

Tom Fuerst: “What is ‘blasphemy of the Holy Spirit’?... It is being so thoroughly committed to an anti-Kingdom mentality that when justice comes via the hand of God, when healing happens by the work of the Spirit, when God-in-the-flesh shows up and begins to set the world right again, you attribute all of that goodness to Satan. In a very real sense, you have so pitted yourself against the work of God that you now see evil as good, and kingdom good as downright satanic.... Jesus was talking about someone who is so warped that their sense of good and evil, justice and injustice, God and Satan are turned upside down and they simply do not want to see the world any other way.”

- iv. To commit this unforgiveable sin, you have to think that the source of Jesus’ miraculous works is satanic; that Jesus is actually an evil worker.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What do you think Jerry means by “tree questions” vs. “forest questions”? Why is it important to ask “forest questions” about Scripture texts we are studying?
- What do we learn about this text (which mentions the Spirit 3x) from the immediate context? From the role of the Spirit in Scripture?
- Discuss the Cornelius Van der Kooi quotes under II. A. iv.
- Would people observing our lives and the work of the Spirit through us be able to see that the Kingdom of God, the Messianic Kingdom, has come upon us? What evidences should be present?
- How does Jesus, by defeating the strongman, make gathering both possible and necessary for disciples?
- How is it that the Pharisees demonstrate in their accusation of Jesus that they are offspring of the serpent?
- Do you find the Tom Fuerst quote (above) helpful? Why or why not?

DISCIPLE 1.0 – Moving Past the Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit

Jerry Cisar — September 15, 2019

Text: Matthew 12:22-37

Introduction

I. Transforming Triple Threat (12:22-24)

- A. *This guy was no ordinary case!* His life represents the complete brokenness of humanity.
- B. Jesus had the Spirit’s power with two results:
 - i. The crowds asked in half disbelief, “Could this really be the Son of David (the Messiah)?”
 - ii. The Pharisees accuse Jesus of black magic.
- C. This scene is foreshadowed earlier in the Sermon on Mission.
 - i. Matthew 10:24-25
 - ii. Jesus is on His mission and He is accused. When we are doing the work of His kingdom, we too will be accused.

II. Subduing the Strongman (25-30)

- A. The Spirit
 - i. The verses immediately prior to the unit we are studying mentions the Holy Spirit! (Matt. 12:18)

ii. It was the Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness where He was tempted and the Spirit who gave Him power to resist that temptation—temptation to take the kingdoms of the world on Satan’s terms. Satan’s unjust terms. (Matt. 4)

iii. The HS in Scripture

a) Gen. 1:2

b) Psalm 104:29-30

iv. The Kingdom of God has Come Upon You (28)

Cornelius Van der Kooi: “If Christ reigns and his Spirit has been sent, then this world is not empty but has become the space in which Christ by his Spirit works and manifests himself, especially against resistance, breakdown, and chaos.”

“This universe is not empty. It is the place where God by his Spirit moves, dwells, struggles, and interferes.”

The Kingdom of God has come where the Spirit of God restores people to shalom, to justice, to healing and wholeness. It has come when God’s justice is being proclaimed and accomplished.

B. Spirits: Were the disciples of the Pharisees doing the same kind of works as Jesus? (27)

C. Strongmen (29)

i. What’s a strongman?

ii. The healing of the triple threat reveals that Jesus has total control over Satan and his dominion. Now we can rise up and go take back all those he has held captive... and that is the work of mission, through proclamation and action!

D. Gathering and Scattering (30)

III. Standing Up to Serpents (31-37)

A. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

i. Exactly what is it?

ii. Why is Matthew recording this event?

B. Calling good evil (or evil good) is a cover up for acts of injustice!

i. “You brood of snakes.”

ii. Isaiah 5:16-23

iii. The Pharisees were attributing the work of Jesus to demons in order to keep themselves in power at the expense of justice to the innocent, of healing to the sick, or restoration to the broken!