

LESSON 15: MATTHEW 12
NOVEMBER 5, 2008

OVERVIEW

- . The fourfold reaction to Christ's early ministry (Matthew 11&12)
 - . The Genuinely Perplexed – Matthew 11:1-15
 - . The Unresponsive Majority – Matthew 11:16-24
 - . The Responsive Minority – Matthew 11:25-30
 - . The Active Opposition – Matthew 12:1-45
- . The most violent opposition to the Lord Jesus Christ came from the religious leaders (Matthew 12:1-45)
 - . Concerning the Sabbath – Matthew 12:1-21
 - . Concerning Satan and the Demon Possessed – Matthew 12:22-37
 - . The Pharisees' Demand for a Sign – Matthew 12:38-45

THE PHARISEES' ATTACK JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES FOR THEIR ACTIONS ON THE SABBATH – MATTHEW 12:1-21

- . Jesus and his disciples did not break the law of God, but only the traditions of how this law should be interpreted in daily life
 - . Jesus never belittles the Old Testament but rather upholds it (Matthew 5:17-18)
- . The Disciples actions on the Sabbath – Matthew 12:1-2
 - . The disciples eating the grain was lawful – Deuteronomy 23:25
 - . The Pharisees' complaint was with the disciples doing this on the Sabbath – Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15
 - . The Pharisees had turned God's blessed day into a burdensome day by a complicated interpretation of *work*
 - . Everything eaten on the Sabbath had to be prepared the day Before
 - . Christ's response – Matthew 12:3-8
 - . David's eating the consecrated bread – 1 Samuel 21:1-6
 - . It is always lawful to do good and save lives
 - . The work of the temple priests on the Sabbath day – Numbers 28:9-10
 - . God gave the priests alternate rest periods
 - . God's service takes precedence over Sabbath rules
 - . God's command (through Hosea) to exercise mercy – Hosea 6:6
- . Jesus' action on the Sabbath – Matthew 12:9-13
 - . The Pharisees tradition said that every case where a life was in danger supersedes the Sabbath law
 - . Otherwise one could take steps to keep the situation from getting worse, But not from getting better

- . Jesus knew their thoughts and anticipated the opposition his action would Provoke
 - . Sabbath traditions were merciless, burdensome and completely outside His Fathers' will concerning His day for His people
 - . Jesus had come to set the prisoners free from such burdensome shackles
- . Jesus burned in anger towards the Pharisees hardened hearts – Mark 3:5
- . Results of Jesus' action – Matthew 12:14-21
 - . The Pharisees made their decision to reject Him and His message and the true teaching of scripture
 - . They immediately called a meeting to consider how to destroy Jesus and his threat to their way of life
 - . Jesus, knowing that no one could touch Him until His hour ordained by His Father, quietly slipped away
 - . Matthew sees Jesus ministry at this time as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 42:1-4
 - . Jesus is God's beloved, chosen servant in whom God is pleased
 - . Jesus is not seeking to promote Himself
 - . The ministry of Jesus is distinguished by its mercy
 - . Jesus will not snuff out the smoldering wick nor break the bruised reed, rather he will rekindle the fire and restore the bruised reed
- . How do we approach the Sabbath?
 - . Jesus removed the legalistic burdens, but we have removed the blessedness

CONCERNING SATAN AND THE DEMON POSSESSED – MATTHEW 12:22-37

- . The Pharisees charge Jesus of being in league with Satan himself and of healing people by Satan's power. Their words could not have been more blasphemous – Matthew 12:22-24
- . Jesus responds that Satan is not against himself – Matthew 12:25-26
- . Jesus cast out demons by the Spirit of God – Matthew 12:28-30
 - . Jesus' actions prove that Satan is powerless to hinder Jesus' deliverance of Satan's captives – Luke 4:5-8, John 12:31, 14:30, Acts 26:18, Colossians 1:13
 - . We are either actively with Christ, or we are against Him – Matthew 12:30
- . Jesus warns about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit – Matthew 12:31-37
 - . Our words against God, against Christ, against other people, as well as our actions, will all be forgiven, when we come to God through Christ – John 6:37
 - . The work of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin, to reveal God's judgment on sin and the sinner, and to reveal Christ and His righteousness, as God's deliverance from guilt and power of sin – John 16:8-13

- . To resist or despise the Holy Spirit, to deliberately reject Him and continue to do so to the end of your life, is the person who risks final condemnation
- . Jesus said to the Pharisees, “if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins” – John 8:24

THE PHARISEES’ DEMAND FOR A SIGN – MATTHEW 12:38-45

- . The demand for a sign was the Pharisees third manifestation of their opposition against Jesus and His message
- . Jesus had already spoken to them about his coming resurrection – John 2:19-21
- . He speaks of the impact that Jonah and his miracle had on the people of Nineveh
 - . Now, a far greater prophet than Jonah, Christ Himself, was having less of an impact on the Pharisees, than Jonah had on the gentiles.
 - . This is further evidence that Christ could see their hardened hearts
- . Jesus uses a parable to describe three phases of Jewish history – Matthew 12:43-45
 - . The reformation after the Babylonian exile – Matthew 12:43
 - . After the exile, the Jews gave up idolatry, never again worshipping idols of wood or stone. The unclean spirit had gone out
 - . The return of satanic temptation – Matthew 12:44
 - . While the Jews cast out idols, they had not replaced idolatry with true worship of the living God, or they would not have rejected Jesus
 - . The repossession of Satan – Matthew 12:45
 - . When Jesus revealed Himself, Satan marshaled all his forces
 - . Satan gained entrance into the emotions, minds and wills of the Pharisees
 - . Their sin against God was far worse than their former sins of idolatry

NEXT LESSON, NOVEMBER 19, 2008: MATTHEW 13