

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • TV-022A

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Luke 11:14-26

“And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

I want you to take your Bibles and open them to the book of **Luke chapter 11**. I’m going to be using several verses of Scripture. So it would be very good if you would take your Bible and follow along with me as I speak today, **Luke chapter 11**, beginning with **verses 14-26**.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, there are three important and powerful lessons taught in this portion of God's Word and I believe they're especially applicable to this day. Now, the first lesson we'll find in **verses 14 and 15 of Luke 11.**

And this is the lesson; the Lord of glory never uses the weapons of Satan as a means of this world, carnal, fleshly tactics, to accomplish His purpose. Now let's read this in **verses 14 and 15:**

“And He was casting out a devil; (this is our Lord Jesus Christ) and it was a dumb spirit. And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake and the people marveled. But some of them said; (now get this) He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. He cast out devils by the power of Satan.”

Now this crowd was accusing our Lord of using the power and the means and the weapons of Satan to cast out evil. And our Lord strongly denied this and strongly objected to it. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, is never in anyway, in league with Satan.

There is a deadly, eternal, infinite hatred, between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil. There is a deadly hatred between Jesus Christ and Satan and has been since his fall. If you will take your Bible and turn in **Genesis 3:15** you'll find this recorded in the first part of God's Word.

The Lord is speaking to Satan and He said; *“I will put enmity, (hatred), between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed.”* Her seed here is the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the prophecy of the virgin birth of the Son of God. And God says to Satan; *“There will be enmity, (hatred) between you and the woman's seed.”*

Now look at **1 John 3:8**: *“For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy, (not use) but destroy the works of Satan.”* There never can be; there never has been, is not now, or never can be, any compromise between the kingdom of evil and the kingdom of God Almighty.

Our Lord never uses evil to fight evil. Our Lord never uses common means to accomplish spiritual work. Now this is important; you listen carefully; our Lord never allies himself with Satan to help accomplish God's purposes.

Now listen to a Scripture, **2 Corinthians 10:4**. Paul is writing to the church at Corinth and he says, *“The weapons of our warfare, (the spiritual warfare in which we engage, this is a spiritual warfare with Satan) we wrestle not with flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, the kingdom of darkness, the rulers of evil, and spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

“And our weapons are not carnal; (they're not fleshly) but they're mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down, imaginations (reasonings), and every high thing that exalted itself against the kingdom of God.”

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Our Lord of glory is never in league in anyway with Satan. He never uses carnal methods and carnal means to accomplish spiritual purposes. Now you say, “Preacher, how are you applying that to this day?”

Well now you listen to me; this wicked and blasphemous philosophy has a grip on religion and churches today as never before. And here is the philosophy; “As long as our goal is good, bringing people to church, bringing people to Christ, as long as our goal is good, it does not matter what means we use.”

This is the philosophy; “Our goal is to get people in the church by the thousands. Our goal is to build great, religious organizations, beautiful buildings, temples, cathedrals, and churches, filled with people. Our goal is to excel in numbers. And even if we use carnal methods, fleshly entertainment, fleshly weapons, it does not matter just so long our goal is good.”

Now my friends; I’m shocked and I’m heart-sick. It is not a laughing matter. It is a serious matter. I am shocked in my heart and I’m heart-sick over the methods that are being used by churches today to persuade people to come to the house of God. It started years ago. Years ago the church started having contests, contests in the Sunday school, contests with the youth groups, contests giving recognition and prizes to the classes for having the largest attendance.

That’s the way it started, the wanted numbers and they wanted crowds. So, we started having contests in the church, little innocent contests. “If you have more than we have then we’ll take you on a picnic. If you have more than we have you’ll get to do this, that, and the other.”

And then the churches began to compete with one another. I remember when I was a boy when this first started; the church over across town would compete with the church over here to see who could have the largest Sunday school, or the largest training union, or the largest prayer meeting, or the greatest numbers.

And then we started having what they called, “Special days.” They started having round-up days and roll-call days and baby days, mother’s days, and father’s days, and anniversary days and all matter of days, “Special days.”

And during these, “Special days” cars were given away and clothes were given away and orchids were given away to the oldest mother, the youngest mother, the one with the most children, the oldest father, the one with the most descendants. All of these methods were used to get people to come to the house of God.

These are carnal methods. These are fleshly methods. And our Lord never is in anyway in league with Satan or using satanic methods and fleshly carnal warfare, to accomplish His purpose.

Now today; this is what’s sad and you know what I’m saying is true; today, nothing is out of bounds. Today, children are actually paid money to ride buses to church. Today, children are promised hotdogs and Pepsi Colas.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

They're promised McDonald hamburgers. They're promised Kentucky Fried Chicken. They're even giving away bicycles and ponies and footballs and airplane rides to the children who will bring the most people to Sunday school.

One church in this area and this is sad, this is shocking. This is a heartache to all who really love the kingdom of God, the church of our Lord, and His blessed Word. One pastor promised his congregation that if they had a certain number in Sunday school on the Lord's Day; he would eat his dinner on top of the church.

And the next day the picture appeared in the paper. The pastor straddled the steeple on top of the church eating his lunch. Can you just imagine in your wildest imagination the apostle Paul, or Peter, or James, or John compromising in this way?

Another church in this area had "River Sunday" in which none of the deacons, clothes and all, were thrown into the river. And people came from all around and attended the church that morning to see the deacon thrown into the river.

This is carnal; it's fleshly. It's the church in league with entertainment and using satanic methods to try to accomplish God's purpose. And our Lord Jesus Christ is not in that in anyway.

And that's not the only problem. You say, "Well get them to the church to hear the Gospel;" the Gospel's not being preached. Bible teaching and doctrinal preaching is the thing of the past. You know it and I know it.

Today it's entertainment. Today it's music. Today it's all night singing; today its plays and its movies, announcements, recognition and flesh.

My friends; real heart worship of the living God, real heart prayer and Bible preaching is all but forgotten. People leave the church buildings today, rather than feeling that they've been in the presence of God, like those disciples of old who said, "*Didn't our hearts burn within us as He spoke to us and as He opened the Word of God to us?*"

Today when people leave the church, instead of feeling that they've been in the presence of God and God has spoken to them and their burdens have been lifted and their hearts have been comforted and their souls have been convicted and their minds have been edified, rather than feeling that way, they feel like they've been to a three-ringed circus. Now that's just about what it is, a three-ringed circus.

David said, "*I was glad when they said to me let's go to the house of God.*" And our Lord said, "*My house shall be called a house of prayer. You've made it a den of thieves.*"

And I believe that if our Lord was on the earth today and would enter into these places of amusement which call themselves "Churches," these places of contests, organizations, socials, and everything but preaching, that He'd drive the moneychangers out of the pulpit and out of the

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

pews crying; *“My house shall be called the house of God, the house of prayer, the house of worship, the house of preaching. You’ve made it a den of thieves.”*

And I’ll tell you something else, even the church today is supported by selling candy door to door. The church is supported by soliciting money from business men. The church is supported by raffles, car washes, rummage sales, and even calling in special bonding companies from New York, Chicago, and Detroit to raise money, selling bonds that are to be redeemed at an even 10% interest to support the kingdom of God Almighty, selling books and giving away records and all manner of gimmicks to raise money.

There’s but one Bible way, there’s but one spiritual way, there is but one scriptural way to support the kingdom of God and that’s the free will loving contribution to God’s people that are given without pressure and with courting and without pledges but are given from the heart because they love the Lord.

Well I’ll tell you something else and I’m heartsick over it; I’m heartbroken over it. I don’t laugh about it anymore. I weep over it. I see the direction we’re going, carnal methods to accomplish spiritual purposes.

Even the Gospel is so compromised and the edge is taken off. And the offense of the cross is compromised and watered down to get people to walk down church aisles and join the church and be baptized so we can have more members than the church down the street.

Why wait for the sowing of the seed in the heart, the seed of God’s Word? This is their reasoning, why wait for the humbling, convicting, convincing work of the Holy Spirit? Why wait for genuine repentance toward God?

Why wait for genuine, God-given faith in Jesus Christ, get up in the pulpit and entertain sinners with a few songs and give them their little trinkets to play with and their yo-yo to play with and then tell them a story about mother and country or heaven and hell and promise an eternal life that they’ll walk down the aisle and shake the preacher’s hand and join the church and make a decision for Jesus and kiss them good bye and put their names on the roll and never see them again?

This is carnal, this is fleshly. This is deceitful. This is satanic. God is not in it. And I urge faithful ministers; I don’t know how many ministers hear this telecast but I urge faithful ministers and I urge faithful deacons and I urge God’s people to stand against this trend and to stand against this fleshly, carnal, prostitution of the church of Jesus Christ, and call for some genuine worship.

Let’s bow down and worship God. Let’s call on the living God from our hearts. Let’s have some preachers who hibernate to their studies. You know, Peter, James, and John said; *“We’re going to give ourselves to study and prayer and the preaching of the Word. You fellows take care of the needs out yonder.”*

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Let's have some preachers hibernating to their studying, looking into God's Word, and coming out unto the pulpit on Sunday morning and Sunday night and Wednesday night with a message from God almighty.

These methods are carnal and they're fleshly and I urge us to have fellowship in Christ, not in program, fellowship in Christ, and not in socials, fellowship in Christ, and not in methods. Our Lord does not use flesh to give birth to the spirit.

Now here's the second lesson taught in this Scripture. You go back and read that **14 and 15 verse** and read it carefully. Now, in **verse 21** true conversions are described, **verses 21 and 22**. Now listen; this is true conversion.

They had accused the Lord of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, by the power of demons. He said, (now here's true conversion, here's the way Satan is cast out) *"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him he taketh from him all his armor, wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."*

You say, "Well I can't understand that." Well, let me help you with it a little bit; now listen to me; Who is the strong man here? When a strong man armed keeps his palace; the strong man here is Satan.

Now he's not almighty; he's mighty. He's not all-powerful; he's powerful. He's not omnipotent; he is strong. If you don't believe Satan's strong ask Job how strong he is. He took everything Job had away from him.

If you don't believe Satan is strong ask Samson how strong he is. Samson could slay thousands of Philistines but he could not cope with Satan. And he was tricked by Satan. Ask Solomon how strong he is, the wisest man in the world, and yet he was deceived by Satan.

Ask Peter how strong he is. Peter said, *"Lord I'll die for you. I'll never deny you. These other fellows may but I won't."* He was the one who did. Satan tricked him. Our Lord said, *"Satan hath desired thee that he might sift thee as wheat."*

Ask the angel Gabriel how strong he is. Gabriel when contending with Lucifer over the body of Moses said, *"The Lord rebuke thee Satan."* The strong man is Satan. He's armed. Now what's he armed with?

He's armed with deceit. That's what he used on Eve in the Garden. He's armed with trickery. His chief weapon is the lie. He can make sweet appear bitter. He can make bitter appear sweet.

"And he keeps his palace." Now a palace is usually the abode of a king. That's where the king lives, in the palace. And since the fall man's heart has been the abode of Satan. It's been the palace of Satan. He has taken possession.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

We are the subjects and the servants of sin. That's what the Scripture tells us, we're the servants of sin. And he's armed and he keeps his palace and his goods are in peace as long as he is in control.

And that's what Christ said about us, "*We walk according to the prince of the power of the air, the power of the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience having our conversation filled with the lust of the flesh and the lust of the mind and the pride of life.*"

"*But, when a stronger than he comes upon him;*" now who is this? Well it's not the man because I'm not stronger than Satan. It's not the preacher. Who is this stronger than Satan that comes? It's not the angel Gabriel; he turned him over to the Lord. There's the one stronger than Satan, the Lord of glory. When the Holy Spirit comes in power upon Satan's stronghold He overcomes them.

My friend; conversion is more than just a mental acceptance of facts. A man doesn't just sit in the pulpit and listen to me preach and then go hear another fellow preach and then go hear another one preach and decide mentally which one he thinks is right. That's not conversion.

And then conversion is more than just a decision to go to heaven, weigh the eternal bliss of heaven and the eternal damnation of hell and say; "Well, I sure don't want to go to hell. I'd whole lot rather walk on streets of gold than coals of fire. I'd whole lot rather live in a mansion of rest than to live in a ghetto in hell." That's not what conversion is; conversion is more than just a reformation. What is conversion? Here's what the Lord's saying, it's a struggle. It's a struggle between Satan and God. It's a warfare between heaven and hell.

God must break Satan's power. God must break Satan's control over man's heart and life. God must break his power. He overcomes him. And what does he do? He takes from him his armor.

When our Lord comes into a sinner's heart and reveals sin and reveals Christ as a sufficient Saviour, the redeeming Saviour, the blood of Calvary that atoned for our guilt; He takes away Satan's armor and drives him out.

He takes the sword of rebellion and breaks it into. He takes away the hatred, the prejudice, the jealousy, the dishonesty, the envy, and He sheds abroad in that man's heart the love of God.

Christ is enthroned. Where Satan was enthroned, now Christ is Lord. Where Satan was the leader, now Christ is the king. Where Satan was the strong one keeping the palace; it's now the abode, your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Christ said; "*I and my Father will come in and take up our abode.*"

And salvation is a work of God for us. It's not a decision we make for God. It's not a work we do for ourselves. It's not a work the church does for us. It's not a work we do for our own selves; it's a work God does for us.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Salvation is of the Lord. *“The salvation of the righteous is of God.”* That’s what the Scripture says. So this is true conversion. Christ said, *“Satan is there; he is in his palace. He’s armed. He keeps his palace.”*

But when one is stronger than he, the power of God comes upon him, not using fleshly tactics and carnal methods, but God using His Spirit and His Word He comes and overcomes Satan and drives him out and puts in his place the enthroned Redeemer.

And He puts in the place of hatred, love, and puts in the place of dishonesty, honesty. And He puts in the place of lies, truth, and puts in the place of envy and jealousy, a generous, gracious, spirit. That’s God dwelling within.

But in the next few verses we have the third lesson; we have false conversion described, now that’s true conversion. And you don’t do that with your carnal methods. You don’t go out and give a fellow a hotdog and a Pepsi Cola to come to church and drive Satan out; God has to do it.

But now here is false conversion; read **verses 24-26**; *“When the unclean spirit, when Satan is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and finding none. He says, ‘I’ll return to my house from whence I came out.’”*

“And when he returned he found it, (Matthew said) empty, swept, and garnished (or decorated). Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than themselves and they enter and dwell there and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

Now here’s false conversion; this is the way it happened. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man; now there’s no struggle there, the unclean spirit is not overcome, he is not driven out, there is no conflict, there is no conquering by the power of God.

There is no overthrowing of Satan; this unclean spirit went out of that man of his own will, of his own free will, he went out. He was not convicted, no power of God, no repentance, no seeking the Lord, no grieving over sin, just reformation. He went out.

Of course the man was cleaner. Of course his life was more righteous and more religious. Satan was gone, the evil spirit was gone. So this evil spirit walks through dry places seeking rest. He couldn’t find any rest out there because Satan’s rest is in his delight to occupy the human heart. Satan’s rest and delight is warfare against the kingdom of God.

So he said, *“I’ll go back to my house; (notice it, my house).”* It never ceased to be his house. It wasn’t God’s house. It wasn’t the temple of God. It wasn’t the home of God; it was his house. It was his house when he was there. It was his house when he left. It was his house while he was gone and it was house when he came back.

And then he came back and he found it empty. Now my friend; if God really saves a man he’s not empty; he’s indwelt with the Holy Spirit. But this house was never occupied by God. It was never occupied by the Holy Spirit. It was never indwelt by Christ; it was empty, empty.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

LUKE 11:14-26 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And he found it swept, not washed in the blood, but swept. You know what sweeping does don't you? It stirs up the dust, that's all. It just moves the dust from here, over here, or puts it in a different place and really it's just located in a different place. It's still there but it's located in a different place.

But when Christ comes in He washes us, He washes and washes, "*The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin*, (because it washes away every stain)."

But he found his house empty. He found it swept and he found it; this word, "*garnished*" is decorated. A fellow was wearing a cross. He had a cross in his lapel or a fish or something and he had all kinds of religious trinkets.

He had pictures all over his house of Jesus in the Garden, and Solomon's head of Christ. He had some slogans. He had some little clichés everywhere. "Only one life would soon be passed, just what's done for Christ for life."

All of these decorations, religious decorations; do you know what Satan did? Christ wasn't there, now just a decoration, just the outward show appearing beautiful to men; do you know what Satan did?

"He went and got seven other demons and he brought them back with him. And that fellow fell from grace." That's what they say. That fellow departed from the church. And that last state of reformed man who was never saved, who never met God; the last state of that man who made a decision but never met the Lord, the last state of that man who joined the church but who was never regenerated; it was worse than the first.

Now, if you want to use your carnal methods to coerce men into the kingdom of God you're welcome to it. But you'll have you some folks on your hand, one of these days, in a worse shape than they were before you tampered with them with your fleshly methods and carnal weapons.

I'm going to wait on the Lord. Preach His Word, pray unto Him to make it effectual and depend on the Holy Spirit to save sinners and bring them to a knowledge of Christ!