

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

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

Chapter 11- Luke 11:24-28

219- The Terrifying Danger of Human Morality- Part 2

September 15, 2013

Luke 11:24-28

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."

To the Glory of God

Now over the last two weeks- I have told you that contrary to popular opinion- this Passage here in **Luke 11** is not about demons, and it is also not a formula of how we are to cast demons out of people. This Passage is about Jesus Christ and it is about the Essence of Christ's Nature and it is about the terrible danger of human morality raising its arrogant head against God and it is about a very important issue that I call,

The Problem of God's Righteousness

God's Righteousness is a very serious problem with Man- in fact it is *the* single biggest issue because it is at the core of Man's rebellion and

his continual effort to try to make himself acceptable in God's sight by what Man does for himself.

So understand this- people trying to do something- *anything*- that is designed in any way to earn God's Favor and thus earn their way into Heaven based on elevating *their own* personal intrinsic righteousness is not a noble thing- it is not an honorable thing- it is not something that we should respect and admire.

No, any effort to work your way into Heaven is a hideous evil and is a wicked sin and is an insidious attack against God's Righteousness- but it gets far worse than that. Any religious system that promotes human activity that is designed to earn God's Favor or that is designed to develop human righteousness to the point where God is now obligated to save them- attacks the precious Grace of God and the finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think about it. If all you have to do to go to Heaven is for you to do something like be baptized or to take Communion or to speak in tongues or walk down an aisle or raise your hand or pray a prayer or shake the preacher's hand or fly an airplane through a building- then you don't need Grace- all you need is will power. You need gumption rather than unction. You need determination and you need to "make your mind up" and you need to "exercise your own free will" and you need to "turn over a new leaf" and you need to "make a New Year's Resolution" and you need to "make a choice".

But you don't need Grace. God's Grace is not necessary to do any of those things because lost people do those things all day long. And as they do those things- they do not grow closer to God; they do not become saved and they remain lost in their sins. So to promote those things is by default to remove our need for Grace.

And then if you follow this heresy all the way out to its logical conclusion- if all you have to do to be saved is to do one or more of those things- then you really don't need Jesus either, and you certainly don't need His full Deity or His Virgin Birth or His sinless Life or His Death by Crucifixion or His Resurrection, and you don't need the Bible either- except maybe to get some real catchy slogans and bumper sticker material, and you don't need the supernatural Power of the Holy Spirit either- because, in that system, everything you do is based on yourself.

If all you have to do to be saved is to "make your mind up" or to "exercise your own free will" and "make a choice"- then Grace and Jesus

and the Sovereign Act of God in giving you eyes to see and ears to hear and a heart to believe are all utterly unnecessary- which is exactly what the heresy of "Legalism" ultimately teaches.

But you can't have it both ways. If we need Grace for Salvation- then by default it is only because we are not able to attain unto Salvation by anything that we do. And if we are able to attain unto Salvation by doing something- then we don't need Grace. So it is one or the other- but it cannot be both.

Now what we must do to earn our own Salvation differs between the false religious groups- but the result is always the same. But among the various man-made religions- we have these main distinctions:

- ✓ Sacerdotal Regeneration
- ✓ Baptismal Regeneration
- ✓ Decisional Regeneration

And all of these teach that Regeneration or being "born again" is the result of engaging in these activities. So for example- "Sacerdotal Regeneration" is the wrong and false belief that we can earn or work our way into "Regeneration" or being born again by partaking in one or more of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church such as Communion, Baptism, Confession, etc. Baptismal Regeneration as taught by The Church of Christ and a few others teach that going down into the water and getting wet causes or brings forth Regeneration- as long as a proper minister conducted the baptism, while many Southern Baptists and Pentecostals today teach that by "making a decision for Christ" or by exercising our own "free will" and "choosing" Jesus- we cause or initiate being Born Again. So in their view- the lost person must first believe in order to be born again.

But the Holy Bible teaches something called, "Sovereign Regeneration" whereby God Himself- all by Himself- initiates and originates and begins Salvation in the lost person by opening his blind eyes and unstopping his deaf ears and giving him a heart of flesh- before the lost person wants it or even asks for it. So the Bible teaches that in order for anyone to believe- he must first be born again by a sovereign Move of the Spirit of God.

Now keep in mind that none of these false concepts of being born again are any closer to the Truth of Sovereign Regeneration. They are all wrong and you are just as unbiblical believing in one as you are the other. But as you talk with a Roman or a Church of Christ member or a Baptist- they each take great comfort in the fact that- while they believe in the one false teaching- they certainly don't believe in the other two. But the truth is that you can put Sacerdotal Regeneration and Baptismal Regeneration and Decisional Regeneration into a bag and shake it up and pour it on the ground and you will always get the very same results- lost and fallen human beings are doing something to earn or to cause or to initiate their own Regeneration- which is categorically contrary to what the Bible actually says.

Now what is amazing is that while Pentecostals have always taught Decisional Regeneration- Baptists did not. There was a time when Baptists taught the Scriptures about this subject- and there are many Baptist congregations today that continue to teach the Truth about being born again.

But the heresy of "Decisional Regeneration" that now dominates the Protestant world was put forth by the Presbyterian Charles Finney along with its "altar calls" and "mourner's benches" and emotional pleas for a "decision" at the end of the service.

And as you study Church History you will find that there are no records anywhere of anybody ever giving an "altar call" or pulling for a "human decision" to "accept Christ as their personal Savior" in the Church service before the mid to late 1800's. But keep in mind- lest you are tempted to think that the people who led the Church before Finney didn't care about winning souls and that's the reason they didn't engage in these things- that great and powerful revivals along with passionate world-wide missions occurred before Finney and his heresy and mass conversions and uplifting stories of Gospel success abounded by men who believed the Bible and conducted Evangelism biblically.

No, the truth is that Charles Finney just flat out invented all these things late in the 19th Century because he wasn't saved and didn't believe what the Bible said about the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. And this false, man-made concept of Regeneration became famous and popular in the mid- 20th Century- mainly through the teachings and the televised Crusades of Billy Graham-who to this day idolizes Finney.

And what is amazing is that over the next several decades-

"Decisional Regeneration" became the de-facto way to teach Evangelism in the Christian Church- even though it is entirely at odds with Holy Scripture and was invented by a man who didn't believe that the Blood of Jesus washed sins away.

Let us settle it forever in our minds, dear friends, that the Apostles Paul, Peter and John as well as the Lord Jesus Himself never engaged in an altar call or pleas for human decisions- even though I would suggest that they were more concerned for winning the lost than we are. No, these things are simply not taught anywhere in the Bible- and there is not one Biblical Record or Command for anyone to try to wring a decision from a lost person to love and serve Jesus Christ based on them making their mind up or engaging in human will power- even though we see and hear that nearly every single week in the American Church and on the Hay, Wood, and Stubble Television Network.

And lest you might be tempted to suggest that the reason why we invent unbiblical methods of evangelism in our day is because we are more interested in saving souls than they were- I would suggest that any effort to either ignore the clear teachings of the Holy Bible or to just make stuff up out of emotional desire to see transformation is sin and is really not winning any more souls to the Lord Christ than would be won if we simply believed the Bible to be the Word of God and conducted Evangelism the way it is taught in Scripture.

But the main reason why any human initiated Regeneration is wrong- whether it is "Sacerdotal" or "Baptismal" or "Decisional" in nature- any human engineered effort to make your-self be born again has to assume that fallen humanity is able to do actually accomplish that. In other words- for the heresy of Legalism to work- Man cannot be as fallen and as radically ruined as the Bible clearly and repeatedly says that he is. Let me give you just one example of what is taught hundreds of times in the sacred Scripture- please turn with me to **Genesis 6:5:**

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Now contrary to the very popular opinion of those Harvard and Yale Theological Professors who call themselves "Christians" while working as hard as they can to disbelieve the Bible- these phrases in

this verse are not vague or general phrases in the original Hebrew. They are what are called, "Universal Phrases" meaning that they are very precise and they are very accurate and they apply to everybody. So let's examine six words or phrases in this one single verse- each one designed to drive home the horrible and deadly and powerful impact of what it actually means to be fallen:

- ✓ Wickedness
- ✓ Man
- ✓ Great in the Earth
- ✓ Every Intent of the Thoughts of His Heart
- ✓ Only Evil
- ✓ Continually

In the context of this verse- the word, "wickedness" in **Genesis 6:5** refers to not simply the evil *deeds* or *actions* of mankind but rather his "disposition"- his "internal order" or "the thoughts and intents of his heart". So the "wickedness" in view here is not what Man *does*- it is *who Man is*. So God is not saying here that fallen Man periodically engages in wicked acts- He is saying here that Man *is* wicked- internally- in his nature- all the time- by virtue of The Fall.

The word, "Man" here refers to "Mankind" or the entire human race after Adam sinned. So this word is not just about the males on the earth but rather all of humanity.

The phrase, "Great in the Earth" means "pervasive" or "all-encompassing". So the internal disposition of all mankind to be wicked is "great" in the sense that it encompasses all of the human experience. In other words- there is no component, no area, no part of humanity that was not radically ruined by the Fall and is now wicked.

And this point is driven home by Moses even further by the next phrase, "Every Intent of the Thoughts of His Heart"- proving that the wickedness in view here is not the general *external* wickedness that is in the earth but is the *internal* wickedness that is inherent in the human heart and mind and nature.

Now another way of saying this same thing is to say that there is not a single thought in a lost person or even the origination of a single thought nor a single intent of the human heart of a single person who is

unsaved that is not utterly and completely sinful and entirely evil and fallen and depraved.

And finally, the nail in the coffin is driven home by the final two phrases, "Only Evil Continually". The phrase, "Only Evil" means that there is absolutely no capacity for "good" in a moral sense of that word in any lost and unsaved person- none. And that is the same thing as saying that fallen Man is "all evil". And that would be bad enough- but Moses was moved upon by God the Holy Spirit some 3,500 years ago to pen down the last word, "Continually"- which means "all the time".

So there is not a single moment of a single minute of a single hour of a single day of a single human life that every single thought and every intent of the fallen human heart is not all evil- all the time

Now when you put all this back together- you have perhaps the best summary statement in the entire Bible of the condition of human beings after the Fall:

“Mankind is internally wicked and there is not a single area of human existence that was left intact from the Fall- to the degree that every single intent of the heart is all evil- all the time.”

So in the context of Legalism the question becomes:

If Man is as fallen as the Bible says that he is- how does he ever- in any capacity- initiate any “good” action or thought that would in any way lead to his own regeneration?”

And so for Legalism to work in any real sense of the word- you can come to only one conclusion:

What the Bible teaches about the condition of Man after the Fall must be wrong.

In other words- for any Legalistic act to work to the saving of the soul- what the Bible clearly teaches about fallen Man's condition must be wrong. Another way of saying this is that for anybody to honestly believe in either Sacerdotal Regeneration or Baptismal Regeneration or Decisional Regeneration they must believe that Mankind is not as ruined by the Fall as the Bible says that they are. And the short version of this is to say that for anybody to honestly believe in Legalism

in any of its forms- it is required that they must also disbelieve what the Bible teaches about the condition of fallen Man.

But let us get to the crux of the matter. If the Bible *is* true and Mankind *is* radically and negatively ruined by the Fall to the point where he is both unable and unwilling to do anything that would lead to his own Salvation- then how does anybody get saved?

I mean if every single intent of the thoughts of the human being is all evil- all the time- how does anyone suddenly get the urge to love God and to know God and to enjoy God forever? How is a person in that condition ever convicted of sin? How is the person who has those wicked internal attributes ever in a place where he understands his lost condition and genuinely wants to be rescued by God from it? How does a person who is doomed to only have wicked intentions ever escape out of that doomed condition? If all his thoughts are completely wicked all the time- how does Man ever have a good thought that would lead him to want to love and serve God? From where does the desire to be saved come from if every inch of Man's nature is all evil all the time?

May I suggest the magnificent and utterly amazing Grace of God? May I suggest that in His great Love wherewith He loved us- God *forcefully* and *violently* and *relentlessly* sets upon the lost and unsaved and fallen person three things:

- The Unmerited Favor of God
- The Unearned Love of God
- The Undeserved Special Treatment of God

... which are simply other ways of understanding Grace. And so in reality- and contrary to what we have all been taught- God Sovereignly runs the lost sinner down- who is very busy- sinning as hard as he can and running away from God as fast as he can and has no intention or inclination of ever coming to Jesus for Salvation- and God Sovereignly gives that lost person eyes to see- while he is still lost, and God Sovereignly gives that fallen person ears to hear- while he is still fallen- even though he doesn't want them and hasn't asked for them, and God sovereignly inserts Himself into that persons heart to supernaturally change his heart from stone to flesh while he is still depraved- and God does all of this before that person is saved, and before he desires any of it and before he asks for it and God does all of this while that lost and

unsaved person is exhibiting his wicked inclination to his heart's content. And all of that is what is called, "Grace"

And so- I want you to hear carefully what I say- God *overrides* that unsaved individual's natural and normal inclination to run and hide from God, and God *violates* that lost person's will that causes him to hate God and to hate God's Ways, and God *imposes* Himself onto that depraved individual's life to initiate a new birth and to originate the desire and the Power to love and to serve God and to enjoy God forever.

And I suggest to you that this Sovereign overriding and this Sovereign violation and this Sovereign imposition is just yet another way of understanding "Grace". And the Love of God is that since nobody in their lost condition would ever initiate anything like this in a million years- if anybody is going to be saved- God must do it all and He must do it all- all by Himself. And so God completely ignores Man's desires and based on nothing good or bad that the individual has done- God sets His Love upon that elected sinner to save him and God causes that fallen person to repent and to trust in Christ and God empowers that person to enjoy following Jesus and all of that is what Grace is and all of that is just another way to understand what it means to be born again or regenerated.

And even though this is horribly insulting and horribly offensive and horrible demeaning to the arrogance and self-righteousness of lost and fallen Man- there is not a single saved soul in this building this morning that regrets whatever God had to do to save his wicked soul and there is not a single soul in heaven right now that would trade one single thing that God did- that allowed him to spend eternity in the Presence of God.

No, the collective cry of every single saved soul throughout all history is "*Thank You, Jesus*" for whatever hard thing or whatever difficult thing or whatever terrible thing or whatever sweet and precious thing that God did or that God allowed to come into their life that resulted in all their sins being forgiven and eternal life being granted to them.

And the result of all this is that God gets all the Glory and all the Honor and all the Praise for our Salvation. And it is important for us to know that God gets all the credit- not because it makes us look noble to give Him credit- but God gets all the credit precisely because God did all

the Work and we get no credit because we didn't do anything. So the correct Biblical summary statement of all this is:

Salvation is of the Lord

Now let us re-construct this same Truth- but in the opposite direction. If what the Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches about the condition of fallen Man is in error and humanity is really not that ruined by the Fall but is still somehow able to initiate his own regeneration based on something that he does for himself- whatever form that might take- then why would anybody ever need God's Amazing Grace?

All we would need to do is to "make up our mind" or "exercise our own human prerogative" and "choose" to do those things that would lead to Salvation. We wouldn't need Grace- we would need willpower. We wouldn't need God to override our natural tendency to run and hide from God- we would simply choose to stop running and choose to run toward Jesus based on nothing more than an act of our own supposedly "free will".

And of course we would be able to do all of that because we really weren't that bad off to begin with and there remained within us a sliver of goodness that was left untouched by the Fall that would allow us to do that and so all we really needed to do was to access that remaining internal goodness and to tap into the power that was deep inside us and free it to "be all we could be" and fulfill our dreams and accomplish our own human ambition.

But that would mean that God's Grace would be nothing more than window dressing because eternal life and repentance and faith would not need to be granted or given and mercifully allowed- all those things would simply be the logical result of what we could do for ourselves.

And of course that would mean that Jesus just wasted His time coming down here to be born of a virgin and to live a sinless life and to die by Crucifixion and to be raised from the dead on the third day because Salvation would be the result of what fallen Man could do for himself and not by Grace through Faith.

And that would mean that man should receive all praise and all glory and all honor for his own salvation. And the summary statement

that would best explain all of this would be:

Salvation is of Man

I have said this before and I will repeat it this morning: if God did 99.999% of everything and Man simply did 0.001%- then by rights- Man would be entitled to 0.001% of the Glory for Salvation and God would be a thief to want credit for it all.

So the only way you can honestly say that God gets all the Glory for Our Salvation is I you believe that man did nothing to originate or initiate his own Salvation and that God did all the Work- Sovereignly and Graciously and Mercifully.

But we don't believe that man can earn his own Salvation, do we? We believe what God's Word says about it such as what **Ephesians 2:8&9** says:

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

So in short- the notion that human beings can do anything to earn or deserve or to be entitled to enter into Heaven is heresy, it is apostasy- it is idolatry and is simply another manifestation of the arrogance and self-righteousness that is inherent in every single fallen human being.

This effort to earn Salvation or to work your way into Heaven is called, "Legalism" and it is the very first false teaching that confronted the Christian Church as recorded in **The Acts 15** and genuine believers have been at war with this heresy from the very beginning.

And as deep and accurate Theology and Biblical Truth continues to fall by the way side in the modern Church- this problem is getting worse- not better. We have all in one way or another been exposed to this current trend in the modern Church that not only applauds and admires human morality but seeks to emulate it as the key to Salvation.

But what is amazing is that even though the heresy of Legalism has been confronted and exposed and rejected by the Christian Church as a great evil in several very powerful and well publicized battles- it

has always remained as one of the most stubborn false teachings to defeat- precisely because it makes perfect sense to the fallen mind of lost and unsaved Man.

Now perhaps there has never been a group in history more adamant about morality than the Pharisees and their friends the scribes. They had all undergone a moral reformation. They were the "moral majority" of their day. They were the "religious right". They were the ones who said they could transform their culture by human morality without God and without Grace and without Sovereign Regeneration but simply by choosing to obey God's Law.

And the result was that they made themselves moral on the outside- while internally they remained wicked and lost and fallen and unsaved.

These people were very impressed with their self-righteous exteriors. And they rejected Christ and they hated Him because He attacked them precisely at the point of the deadly danger of their own external morality. They were proudly confident in their superficiality and didn't want God or anybody else challenging it.

Now their hostility toward Jesus had been escalating and mounting for months and months because He continually exposed the superficiality of their morality.

Back in Galilee months earlier, as we have been noting, they had called Him satanic and they continued to send out this propaganda, all across Galilee and all across Judea where He is now in this chronology here in **Luke 11**- and the propaganda that Jesus was satanic. This was the official public comment about Jesus from the Pharisaic media. This is what they wanted the population to believe about Jesus. And every way they can they have published this mantra- Jesus does what He does by the power of Beelzebul- the prince of demons.

And this is classic blasphemy. So you have the most outwardly moral people ever- engaged in the worst possible blasphemy- in which they honestly believe and teach that the glorious Work of God right before their eyes is actually the work of satan.

You can't get any more blind than this. You can't get any more evil than this. You can't be more wrong than this. It is impossible that there would be a greater blasphemy than this. So the most moral people are the worst blasphemers ever. This is the terrible danger of human morality.

Now the confrontation between those who espoused human morality which resulted in a works based salvation system called, "Legalism" and Jesus Who taught only the poor in spirit and those who were Sovereignly graced by God to hunger and thirst after a Righteousness that was external and not internal could be saved broke out in Judea back in **Luke 11:14**- when Jesus was casting out a demon.

And the demon came out and the multitudes marveled when the man began to speak. But then the propaganda that had been sent around by the Pharisees came out and some of them said that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebul- the ruler of the demons.

So there was mockery and taunting and there was this extreme blasphemy of calling Jesus satanic. And Jesus responded in verses 17-22 to this severe blasphemy from these who are the most moral of all with great Mercy. And He wanted to reason with them by saying how ridiculous and inconsistent their thinking was:

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.

And then Jesus taught them that His Grace in Salvation was not weak and ineffectual- but that it violently went right into satan's kingdom and stole the souls that were in bondage to satan and Jesus forcefully set them free when He said:

Luke 11:21-22

21 When a strong *man*, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed.

22 But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

Of course – the “strong man” here is satan and “the stronger man” is God- Who attacks satan and overpowers him and takes his armor away and distributes his plunder- the souls of men- away from satan’s grip and into the Kingdom of God.

And then Jesus brought forth the great division between God’s elect and everybody else when He said in verse 23:

Luke 11:23

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

And it is so important to realize that nobody loved God, nobody desired to obey God, nobody even considered living their lives to the Glory of God- until God caused the elect to do so. Everybody is born lost; in fact, everybody is conceived in their mother’s womb lost and so nobody wants to serve God gladly unless and until God the Holy Spirit comes first to regenerate them and give them spiritual life.

Remember, those are saved were just as lost and just as fallen, and just as ungodly, and just as wicked as those who remain lost are. Our nature was just as fallen as theirs was. We hated God and were running away from God as fast as they were. There was no good thing in us either. We were not saved because God saw something good in us- we were saved for no other reason than it pleased God to extend undeserved mercy to us- because it pleased God to grant to us the magnificence of Grace.

So nobody deserves Grace; nobody has earned Mercy; nobody is entitled to eternal life. Salvation is all by Grace and through the gift of faith in the finished Work of Christ alone.

And so Jesus says,

He who is not with Me is against Me. He who does not gather with Me, scatters.

You’re either with Jesus because God has mercifully allowed you to be with Him by Grace or you remain in your fallen state and you are against Him. And the mystery is that Jesus says that to those who are the most moral and the most religious people on earth. Those who are

the most against Jesus are the most moral and the most religious and the most ceremonial people on earth.

And it is in this context that Jesus gives one of the most damning descriptions of the futility of human morality ever given when He then gives the short story in verses 24-26- so let's read that again:

Luke 11:24-26

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."

So Jesus says that there's a wicked evil, unclean spirit in a man. That unclean spirit is not a demon- but his own intrinsic fallen nature- his natural state of being wicked in every intent of the thoughts of his heart. This is Jesus describing the natural and normal state of all humanity in their fallen condition.

So this is not a demon- this is not unusual, this is not something strange. Everybody born of woman is like this. And the unclean spirit goes out of the man in the sense that he is now in the background and not in the forefront of this man's life. And he wanders around but can't find a place to rest. And he says to himself- "I'll go back to where I came from."

And when it comes back- it finds the man's life swept and put in order. This is talking about the man has now made himself clean and acceptable because he has adopted a moral code and has modified his behavior and looks good. He looks saved; he looks holy; he looks righteous.

But this man is not saved- he has only temporarily modified his behavior and taken on a human morality. And we know that because Jesus says that the spirit goes and takes seven other spirits- who are actually even more evil than the original one and all of them go in and live in that man.

This is the terrible danger of human morality. Putting on morality in the way that the Pharisees did- thinking that that was the

same thing as being born again will not earn you a place in heaven, dear friends- it will kick open a double door for even worse deception to come in.

And this is a frightening reality. One human nature went out and eight more came back. So we're talking about a very religious person here. We're talking here about a person who works really hard to clean up his act but without being saved.

And the main point that Jesus is making to these self-righteous Jews is that any moral reformation that excludes genuine Salvation through the finished Work of Jesus Christ is very dangerous and frightening because it deceives the individual into thinking that he has become right with God.

Now let's just look at it piece by piece.

When the unclean spirit goes out of a man.

Now it doesn't say just how- but the assumption can be made that the man sort of cleaned up his act because of what it says in verse 25. The house is swept and put in order.

So here is the picture of someone who is lost and unsaved- those whose only intent of their heart is only evil continually- and this man- for whatever reason- comes under some sort of pressure to "clean up his life". He's tired of the consequence of his sin and while he has no intention of loving and serving Jesus- he doesn't want to hurt anymore and so he wants to change.

So he temporarily stops his homosexual behavior or he temporarily stops his adultery or he temporarily modifies his anger or his bitterness or his lying and his thieving and he temporarily stops whatever it is- stops his involvement with pornography- and in his own power and to his own glory- he grabs himself by the boot straps and takes the necessary steps he needs to take to pick himself up and clean up his life.

The pressure may have come from his family or his wife or from other people who know him. Maybe he's been embarrassed or he got caught and is on his way to jail or he's trying to impress a girl. Maybe he wants a better job or he's just tired of all the consequences of his sin. Maybe he fears venereal disease or AIDS or he almost got caught or

there was a terrible hurricane or a tornado and he just barely escaped with his life.

Maybe he fears prison. Maybe he fears having to live a debilitated life. Maybe he knows he's going to slide downward. Maybe he's gone to AA or he's gone to some other self-help group and he wants to get his life cleaned up.

As long as he had been living that wretched life he had been a haven for his own fallen nature that loves self and the glory that he can bring to self.

Now Jesus sued the word, that was a Jewish term to describe demons. But in reality He was talking about the fallen nature of Man that was certainly caused by the devil and is propagated by demons- but the real sense here is the fallen nature of the man that was in these religious Jews.

So in this case- the man cleans up his life and turns from his vile behavior and makes a moral reformation so he can clean up his own life by what he does for himself without being born again. And this is classic Legalism. So he starts going to the synagogue and he gets religious and maybe even becomes a Pharisee. And as a result there's a certain level of discomfort for the fallen nature that chaffs at the idea of any reformation- even one that is a false salvation.

Now it says in verse 24 that this demon passes through waterless places seeking rest. And that's just metaphoric. Human natures and even demons are spirit and they don't need water. This is simply a metaphor for the barrenness of an uncomfortable fallen nature floating around in the nether world and floating around in the spirit world.

So this is only in appearance. This man was never saved- but he begins to try to appear to be saved and he appears to be trying to do right and even that is an insult to the fallen nature of man.

And then it says that the unclean spirit can't find a place of comfort and in this case- it says,

I will return to my house from which I came.

Now that's what is called demon possession. Now we come to the demons. Before- Jesus was talking about the fallen nature of all people- but now- because this man tried to earn Salvation through Legalism- he

is now ripe for demons to come and dwell in him and possess him and deceive him to depths that are staggering.

And this is always what happens with Legalism. Legalism has the outward appearance of trying to be good and trying to be moral and trying to be righteous and trying to hold to Judeo/Christian values and trying to clean up your life by moral effort and religious activity- temporarily seeing the outward dismissal of that fallen nature- while in reality- Legalism only makes the person more fit and more ready and more acceptable to demon spirits and demonic power that will come with a vengeance to possess that individual with multi layers of deception and false teaching. Now look again at verse 25:

Luke 11:25

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

Now in the statement that Jesus made about this in the sister Passage over in **Matthew 12:44**- He added one other thing. There Jesus said:

Found it swept and unoccupied.

.. and therein lies the great danger of human morality. The problem in the moral person's heart is appears to be cleaned up and dressed up- but in reality- it is just empty. This is the Greek word, *kosmeo* from which we get our English word, "cosmetics" from. So sweeping like this is a kind of superficial cleaning- a purely *outward, cosmetic* kind of a superficial ordering- that really doesn't change the person at all.

So on the surface- this place had been cleaned up. And you might think that's great. This looks like a clean life- this person has cleaned up his life. And we read about it all the time today, people clean up their lives, they get religion, they change their pattern. They come out of prison and they clean up their lives. They turn from their life of crime or their life of immorality, or whatever.

But in reality- the Bible says that they are empty and all they have done is to become now much more attractive to all sorts of demonic spirits to come and live inside them and deceive them. These people are now in a much more dangerous position than they've ever been because they now are living with a damning delusion that somehow this *kosmeo*

sweeping- this superficial cleaning puts them on a secure footing with God.

And that is a damning delusion. The truth of the matter is that this empty house- the spiritual vacuum that moral or religious reformation brings that does not contain true genuine Salvation doesn't produce real revival and does not honor or glorify God- it only does what verse 26 says:

Luke 11:26

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."

A person living in open blatant iniquity was possessed by only his own fallen nature. But now that he thinks he has cleaned himself up and has earned Salvation by his religious ceremonies and his good deeds- but in reality- all he has done is to put a "vacant" sign on his forehead and eight more demons- who are actually worse than his original fallen nature go in and *katoikeo*, settle down and dwell there permanently is what that means. More demons more wicked.

In other words, the person is more infested with the agents of hell when morally reformed than when he was immoral. What a statement. Listen to what the Lord said in **Matthew 23:15**,

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made you make him twice the child of hell than yourselves."

Now why is that?

Because the proselyte becomes more fanatical for self-righteous works than the teacher, because he sees somehow this move from immorality to morality as some elevation of himself and he sees the change and he relishes the change and he gets temporarily sort of cleaned from the pollution of his iniquity and he becomes even more an advocate for that than the old Pharisees who have cultivated their hypocrisy and know the truth of their own wretchedness.

My brothers and sisters- we must take heed to ourselves that our message never be the elevation of human morality. Jesus' Message was

never morality. The Bible says that legalistic human Morality makes people double sons of hell. Morality kicks the door wide open for more demons. Morality makes the last state worse than the first.

Let me say this to you, and it may shock you that I say it, it is better to be immoral than moral without Christ. It is better to be immoral than moral without Christ. It is better to be irreligious than religious without Christ. Because human morality and man-made religion are a seduction. Morality and religion give the deception of all is well with God when it is not. Morality and religion is a soul numbing deception. As long as a person believes he is immoral, he can be saved, right? It's when a person believes he's moral, doesn't need a Savior. As long as a person knows he's irreligious, he's iniquitous, he's wretched, he is in a position to be delivered. When a person comes to believe in his own righteousness, he is not redeemable.

It was never the immoral people, by the way, that blasphemed Jesus. You just need to know that. As you go through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, you're never going to find the immoral people blaspheming Jesus, it was always the moral ones. It's never the harlots, the prostitutes, the tax collectors, the riff-raff, the criminal element. It was the religious people. It was the self-righteous people. Moral people, religious people are self-congratulatory, they are self-righteous, they're confident in their own holiness, in their own morality. They are utterly deceived into believing that they have been delivered from the powers of Satan because they live moral lives. And the truth of the matter is they may be more infested with demons than a prostitute or a criminal. Moral people tend to have no vigilance and therefore no protection. Hear the Word of the Lord from **2Peter 2:20**,

For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.

If you try to clean up your own life- even in the Name of Jesus- but you are not saved- then it's empty in there and eventually you're going to go right back and get entangled in sin again and be overcome and end up in a worse condition. And then Peter says this amazing statement in the very next two verses:

2Peter 2:21&22

21 For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

22 **8**It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, *returns* to wallowing in the mire."

Now these are not saved people who have lost their salvation- these are people who were deceived into thinking they were saved by the elevation of their own human morality and through legalism- they thought they were saved but were still lost. And Peter says that it is worse for them at the end than at the beginning.

Beloved- hear me. There really is no more serious danger than the danger of human morality. Any attempt to clean your life up without Jesus Christ coming to dwell in you forever is to be exposed to an even greater danger. That statement, "**The last state of that man becomes worse than the first,**" is very definitive. So in the end, being moral is more dangerous than being immoral. There is no benefit at all in reformation without regeneration. And this is exactly what the Jews did. And that's why in verse 29, the next verse, He began to say,

"This generation is a wicked generation."

Being with Christ is not just being moral. Being with Christ is not just honoring Him, very unlike the Pharisees. Being with Christ, He says, is hearing the Word of God and doing it. And the Word of God initially is to believe in the Son and be saved. A moral person is in the greatest danger. That danger is not mitigated by having good feelings about Jesus. A person would still be empty and a haven for demons. On the other hand, a saved person is one who hears the Word concerning Christ, believes it in its fullness, embraces Him as Lord and Savior and sets out on a path of obedience enabled by the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Christ.

Amen. Let's pray.