

Jesus Is Accused of Working for the Devil

Matthew 12:22-37

by David Servant

Jesus exposes the Pharisees' lie that He works for Satan and explains that His power comes from the Holy Spirit, which is stronger than any evil spirit.

Scripture: Matthew 12:34

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Blasphemy Against God"

Description

David Servant preaches about Jesus exposing the wickedness of the Pharisees, who accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Satan. Jesus clarified that He used the power of the Holy Spirit to destroy the works of the devil and free people from captivity. He warned against the unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which hardens the heart beyond salvation. Jesus emphasized the importance of words reflecting the condition of one's heart, indicating true belief in Him.

Transcript

Today we realize even more how wicked the Pharisees were. After witnessing the instantaneous deliverance of a man who had been both blind and unable to talk, they claimed that Jesus got His power to cast out demons from Satan. Most of the other witnesses whose hearts weren't so hard began wondering out loud if Jesus was the Messiah.

Jesus easily exposed the lie of the Pharisees' accusation. Why would Satan empower someone to cast out his own evil spirits that he had commissioned? He would be undoing his own work, and if he continued, his kingdom would be doomed to self-destruction.

Jesus also mentioned that some of the Pharisees' own followers were casting out demons. Were they empowered by Satan as well? The Pharisees would of course deny such a thing, showing their double standard.

Jesus then explained that He cast out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit, who is much stronger than any evil spirit. The Bible says that Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8, NASB). Jesus explained that by using greater power, He was able to "tie up the strong man," Satan, and rob him of his possessions, the people he'd held captive. He then went on to warn the Pharisees that they were guilty of a sin that could never be forgiven: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. What is that? The Pharisees

were saying that the marvelous works of the Holy Spirit were actually works of the devil. That is blasphemy, aimed specifically at the Holy Spirit. When someone's heart is so hard that he can see the power of the Holy Spirit instantly heal a blind and mute man, and then call it the work of Satan, there is no hope for him to be saved. The condition of his heart is so bad that forgiveness is out of the realm of possibilities.

Sometimes the devil convinces young Christians that they have somehow blasphemed the Holy Spirit by something they've thought or said. But no true Christian could commit this sin. In fact, if you're even concerned that you've committed this sin, that proves you haven't, otherwise you wouldn't be concerned.

Referring to the Pharisees, Jesus said that the condition of their hearts was revealed by their words, just as fruit reveals whether a tree is good or bad. A bad tree can't produce good fruit, and likewise, evil men can't say "what is good and right" (Matthew 12:34). When people one day stand before God to be either allowed into heaven or thrown into hell, the words they spoke on earth will be used as evidence to prove whether they are saved or unsaved. People who have truly believed in Jesus will have spoken kind words, forgiving words, words about God and Jesus, words from the Bible, and words of praise and thanksgiving to God. People who have never believed in Jesus will have spoken many hateful, selfish words, words that mocked the Bible and Christians, and even used God's name as a swear word. Do your words prove that you're a believer in Jesus?

Q. How do you suppose some of the Pharisees' own followers were able to cast out demons?

A. We can read in another Gospel something that John once reported to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he isn't one of our group" (Mark 9:38). Jesus replied, "Don't stop him!...No one who performs miracles in my name will soon be able to speak evil of me" (Mark 9:39). So we learn that other people, even those who weren't followers of Jesus, were using His name to cast out demons. They had discovered a way to cast out demons that worked: tell the demons to come out in Jesus' name ! That shows us that there's a lot of power in the name of Jesus! It also indicates that the followers of the Pharisees who were casting out demons must not have been too devoted to the Pharisees. Their hearts were obviously more open to Jesus, and they were on the verge of believing in Him.

Q. Jesus said that any city or home divided against itself is doomed. Can that same principle be applied to a church?

A. Yes. God wants His people to be unified, but when Christians in the same church start fighting with one another, it can ruin their church. The more unified we are, the stronger we are.

Application: The Holy Spirit is a million times more powerful than any evil spirit from Satan. That's why the Bible says, "The Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world" (1 John 4:4).

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