lost people try to act like saved people without actually being saved?*” And the Answer is: “*It will kick open a double door for the demons to come in!*” One demon went out and eight came back. So, this is talking about a very *religious* person- an outwardly *moral* person- who is lost- who goes about the Effort to “clean up his Act”- without actually being saved. So, this is about a lost person striving to become Moral- WITHOUT the Power of the New Birth.

So, in Context, Jesus was talking about the Self-righteous Pharisees- who believed and taught that human beings can earn God’s Favor and develop our own personal, intrinsic Righteousness to the degree that we will DESERVE Heaven!

And the main point here is this: moral Reformation- without true Salvation- is very dangerous! Morality without Salvation is very frightening!

And this frightening Morality comes about through being deceived about what Righteousness actually is- and how human beings may

obtain that Righteousness. So, this Passage is also about the great Danger of the Heresy of “*Legalism*”.

Legalism is a vicious and damning Heresy that teaches that God’s Grace isn’t enough; and that we humans MUST “do something” in order to accomplish two things:

1. Earn God’s Favor
2. Develop our own Righteousness

And this Heresy has deceived tens of millions of people throughout History and throughout our World today. For example, it is the official, codified Teaching of the Roman religious System; the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons); the Jehovah’s Witnesses; the Seventh Day Adventists; and the Church of Christ- as well as many Pentecostal; Charismatic; and “Full-Gospel” churches. But the Heresy of Legalism is also the official and formal and codified Teaching of Buddhism; Hinduism; Islam; as well as modern Judaism.

Yet Legalism is the enemy of the Grace of God; and the Grace of God is the enemy of Legalism. These two are always at War against each other- yet only one will dominate within an individual. And when the Grace of God dominates- the individual will be saved. But when the Heresy of Legalism dominates in a person’s mind and heart- that individual will be deceived and will strive to earn God’s Favor by what he does for himself- WITHOUT God and WITHOUT Grace- and that individual will not only reject God’s Grace for himself- but he will also denounce it in others. And even though the Heresy of Legalism is alive and well and active in a Church near you- it is actually an ancient Heresy- whose most famous adherents were the unsaved Pharisees of Jesus’ Day. And it was to them that Jesus spoke these words.

So, we must take great Heed to ourselves, dear friends, that we do not fall into the Trap of Legalism- but that we always believe and that always teach the Beauty and the Glory and the Power of God’s amazing unearned Grace!

Amen. Let’s 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.