

Matthew 12:22-50

“Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil [demon], blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by then whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he shall spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven men. And whosoever speakest a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world to come*. [Interesting, Jesus uses the Jewish term for the Millennial Kingdom of God, *the world to come*. The Worldwide Church of God used to call it *The World Tomorrow*. So blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be tolerated, in this present world, nor in the Millennial Kingdom of God after Jesus 2nd coming.] **Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that a man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Then a certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and**

adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, sister, and mother."

*Five Groups Of People Are Here: The Disciples,
the Curious, the Religious Leaders, the
Disinterested, and Finally, Jesus' Unconverted
Family*

As we've been studying through the Gospel of Matthew we have seen that there are different types of responses from people to Jesus. We'll divide it into four groups. There are the disciples, they have chosen to follow him, they have hearts for him, they love him, they want to be with him. [Remember when you first came to Christ, you had those feelings too?--- and you backed them up with actions.] Then there's the other group, the multitudes that we see, these curious people. They have

witnessed Jesus do things, they have heard Jesus. So they come with intrigue, they come with wonder in their hearts. In many instances, too, they're amazed, they're astonished by what they see, even maybe perplexed as they watch Jesus work. They are the multitudes that are around Jesus. Then there are some that are just disinterested, they don't really care. They're not really too often in the picture that we see, they're probably staying at home, staying in the villages. They have other things that they'd rather do, other things that they're interested in. So they've heard maybe about Christ, maybe seen people come back all excited about what he's done in their lives, but they're just not interested. And then there's a group we read a lot about, this fourth group, we continue to see, and they become a bigger factor as we go on, no doubt, and they're in the verses that we'll study today, and that is this opposition group, those that are opposed to Jesus. They're bothered by it, and in some cases so much so that they have a disdain for him, even some have a hatred for him, because of what he says and does. Within this group of opposition there's the religious leaders that we see over and over. These men are envious, jealous of Jesus. So they're threatened by him, they'd like to kill him. Now today, are there different groups around Christ [and his people], responding to Jesus differently? I would like to imagine even in this room there are different groups, maybe all of those four groups I've just mentioned are represented here. There are plenty of folks that you would consider followers of Jesus Christ that are here no doubt, that want to be with him and walk with him. But maybe there are even some that would represent the multitudes of the world that are curious, that are amazed, perplexed, astonished by him and the Church [greater Body of Christ], yet for whatever reason, you are here and you haven't chosen to be a follower of Jesus Christ yourself. And maybe there might be one or two that are part of that group that you call the disinterested group, and the only reason you are here is because you have to be here. Maybe your mom and dad say you had to be here, so you're here. You don't want to be here, you are **not interested**, just plain and simple. Or maybe it's a spouse, a friend, they've just pressured you like crazy, so you're here. You're not interested, you'll get through it and the good news is it isn't too long. But that's who you are, you're just not interested. Your interests are in other things. Then maybe there are one or two or three listening in, and you'd be considered part of the opposition group. And why you're here I'm not sure why you're here, maybe you have to be here, again. But when it comes to the Christian thing, man, you don't like it. It's not that you're not interested, you don't like it. It even bugs

you, it bothers you. Well, as we go through and study what we do, we'll read a lot about the opposition group today in our verses. As you study the Scripture, we get the privilege of learning about what God sees in those groups and what he thinks. And that's valuable to us. We also get the situation as far as the perspective of what does it mean to be in that group, what is the final outcome? And what is the reality of what it means to be part of the disinterested, what does that mean in the future for them? [Comment: Want to know what happened to both of those groups? Log onto http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Jewish_Roman_War . It wasn't pretty. For us, the Great Tribulation, World War III is just around the corner.] I thank God that we can come to the Lord, and we can go *'Well I was part of the opposition group, but I just don't want to be part of that anymore. I'd like to know what it is like to follow Christ.'* Or maybe you're part of the disinterested group, and the amazing thing is, you can even, by the grace of God, today have a change in heart, and say, *'You know, I want to know more.'*

Different Reactions To A Real Miracle

Verses 22-24, "Then one was brought to him who was demon possessed, blind and mute; and he healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons.'" We see Jesus, he continues just to minister to the lives, he continues to heal people and touch lives. That's his heart, doesn't matter what people have said, they've said some harsh things and they're going to continue to say harsh things, as we see. Yet he continues just to touch lives. There's a man that's brought to him here, this man is, man he's got a hell of a life, in the sense that he's living a hell is what he's living. He is demon possessed, and all that we know about demon possession is there couldn't be much of a worse experience than being demon possessed. And it's possibly related to his demon possession too but he's at a state where he cannot speak, and neither can he see. And if demonic possession is a living hell, add to it the fact that you cannot speak, that you cannot share about your anguish, that you cannot express to anyone what's going on in your life, would only compound the matter. And then throw into it also the fact that he cannot see, just the fears that go on with demonic

possession, the mental battles and the emotional battles. The fact that you cannot see would make it even worse. So this man has had just a dire existence. And here they bring this man. Some say here that Jesus has a quadruple miracle, maybe a triple, maybe a quadruple miracle, I mean it's quite a miracle in the sense that there are multiple facets to it in this man's life. But he's brought to Christ, and Jesus heals him. So, he goes from the demonic possession, he's no longer, he's free of that. Secondly, he then is able to speak. Thirdly he's also able to see. And then fourthly, there's a sense of new freedom and just freshness that his life now has, he's been healed. And with that, as you see in the verses, verse 23, the multitudes are amazed, astonished that this man would be transformed, right before their eyes like that. And so they say **'Could this be the Son of David?'** Now what we don't have here in the English, there is in the Greek this word *meti* which is *not*, it starts the phrase in the Greek, but there is actually in the Greek, when they state this, it's in the sense that they expect a negative answer. You don't see that there in the English, but that's what they expect. They expect the answer to be, when they say **'Could this be the Son of David?'** they expect *'No it's not the Son of David,'* the way the wording is done there. Now they're amazed, so their hearts are stirred, they know the Old Testament prophets, they know what Christ, what the Messiah is supposed to be like. But it would seem, and different Bible teachers would take it this way, and I think it's a good chance given what we see here, is as they state the things that they do, they're like afraid of the religious leaders that are in their midst. These guys, they were the leaders, they were the rulers in that sense, they ruled with an iron fist, they were tough guys, and man, they were the dudes. And it would seem that they state the question **'Could this be the Son of David?'**, meaning they are amazed, yet there's this religious Pharisee standing next to me, and so, it's posed in the question, *'Ah, could it be, ah no,'* in that kind of way is what they state there. So, implied in the Greek, and I think it's very possible, there is a fear as they are seeing what they are seeing. I start with that because maybe there are some of us that are like that [i.e. peer pressure of worldly friends]. There is no doubt, many people that hear about Christ, that witness things about Christ, that yet are afraid, *'Well, I see these things, hear these things, but I don't know, man, I don't know about these things.'* Maybe there's a fear because of a relationship, often there is. It's possible for someone to be sitting in the church, and being confronted again with Christ and the Gospel, and to go, *'You*

know, I hear it, but man I also know that if I go down this road, if I chose to, I see it out there, but my spouse at home, man, she [or he] won't go for it. If I do this, or my mom or dad, or my family, if I was to accept Christ, if I was to do this, become one of these Christians, man, that isn't going to go over well.' [The Lord called me not into an ordinary Sunday observing church, but a Sabbath observing Old Testament Holy Day observing Christian church, which also observed the dietary laws of Leviticus 11. You guys got it easy. My family and friends looked at me like I had three heads! Try that one on for size, why don't you.] So there's this fear or what someone else might say or think. Maybe it's a friend, maybe it's just the peer pressure at school. There's this fear of man. You may have been here a couple weeks ago, if you weren't, I'll share with you what Jesus said then, **Matthew 10, verse 32 to verse 33, "Therefore whoever confesses me before men, him I'll also confess before my Father who is in heaven. Whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven."** So then, understand the consequence, understand the implication, understand what it means in the end. Jesus said ***'If you're ashamed of me I'll be ashamed of you before the Father. If you can't follow me, man when I stand before God, that's not gonna help you a whole lot, if you stand on the sidelines and decide not to follow me because of the fear of man.'*** But there are people too, their fear is just what they see with the Christian life, that *'I'm afraid because, you know, I'm gonna have to change, I'm going to have to stop this, I can't have this. I look at other Christians I know, and in some cases there's suffering and I can see, it's not popular to be a Christian.'* And so there's this fear. [This is all part of counting the cost, between choosing the red pill or the blue pill, as portrayed in the movie The Matrix. See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Does/TheMatrix.htm>. Some people choose the blue pill, decide the cost of being a believer is too high, are fearful to make the choice and take the red pill, accepting Jesus Christ into their life and following him.] I'll just read to you the apostle John's words, **1st John 4**, he says this, if that's your fear, fear of the difficulty related to following the Lord, or fear of hardship, **"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."** And I tell you, to follow the Lord, there's no greater life. Not necessarily an easier life, but there's no greater. It's a life of no regrets. It's a life that you experience to the fullest joy and just goodness in your life. Yeah, there are challenges, there can be even tremendous challenges, but it's the greatest life. We have

seen these folks, they seem to be afraid at this point. Then we see in verse 24, the religious leaders, they come back pretty sharply, but rather than focusing on anybody in the crowd, they focus their words at Christ. And it's very critical what they say. They hear this and they say, ***'This guy has done this, man, he's cast out demons as he does because of a demonic influence in his life, because Beelzebub, the ruler of demons, that's the way this guy does it, that's where he gets his power.'*** Now those are pretty harsh words, to say that it's because of Satan. Ultimately Beelzebub would be a reference to Satan. They can't deny the miracle, they can't say it didn't happen, the man is speaking, the man is clearly seeing, the man is not demon possessed anymore. It cannot be denied, a tremendous thing has happened, and so because they cannot deny it, all they have left to do is criticize the one who did it. And they come back pretty critical, they say he's essentially a worker of the Devil. Well, in Mark chapter 3, verse 22, the way it's worded there, it says that he is possessed by Beelzebub, he's possessed by Beelzebub. So we see this group here, they represent to us a group of people that are critical of Christ, people that hear about the Lord, they see the Church [greater Body of Christ], things going on in the Church, God at work in the Church, a Christian's life, and they're critical, and they say harsh things, and they tear people down, and they shred this or that.

Why The Religious Group Are Saying Harsh Critical Things About Christ

And the reason why, so often, and we see this group is doing it, they're critical especially because they're threatened, they're threatened by Jesus. It is easy to criticize, when people's positions will be threatened. One church will look at another church and be [feel] threatened by what's going on in that church, you know, because they're growing or because of excitement in the community, and they'll just come out with *'Well, they're just carnal, that's why, they have that contemporary music because they're appealing to the carnal desires of the people, of course people will come to that church.'* [Also the religious leaders in Christ's time are the ones all Judeans had to tithe to. This was a theocracy. You paid taxes to the Romans, but the theocratic government of the priesthood and Temple was maintained by the tithes of the people, 10 percent of their income. Jesus was threatening their whole livelihoods in reality, the way these religious honchos looked at

it.] These folks are threatened, and because they are threatened, they're being critical. And they represent a group of people like that. And today, maybe there are some like that. To be critical because you're being threatened, I mean, that's a statement of weakness, that's just a statement of being given into fear, and then being evil at what you do in response. That's just an envy and a jealousy that's pretty ugly. Maybe you're here today and you are in a season where you are just now seeking the Lord and following the Lord, and there are people really being critical of you. You go home from this place, and your spouse is waiting for you, and they are so bothered by the fact that your are here. Or maybe you're a young person, and your mom and dad are just not happy that you would be coming here. Well understand that it's very possible because of the fact that they're threatened by what's going on, now you know how to pray for them. You can kind of focus your prayer with that very issue, that they're threatened by it, and maybe be understanding in a way you wouldn't have been, if you consider the real issue at heart and why they're struggling the way that they are. Jesus, as he goes on, just about everything he says up through verse 45 is getting at the issue of these guy's hearts, these men that are opposing him, he is just going to lay it bare.

*Jesus Confronts The Pharisees' Illogical Reasoning,
Backing Them Into A Corner*

Verses 25-30, "But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts our Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters abroad.'" Jesus responded to just the illogicalness of their criticism. As often criticism toward the Church, you hear it through the airwaves or read it in the press [or see it on posts to facebook], as often you look at it, you have to come to the conclusion that what they're saying is just illogical, that's just not true. He explains to them how foolish it is, *'If I am being empowered by Satan,'* as he's sharing, *'then*

Satan is actually working against himself, and consider how illogical that is, Satan, I mean he's working against his own goal. His goal it to possess his kingdom, to expand his kingdom, to have more people in his kingdom. ***'And this man I just healed was in Satan's kingdom, he was under his control. And he [meaning Satan] has cast the demon out?'*** And he has relinquished that person? Any kingdom divided against itself is not going to stand. A household divided is not going to stand. And that always is to us a reminder then of just the need to continue to pray for unity in this congregation and unity in our homes, harmony. [And how about unity within the greater Body of Christ too? Try seeking, praying for that as well. How? see: <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm> and scroll to Zephaniah 2:1-3.] And the way we ensure that there is unity, the way you do that, is to love. That's the way. If there's division between you and other people in the congregation, the way to deal with that is to come back in love, man. Because if a congregation is divided, or even a household is divided, man, the principle he says here is true, in the end it won't stand, it will come to an end. But then he goes even further, speaking of just how that's illogical, he says in ***verse 27, 'If I'm doing this by a demon, by the Devil, then how do your people do it?'*** Now evidently, these religious leaders, they had Jewish exorcists, you remember if you studied the Book of Acts, there's the sons of Skiva, and they go out there in Acts chapter 19, and they don't have a very good time of it. But they're Jewish itinerant exorcists, they go to this one place, they see here's a demon possessed man, they seek to cast out the demon in the name of Jesus whom Paul speaks of, you might remember, the demon responds pretty brutally, and in the end they are beat up and they run out of the house completely naked (cf. Acts 19:13-17). And so he says, ***'Hold on, if I have done this, if you say, by doing this it only proves that I'm demonically influenced and empowered, well then, if it proves that for me, then when your guys do it, it must prove the same thing, in order to do this. And that's your determination, I've cast out a demon, therefore I have demons. Well your own guys, and if you trained them, and if you've led them, then what does that say about you their trainer and their leader?'*** He's backing them into a corner with their own logic. ***"But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God" or as it says in Luke "by the finger of God", 'if I do it that way, then what does that say? Surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.'*** Meaning, ***'If light is here, and darkness is being pushed back, if the Devil, I mean, if he's***

losing ground here, if he's being overthrown, if his kingdom is being dismantled, then what does that say? It says the kingdom of God is right here, right now, right upon you through me, the Messiah, the Son of David indeed, the Son of God.' Verse 29, **"Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house."** He goes further here in verse 29, but how can a person go in and, you know, there's a strong man in the house, and how can you go in and take the strong man's goods? You know, a mighty, well-armed robber in a home, in his fortress, how can you go in and take his goods, unless you go in and you disarm him and you bind him and tie him up. And that's what he's indicating he's done. ***'That's how this happens, somebody that's stronger, meaning the strongman being the Devil, somebody stronger is here, and I've just bound him, and I've taken his goods,'*** the goods being the people he's driven demons out of, that's the goods that the Devil possesses.

"He Who Is Not With Me Is Against Me"---No Middle Ground, No Fence-Sitting Allowed.

Then **verse 30**, he goes further, **"He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters abroad."** ***'If you're not with me, if you're not on my team, if you're not working with me,'*** he says there's no middle ground. ***'There's no neutrality, you're either with me, working with me...if you choose not to do that, for whatever reason, you are then in the other group, by default, you are against me.'*** So there's no neutrality, there's no being disinterested, there's no *'Well, Christ, that's fine, hey that's for you, that's cool, I don't need it, God's fine with that, I'm gonna do my thing, I'm just not interested.'* Or, *'You know what? I don't want to do that and offend people, so I'll, I want to be friends with everybody, so I'll just stand in the middle.'* There's no middle ground. He says, ***'If you are not with me, if you do not choose to follow me, then your only other place is to be against me.'*** I pray that you'd consider that, that you're against the Lord, you're against him because you won't choose to follow him, you are against him. Just like any Satanist would be against him, just as some of the most evil groups that you think of are against him, you are in the same group, that's what he says, those are his own words. You are against him. But don't be deceived into thinking that *'I can just do what I*

want to do and be disinterested and neutral, and God's fine with that.' No God says **'You're against me.'** That's the Scripture, the teaching of the Bible. Verses 31-32 go even further. We have this group that's afraid, we have a group that's critical, and then this neutral group, and all of this in many instances is the same group of people at this time that Jesus is dealing with. But we're using it to just think of groups today [and also in our time].

What Is The Blasphemy Of The Holy Spirit?

Verses 31-32, "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven of men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

What he's showing them here, he's speaking about the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, and he says the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. I mean, **'If you speak a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven, but if you blaspheme the Holy Spirit,'** he says, **'it will not be forgiven.'**

So what is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? Well at this particular time, they are in a very unique position, in that they are seeing Jesus, Yeshua, physically, they can see him, they can tell you what he looks like, they're watching him work, they're listening to him teach, they're watching his whole life, all the miracles, they've just seen a man who was blind and mute and demon possessed healed, so they have a very unique perspective. And what they're doing, is that looking and saying **'That's evil, that's evil, that's evil.'** And that's blasphemy of the Holy Spirit for them. A work of God going on right before them, right there with Christ, they're watching that, and God is speaking to them, and Christ is seeking to draw them to himself, and yet they're speaking evil because of what is in their hearts, their hearts are at a place where the Holy Spirit is about to say, **'Hey, done, over, I'm not going to dwell with you anymore, I'm not going to draw you anymore, if that's the way you're going to be.'** [Comment: One part of the Body of Christ can come close to this by speaking against another part of the Body of Christ that is doing a work, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and yet this other denomination speaks evil of what the Holy Spirit is doing in this other denomination. Extreme caution has to be used in speaking evil toward another denomination. This is often seen, going both ways, between the

Sabbath-keeping Churches of God and Sunday-observing denominations, and the poor Messianic Jewish groups catching it from both sides. Such slandering really amounts to speaking against what the Holy Spirit is doing in each separate group. This can amount to blasphemy against a work of the Holy Spirit. It would be very wise for those engaged in such conversation to cease and desist from such blasphemous talk, you're treading on **very thin ice.**] Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit today is also that heart of just continuing to deny the work of the Spirit, continuing to deny the work of the Spirit speaking to you and attempting to draw you to God, to Christ. Maybe you're here in services, and Christ is going, **'Again I'm trying to get your attention, do you understand what's at stake? Do you see where you are? Do you understand where you need to be? Do you understand what I have done for you? Do you understand, do you understand?--I'm knocking on your heart, and you're resisting and resisting and resisting. And every time you resist, your heart gets a little harder, and if you continue to do that, eventually you get to the place where your heart is just hard, and like Pharaoh, God will say 'Forget it, there's hardness in his heart, let it be that way, nothing's going to change his heart.'** That's also what blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is today. And if you get to a state where that is your heart, the condition of your heart, well then, you cannot be forgiven, because how can you be forgiven if you will not come to Christ?

You Will Be Judged By Your Words, Because Your Words Reflect What's In Your Heart

Verses 33-37, "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Now the logic here is Jesus is again speaking to these men and these people that have been critical of him, accusing him of evil. He says, **'Listen, you've got only two options here, either make the fruit bad and the tree bad, because a bad tree bears bad fruit, a bad tree doesn't bear good fruit, or make the tree a good tree and its fruit good.**

The tree and the fruit, they go together, and if you are saying that I am evil, the tree is evil, then what I have just done is also evil. You can't just say, 'Well he just did good,' you have to say and agree that what I just did was evil. I healed this demon possessed man, and I healed his speech and his eyes, that was evil, because, if I'm evil, I've done evil things. You don't have the option of saying 'Well that was good, but he's evil.' And if what I did was good, saying 'Well that was good, but he's evil,' that doesn't equate. You don't have the option of saying 'Well that was good, but he's evil.' And if what I did was good, then that also is indicative that I am good, I'm not evil. But if you think I'm of the Devil, then you have to say 'Well, boy, that is terrible that he just cast the demon out of that person, I can't believe he made him see, he should reverse it, make him blind again.' That's the reasoning of what he's using here, that they only have one choice. He says, ***"You brood of vipers!"***, just like John the Baptist saying ***"You brood of vipers!"*** ***'You are evil, how could you possibly say a good thing? You think what you said about me before the crowds is good? No, it's because your tree is evil and you're evil, what you said is only evil, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things, and a man whose evil brings forth evil out of his mouth, and what you said is indeed evil, and so indeed your heart is evil.'*** But interesting, our words, as he goes on in verse 36, our words, man are very powerful in what they mean about our heart. What he's saying is, ***'What you say, the way you say things, and what comes out of your mouth, man that river that flows out of your mouth shows what's in the heart. It shows what's down there.'*** And he says, ***'That every idle word that men speak, they will give an account of it on the day of judgment.'*** Now I read that, and I'm like, that is not good news for me, you know. Some of the things that I say and have said, I don't even have to go back too far, man. I gotta give an account of that? Well as we are Christians or Messianic Jewish believers in Yeshua, we know that, balance every Scripture against every Scripture, and we know that there are other Scriptures that come to mind, and when it comes to our judgment day, I also understand that I'm under the blood of Christ. So as a Christian, I'm gonna come up there, and Jesus is going to admit, I am a mess, and then he's going to say, "Father, he's under the blood. This guy's a mess, but don't worry, I died for him, he's forgiven." So, when it comes to judgment day, I have the blood of Christ. Yet, without Christ, when people without

Christ stand before God, they will be judged for what they have said, they'll be judged for what they say. Now that's pretty interesting, you might come to judgment day, and not be a Christian, and go *"You know, I'm just, man I've done all these things, and, I think you're cool and I've never said anything bad about you, and I've tried to be pretty good, I mean, I've not stolen, not murdered,"* and God will go, turn on his little equipment, *'Let's listen to some of these things that you've said.'* You said that, you know, 20 years ago, and here you go *'Oh no.'* And the point is, you said that because it was in your heart. And it's your heart, your heart. He's referring to those evil speakers, when you're an evil speaker it's because there's evil in your heart. But it says something to you and I too about being a Christian, that our words, man, are significant, and you can't just write it off. You can't just be a Christian and think that it's fine to be critical and speak down about somebody or speak negatively of somebody, that just shows there's poison in your heart, it's your heart. **"For by your words you'll be justified, and by your words you'll be condemned."** That's the state of man apart from Christ. I thank God there's forgiveness in Christ, and there's also healing.

'Teacher, Give Us A Sign'

Verses 38-42, "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered saying, 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.'" Now that is amazing, isn't it? I mean, he just healed this guy. He has done miracle after miracle already, and they're like 'We want to see a sign from you.' **"But he answered and said to them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South [Sheba] will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."** He describes the Pharisees. They say, *'Teacher, we want a sign.'* It is incredible that they would say that, considering the incredible things that they have just seen. In Luke chapter 11 it says they tempt him. They're not sincerely going like *'I'd like*

to see a sign.’ They’re tempting him. Mark chapter 8, verse 11, it says specifically that they asked for a sign from heaven. **‘Show us a sign from heaven.’** Well, there is a spirit in that. These men have every reason to put their faith in Christ, they have no reason to think the things that they do. The only reason they do is because of their own ugly hearts. And he says **“An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign”**, wants God to do whatever you want to do to prove himself to you, you want God to do this or that just to prove himself to you, like God has to do that, you know, he has to meet you in that particular way, do this particular thing for you. He says that’s an ugly heart, that type of vanity. There are many people like that. [Comment: That’s an ugly heart if you ask for that kind of thing in a doubting, scoffing and scornful way. But if you are sincerely asking God to prove himself because you are sincerely interested in learning more about God, such requests have been honored. God will help you if you are sincere.] *‘I don’t believe in God because I don’t see him. And he’d better stand in front of me if I’m gonna put belief in him and follow him.’* And Jesus comes back and says **‘What an evil and adulterous generation,’** what an evil heart, an incredulous heart, denying Christ because he’s not meeting you in a certain way, when you have every reason to, because the Holy Spirit speaks to your heart, because God has given you the life that he’s given you. He’s given you the planet and made things move the way that they do. Brought the people into your life, and showing you grace and kindness over and over again. Yet people say *‘I want more.’* Sometimes it’s OK to sincerely struggle, going *‘I need more, I need something else, I want to believe...’* That’s one type of heart, and generally as you’re going through it, *‘Lord, just help me believe,’* and he will. But it’s a whole other type of heart, he said, *‘Ah, I need this, meet me here, this way.’* I tell you what, you’ll find that God won’t meet you that way. And you’ll find in the end that there’s a real poison in your heart. He said, **‘the only sign, I’m not gonna give a sign, I’m not gonna play your game, the only sign you’re going to get is the sign of the prophet Jonah.’** **‘So as the Son of man, I will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Same way, he died, and it was a sign of what I’m going to do. He died in the sense of going into the great fish, and then coming out three days and three nights [72 hours exactly] later. That’s the sign you get.’** And that’s all the sign we need. [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>]

Obedience Without Christ, What That Means

Verses 43-45, “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.” And he’s speaking to me about those that think that they’ve got their lives cleaned up. The picture he’s giving here, of this house of this man, individual, who has a demonic spirit, this abode of a demonic spirit. If the spirit leaves, and the ‘house’ is all clean, but nothing else comes in and resides there [such as the Holy Spirit], that demonic spirit that has gone out and can’t find a place, running into other spirits that can’t find a place to live either, will grab them and say ‘*Hey, come on back with me, man, this house is vacant, and it’s clean, let’s move on in.*’ And he says the last state of that ‘house’ or individual will be worse than the first. And he’s saying to them, these Pharisees and scribes, ‘**You’ve got all your lives cleaned up, that’s what you think, but you haven’t received me, you haven’t received true life. And if something doesn’t change, you’ll be worse off.**’ He’s also speaking to the nation of Israel, Judah, Judea, that they were in idolatry (previous to the Babylonian Captivity), God punished them, sent them off, the tribe of Judah off to Babylon. They were there seventy years, man they were disciplined, they came back, they were purified of that type of idolatry, you don’t read about it again. Now they’ve got this religious system going where they believe they’re worshipping Jehovah and they’re all cleaned up. He’s speaking to them as a whole nation, that if they don’t receive the Messiah whose here and now, the Christ, man, things are going to get really bad. They’ll be worse off than before they went to Babylon. [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1a.htm> and scroll to the title “Bar Kochba Revolt” and read from there to the end.] Today if you’re here, and you’re thinking ‘*good works, self-righteous, I can do it on my own, I’ve been doing it on my own.*’ Man, that’s a dangerous state to be in, that is a dangerous heart. You will end up in a horrible state, if you don’t humble yourself and come to Christ (see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/revelation/Revelation%2018-20.htm> and scroll to the paragraph title “**Satan loosed after**

the one-thousand years for a short span of time” (Revelation 20:7-9) and read that short paragraph). There is a Psalm that states ‘Unless the LORD builds the house, the weary builder builds in vain, unless the LORD shields the city, they that stand on the wall stand a useless watch.’

*Do You Have Unsaved Family That Disagree
With What You’re Doing, What You Believe?---
Jesus Has Been There*

Verses 46-50, “While he was still talking to the multitude, behold, his mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with him. Then one said to him, ‘Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with you. But he answered and said to the one who told him, ‘Who is my mother and who are my brothers?’ And he stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers!’ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” The last verses we’ll look at as we come to the end of our time. Well, we don’t see it here, but there’s another heart here in response to what Christ is doing. And we actually get some help from the other Gospels. **But Mark chapter 3 verses 20-21, as this happened, we read in Mark, “But when his own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of him, for they said, ‘He is out of his mind.’”** So Mom and his brothers come here, they don’t come to say *‘Hey, we’d just like to talk to Jesus, you know, haven’t seen him in awhile, just kind of miss him, want to see how he’s doing.’* No they come going, *‘What in the world is he doing!? He seems to be out of his mind, we need to go help him, we need to stop him from doing these things.’* And it’s because of that---Jesus very much loves his Mom and his brothers---but it’s because of the way they’re coming, he’s doing the work of God, and it’s because of their heart at this point, they’re troubled, they’re concerned for him. He’s doing a good thing, and they don’t understand, and they’re troubled. It’s because of that he says **‘Whose my family? Who are my brothers?’** And then he looks around at these who have followed him, his disciples, and those that love him, and he says **‘This is my family, this is my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.’** [My flesh and blood children and adoptive daughters have that attitude toward what I am doing in this ministry. It kind of hurts. Often we find we’re closer to our spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ than

we are with flesh and blood family members (unless they're born-again), and this is why, there's this spiritual gulf. None of Jesus' immediate family were born-again at this time when this occurred here in Matthew 12:46-50.] He says, **'Man, this is my family. These are my people, man. These are, this is it man, my mother and brothers.'** When you follow Christ with your whole heart, it may not be easy, but you're part of the family of God. Let's close in prayer...[Condensed from a connective expository sermon given somewhere in New England]

related links:

The Pharisees and religious leader's end:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Jewish-Roman_War

Final conquest of Judea:

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1a.htm>

and scroll to the title **The Bar Kochba Revolt** and read from there to the end of that chapter.

Why Christians, Messianic Jewish believers in Jesus are not obeying God's Laws all on their own. See,

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm>

Obedience without Christ, where does it lead? Log onto:

http://www.unityinchrist.com/revelation/Revelation_18-20.htm

and scroll to the paragraph covering Revelation 20:7-9 and read that paragraph.