

Matthew 12:22-50

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SERMON NOTES

Matthew

The King and His Kingdom

Matthew 12:22-50

No Neutral Ground

“Our leisure, even our play, is a matter of serious concern. There is no neutral ground in the universe. Every square inch, every split second is claimed by God, and counterclaimed by Satan.”

- C.S. Lewis

Recurring themes from Matthew 11 and 12:

1. Honest doubt vs. willful unbelief
2. Belief and allegiance vs. unbelief and resistance
3. The gentle offer and invitation of Jesus

5 Pericopes of Matthew 12:22-50:

1. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (v. 22-32)
2. A tree is known by its fruit (v. 33-37)
3. The sign of Jonah (v. 38-42)
4. Return of an unclean spirit (v. 43-45)
5. Jesus' mother and brothers (v. 46-50)

Matthew 12:22-50

No Neutral Ground

1. Our hearts were never designed to be empty.
2. Reverence *for* God leads to understanding *of* God.
3. Our repentance is met by God's forgiveness.

“The warning of the return of the unclean spirits is pictorial commentary on Jesus’ earlier warning against neutralism... neutrality toward Jesus is an empty house; unmoved ‘belief’ in Jesus is a merely swept but unoccupied home; mere interest in Jesus, with no commitment to Him, is a house in danger of haunting... for our empty, swept, tidy houses will be filled sooner or later by something, because houses are made for occupancy.”

- Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Christbook*

“The ultimate issue in relation to Jesus Christ is not one of semantics (the meaning of words), but of homage (the attitude of the heart); not whether our tongue can subscribe to an orthodox formulation of the person of Jesus, but whether our knee has bowed before His majesty. Besides, reverence always precedes understanding. We shall know Him only if we are willing to obey Him.”

- John Stott, *The Authentic Jesus*

“The unbelieving mind would not be convinced by any proof, and the worshiping heart needs none.”

- A.W. Tozer

“I believe in order to know.”

- Augustine of Hippo

“There are only two kinds of people - those who say, ‘Thy will be done,’ to God, or those to whom God, in the end, says, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in hell choose it. Without that self-choice, it wouldn’t be hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it.”

- C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

“All God does in the end with people is give them what they most want, including freedom from Himself. What could be more fair than that?”

- Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*

“...That is not at all the situation of most of those who come to pastors fearing that they have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit. Those who fear they have committed it cannot have committed it! For those who sin against the light, against the Holy Spirit, deliberately ascribe to evil what they know comes from God. And it is unforgivable not because God will not forgive, but because those who practice such deliberate self-deception cannot bring themselves to the requisite repentance.”

- Michael Green, *The Bible Speaks Today*

“Come to Me, all who labor are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

- *Matthew 11:28-29*

“And whoever comes to Me I will never cast out.”
- *John 6:37*