

Luke 11:14-26

Introduction: This passage shows us the first of a series of five open encounters with the Jewish opposition to Jesus' ministry (extends through 13:21). This opposition takes place in the fall of 32 AD, leading up to December at the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah; prior to John 10:22-ff). This also addresses the age-old issue mentioned in C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*: Jesus is either a lunatic, liar, or Lord. I think Lewis misses one other option. Darrel Bock is right to say we ought to add that Jesus could simply have been wrong. Misguided, but wrong. What is He? How do you evaluate Jesus?

Jesus encounters a variety of responses to His miracle—11:14-16

- 1) The setting—11:14a ¹⁴ *And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute.*
 - a) Luke changes how he details this miracle. Normally it takes more than one verse. Here his focus is on the response to the miracle.
 - b) A fulfillment of Isaiah 35:6.
- 2) Positive response—11:14b *Now it happened, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the crowds were astonished.*
- 3) Two-fold negative response—11:15-16
 - a) Active opposition—11:15 ¹⁵ *But some of them said, "He is casting out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."*
 - i) They recognized the miracle as supernatural, but Satanic in origin.
 - ii) Beelzebub was worshiped in Philistine city of Ekron (2nd Kings 1:2-3).
 - iii) This is the second time this accusation has been made against Jesus.
About a year earlier in Galilee, a similar miracle occurred. (cf. Matthew 12:22-32)
 - iv) Note the power of prejudice over the hearts of the unconverted. (Ryle)
 - b) Non-decisive—11:16 ¹⁶ *And others, testing Him, were seeking from Him a sign from heaven.*
 - i) This is addressed in 11:29, which we will look at next time.
 - ii) They have over 3 years worth of evidence. Isn't that sufficient?

Jesus teaches about loyalty to Himself—11:17-23

- 1) Jesus' omniscience—11:17a ¹⁷ *But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them,*
 - a) Cf. He knows the human heart (Acts
- 2) Basic principle of absurdity—11:17b-20 *"Every kingdom divided against itself is ruined, and a household against itself collapses. (the proverbial house of cards)*
 - a) Application—11:18-20 ¹⁸ *So, if (1st class condition) Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you^{pl} claim I am casting out the demons in association with Beelzebul.*
 - b) Possibility # 1—¹⁹ *Now if (1st class condition) I am casting out the demons in association with Beelzebul, in association with whom are your^{pl} sons (the disciples) casting them out?*
 - i) *Therefore they (the disciples) will be your^{pl} judges.* (cf. 22:30; Matthew 19:28)

- ii) In essence, “Okay, you don’t accept me. But look at my disciples whom you’ve known for a long time. What about them?”
- c) Possibility # 2—²⁰ *But if (1st class condition) in association with the finger of God (cf. Exodus 8:19; context of miracles) I am casting out the demons, consequently the kingdom of God has come upon you^{pl}.*
- 3) Basic principle of strength—11:21-22
 - a) Security—²¹ *When a strong man (Satan), being fully armed, guards his own estate, his possessions are secure.*
 - b) Defeat—²² *But when someone stronger (Jesus) attacks and defeats him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted and distributes the spoils.*
 - i) Armor and weapons are taken away from a defeated enemy soldier.
 - ii) “It is because Jesus is stronger and has overcome Satan that He is casting out demons. This is the lesson they should be drawing from it.” (Magill)
- 4) Jesus’ main point; side with the Winner—11:23 ²³ *He who is not with Me (in My battle against Satan) is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.*
 - a) To refuse to follow Christ is to be destructive toward His purposes. Neutrality was and is impossible. Those not siding with the Victor are siding with the enemy.
 - b) Failure to embrace Christ amounts to opposing His kingdom. It was the Jews, and not Jesus, who were in an alliance with Satan.

Jesus teaches about the dangers of indifference to Himself—11:24-26

- 1) ²⁴ *When an unclean spirit goes out from a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finding none, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’* ²⁵ *And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.*
 - a) Vulnerability—“The key to the example appears to be that no one else has been invited in to dwell. If an exorcism occurs and there is no response to God, then the way is free for the demon to return.” (NET Bible)
- 2) ²⁶ *Then it proceeds and takes with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and having entered they reside there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first.”*
 - a) Vulnerability—“The point of the story is that to fail to respond is to risk a worse fate than when one started.” (NET Bible)
 - b) “And so it happened in Israel, Mt 12:45. Israel’s state after Jesus became worse than before.” (Magill)

Take-home truth: It is dangerous to be content with any change of religion short of a thorough conversion to God. Attempting to sit on the fence will lead to your destruction.