

**Slide 1**

## **Blessed Are Those Who Hear and Obey**

### **LUKE 11:14-28**

#### **Introduction**

1. Today, many people do not like to be told that they must make a choice — you must either choose this or that.
2. No, more and more people are determined to . . .
  - a. “leave their options open”
  - b. “to have it both ways”
3. However, in our text today, Jesus tells us that we can’t have it both ways.
4. We must choose one or the other.
5. Jesus’ teaching here in vv. 17-26 of chapter 11 in Luke’s gospel is the result of His healing of a mute man.
6. The reason we are given for his inability to speak is a demon which had taken up residence within him.
7. As a result of Jesus having cast out the demon, Luke tells us that “the crowds were amazed” (v. 14).
8. However, there were those “Pharisees” (Matthew 12:24) and “scribes” (Mark 3:22) who were jealous of Jesus popularity.
  - a. They did not deny His authority to expel demons.
  - b. Neither did they accuse Him of being an imposter.
  - c. They actually acknowledged his miracles.
9. But, instead of attributing them to the power of God, they sought to discredit Jesus by attributing them to Beelzebul.
10. Have you ever had someone say to you, “I would believe in Jesus if I could have seen some of His miracles.”
11. In this event, we have evidence that such is not the case.

12. Instead of giving glory to God, these people instead accused Jesus of being in league with Beelzebul, or Satan.
13. Today, as we examine Jesus' response to these detractors, there are three important facts which we must remember.

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[First,]

## **I. There Is A Spiritual Battle Raging**

### **A. IT IS BETWEEN CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND SATAN'S KINGDOM**

1. There are no other sides in this battle — only these two.
2. Christ's kingdom
  - a. He is the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:16).
  - b. He is the one whom Isaiah called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).
  - c. His kingdom includes all those angels who remained faithful to God when Satan and the other angels rebelled.
  - d. His is the "kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 3:2; 7:21) and is composed of all the righteous redeemed.
  - e. His kingdom is eternal.
3. Satan's kingdom
  - a. Satan is an angel who chose to rebel against God.
  - b. His kingdom includes all the demons (evil spirits) who along with him rebelled against God.
  - c. Jesus called him "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
  - d. Paul referred to him as . . .
    - 1) "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2)
    - 2) "the god of this world" who "has blinded the minds of the unbelieving" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

- e. His kingdom is a “domain of darkness” (Colossians 1:13).
- f. He holds people “captive” in his “snare . . . to do his will” (2 Timothy 2:26).

**2a****B. SATAN DOES NOT WORK AGAINST HIMSELF**

1. Ultimately, Satan seeks to lash out at God any way he can.
2. That includes the destruction of you and I who are created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:27).
3. For those attempting to discredit Jesus by saying that He was casting out demons through the power of Satan was to say that Satan was working against himself.
4. Jesus pointed out just how faulty their reasoning was, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a house divided against itself falls” (v. 17).
  - a. Any kingdom, house, army, business, team or movement which engages in its own internal war will eventually destroy itself.
  - b. How many marriages do you know which no longer exist because a husband and wife were fighting against each other.
  - c. Think of the games which were lost because players did not work together as a team.
5. Jesus turned the logic of his detractors back upon them, “And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul” (v. 18).
  - a. There were Jewish exorcists in the time of Jesus and His apostles (Acts 19:13-17).
  - b. Jesus is asking His detractors, “If I am casting out demons by the prince of the demons, how do you know that your own people aren’t doing the same?”

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[Second,]

**II. Jesus Christ Has Authority Over Satan’s Power**

### **A. THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN HIM IS THE "FINGER OF GOD" (v. 20)**

1. Jesus then pointed out that if Satan was not behind His power, then clearly God was.
2. "If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (v. 20).
3. Over 1,400 years earlier when God was sending plagues upon the Egyptians, Pharaoh's magicians were able to duplicate the first two, but with the third plague they told Pharaoh they could not duplicate it because it was "the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19).

**3a**

### **B. IT TAKES ONE STRONGER THAN THE STRONG TO RESCUE US FROM OUR SINS**

1. Satan is the strong man.
2. As we noticed a moment ago, Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:26 that there are those who are in "the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."
3. Jesus is the One who is "stronger" who is able to "overpower" Satan, and "take . . . from him all his armor" (v. 22).
4. Paul wrote in Colossians 2:15 that God "disarmed the rulers and authorities, having triumphed over them through Him [Christ]."
5. Christ is the only one who can set us free.

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## **III. We Are Either On Jesus' Side or Satan's Side**

### **A. NEUTRALITY IS NOT AN OPTION**

1. This is not a battle we can watch from the sidelines.
2. As Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters" (v. 23).

3. Each of us is either a committed follower of Jesus Christ, or we are followers of Satan.
4. There are no other options.

4a

## **B. THE DANGER OF NEUTRALITY**

1. In these last three verses (vv. 24-26), Jesus tells a parable about an unclean spirit which leaves a person.
  - a. That unclean spirit seeks rest in “waterless places,” but is unable to find any (v. 24).
  - b. Finally, it resolves to return to its former human abode.
  - c. Finding that house “swept and put in order” (v. 25), it invites seven “spirits more evil than itself” (v. 26) to take up residence with it.
  - d. Jesus says that “the last state of that man becomes worse than the first” (v. 26).
2. The focus of this parable is the unclean spirit.
3. Jesus message to us is this: “Don’t mess with this spirit, don’t underestimate its power, and most of all, don’t think because you have evicted it one time you never have to worry again.”
4. Any of us who purge evil from our lives but put nothing in its place are in grave moral danger.
5. There are a number of self-help resources available today which teach us how to clean up our lives and put our house in order, but leave our lives empty of God’s Spirit.
6. Unless we have, what the apostle Paul called, “the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5), we are empty and without God.
7. Satan is going to see that such a void is filled, and we may find ourselves more cynical, more distrustful, even more hateful that we were before.
8. There is no neutrality:
  - a. Either the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with the things of God, or
  - b. Satan will fill our hearts with everything that deplores God and those

who are His.

## Conclusion

1. As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd spoke up and said, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you” (v. 27, NIV84).
2. Jesus’ response is one we must not forget, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it” (v. 28, NKJV).
3. All of us are a part of this great spiritual battle which is going on all around us.
  - a. On one side is Jesus Christ and all those who are striving to follow Him.
  - b. On the other side is Satan, the demons and those he either holds captive or who willingly choose to follow him.
4. There is no neutral side, no opting out, no choosing to remain on the sidelines.
5. To try and do so is to automatically allow Satan control of your life.
6. There is only One who has the power to set you free from Satan’s control and grant you a life of joy and peace.
7. That person is Jesus Christ and He invites you to come to Him.

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8. In John 7:37-38 we find an invitation which Jesus extended to those in Jerusalem at the Feast of Booths, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”
9. Let Him fill your soul and grant you what you most need. Today!