

B. The Alternative Generation is an Occupied Generation!

- i. *Doing the will of my Father in heaven.* (12:50)
- ii. This generation, which is doing the will of the Father, does not have lives which are swept clean and put in order.
 - a) The church is not a place for human fiefdoms any more than the temple was a place for the Pharisees' little fiefdom!
 - b) Ezek. 34:4, 16

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What are some of the ways in history that leaders have taught doctrines to protect their power more than shown God's mercy?
- On a more personal level, are there ways we nuance our theology to protect our position? Our bank accounts? To keep our hands clean?
- Why is it be important to recognize that the parable of the demon returning is not about individuals but a generation?
- What are the two ways the English word "unoccupied" is used? The Greek word also has both meanings. How might Jesus be using that play on words here? Does the context support this?
- What are some of the ways, in our generation, we are tempted to be "neat and tidy" but unoccupied with doing the will of the Father?
- If the "demons" which have been driven out of our community returned, would they find us occupied or unoccupied? Explain which use of the word occupied you are using in your answer.
- What are some of the ways that people might end up many times worse than their first state if they are found unoccupied?
- What is the call of this text upon our lives?

DISCIPLE 1.0 The Occupied Generation

Jerry Cisar — September 29, 2019

Text: Matthew 12:38-50

Introduction

Stanley Hauerwas: "We cannot help but be sympathetic with the request for a sign. Jesus asks much of those who would follow him, and it does not seem unreasonable to be given some assurance. Yet, we must remember, the devil asked Jesus for signs in the desert."

I. The Idolatrous Generation (38-40)

A. Signs vs. miracles

- i. Matthew 16:1
- ii. Matthew 2:1, 9

B. Adulterous = Idolatrous

- a) Matthew 6:24
- b) Matthew 16:6-12
- c) Matthew 23:25

C. The Unseen Sign of Jonah

- i. What is this sign of Jonah?
 - a) Craig Keener: the Ninevites did not personally witness Jonah's experience in the great sea creature.

- b) The sign of Jonah, and the sign of the son of man in the heart of the earth, is a sign of weakness.

II. The Unoccupied Generation (41-45)

A. More significant than Jonah (41)

- i. Jesus is more significant than Jonah... who was a prophet.
- ii. Why will the Ninevites rise up in judgment against the Pharisees and teachers of the Law?

B. More significant than the Queen of the South (42)

- i. This Queen came at a great cost to hear Solomon's wisdom.
- ii. Jesus doesn't *have* the Wisdom of God, He *is* the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God that rescues us and saves us and restores us to what we were created for!
- iii. Jesus will build God's house (Eph. 2:20-22).

C. The Unoccupied Ones (43-45)

- i. "This is how it will be with this wicked generation."

- ii. How was this "demon" exercised from lit. "the man" (which is the wicked generation)?
 - a) Bishop of Poitiers, in the 4th century suggested that the Law is what drove the demon out and cleaned them up.

- b) The demon returns to find them all cleaned up by the Law, but not occupied with the purpose of the Law—mercy.
 - Matt. 12:7

iii. Unoccupied

- a) This word can mean *unoccupied* in the sense of empty *and* in the sense of idle... not working, lazy!
- b) In the immediate context, this wicked generation is contrasted with those who are very occupied.
- c) The Pharisees lives are all neat and tidy, swept clean and everything in order. Clean hands are their forte! But they are unoccupied... empty because they are not doing what Jesus said.

III. The Occupied Generation (46-50)

- A. The point is that there is a generation that is occupied with something, a family that is an alternative to this world's!
 - a) What is the qualifier for this family?

- b) *Orthodoxy* must lead to *orthopraxy* if we are going to be part of Jesus' family.