



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Moral Conformity v Messiah's Kingdom

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In the Gospel According to Luke (AD 60-61), Jesus encounters a man who has no voice, yet is not, in the least, hindered from hearing his heart's cry. This man, Luke says, is inhabited by a demon which seems to have afflicted him so severely that he cannot speak among other functions that may well have been troubling which are not mentioned. Jesus' enemies were standing just far enough off to not get involved, but close enough to hurl blasphemous slander at the Messiah.

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters. "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it 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." (Luke 11:14-26, NKJV)

We are often made aware of demonic workings in the Gospels upon the arrival of the Messiah—likely because of the willful neglect of the Word of God and silence from God for so great a period of time (400 years—since Malachi). Since Christ's enemies could not deny the wonderful and unmistakable miracles that were taking place in their presence they resorted to slander. So often when Truth cannot be denied it will be emotionally rejected. This is the easiest way to sooth the conscience that will not bend it's will to the Lord's authority.

These enemies claimed that Christ's power and authority could not be derived from Heaven but only from a Hellish source. (v. 15) Jesus does not succumb to their trap and knowing their thoughts strikes a shrewd blow to their own "sons"—*possibly Jewish leaders, etc.*..with the aim to dismantle their self-righteousness and expose their need for a Savior. (v. 19)

Jesus uses an unanswerable argument. There is only one way for a strong man to be defeated—that is if a stronger man comes to conquer him. Succinctly driving home the point that Jesus is indeed God and therefore has ultimate unrivaled power, Jesus asserts that He is not merely interested in health healing but whole healing. He attributes His works to that of the Kingdom of God—the work of God to reconcile fallen people to Himself through His grace. **Christ moved from "spiritual talk" to eternal truths designed to instigate their own self-examination.** (v. 19)

If we could wear a pair of lenses that would reveal the powers of darkness v the spirits of light we would be sobered. Yet the reality is that we sense, we feel, we wrestle with the effects of the Evil One throughout our day. We cannot underestimate the intentions of the Devil nor can we underestimate the power of God to overthrow the Devil's influence upon us. And while sometimes one would like to think of himself as being on the fence between the two kingdoms **Christ adamantly declares there is no "neutral ground."** (v. 23) **In order to reinforce that moral conformity is not enough to rescue one from the kingdom of darkness Christ aptly warns that He is not merely speaking of Christ-less morality but of the exclusive transforming grace that He alone possesses.** (vv. 24-26)

For Your Consideration:

- How can moral conformity (*rather than Gospel-transformation*) become temporarily soothing to the troubled conscience?
- What daily preparation do you make against the Devil's influence and attacks upon you?
(see Eph. 6:10-18)

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44