

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“SIGNS THAT DEMAND A RESPONSE”

For individual study or group discussion

When the crowds encounter Jesus, they inevitably encounter *signs that demand a response*. In Luke 11:14-28, the crowd witnesses Jesus “casting out a demon that was mute.” Since the onset of Jesus’ ministry, the reality of the Kingdom of God was made manifest through Christ’s power to cast out demons, to heal the sick, and to forgive sins. And yet in today’s passage we see the Pharisees attribute Jesus’ power to Beelzebul, “the prince of demons,” and the crowds test him, pressing for another sign from heaven (vv. 15-16). Both groups fail to grasp that *Jesus’ matchless power signals the arrival of God’s kingdom*.

- Recall from our previous studies in *Luke* the upside-down nature of the Kingdom of God. (Jesus’ welcoming outcasts, teaching the last will be first, etc.) In Luke 11, we witness the upside-down nature of Jesus’ deliverance. From whom did the current generation of Jews expect deliverance? In light today’s passage, the Kingdom of God is signaled by what type of deliverance (v. 20)?
- Pastor and theologian J.C. Ryle points out, “As mighty as the devil is — he was overcome by Jesus on the cross, when He triumphed over him openly. As strong as the devil is — Christ can pluck his captives out of his hands, and break the chains which bind them.”¹ Read Isaiah 49:25. How does Isaiah point us to Jesus in Luke 11:14-28? (cf. Luke 4:16-21)

Jesus’ matchless power signals the arrival of God’s kingdom, which leaves no room for neutrality (vv. 14-23).

Jesus demonstrates the power he commands over the kingdom of darkness by his ability to cast out demons. Luke is making it clear in this passage that not even the “strong man” and his minions have the ability to contend with the Son of God. But many in the crowd who witnessed Jesus’ power wanted more signs, indicating hesitancy and skepticism as a result of their unbelief.

- 1 John 3:8 says, “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil,” and we see in verse 20 “the finger of God” doing just that. According to John 12: 37-43, what is the reason for unbelief for those in the crowd before whom Christ performs many signs and wonders?
- Read Luke 9:49-50. How does Jesus’ rebuke toward his disciples in Luke 9:50 relate to his statement in Luke 11:23?

Jesus’ matchless power signals the arrival of God’s kingdom, which requires more than “cleaning up” our lives (vv. 24-26).

In this section, Jesus illustrates with a parable his assertion that there can be no neutrality in the fight against sin. Satan is a formidable adversary who knows that if he can get one to remain neutral when it comes to Jesus, that soul will belong to him in the end. C.S. Lewis summed up the impossibility of neutrality when he wrote, “There is no neutral ground in the universe: every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.”² (cf. Joshua 24:15)

- The *Reformation Study Bible* states, “Unless God’s Spirit takes up residence, a person purged by self-denial becomes vulnerable to reinfestation by graver evils such as pride, hypocrisy, and contempt of others.” Read Romans 8:9 and John 3:3-6. In order to enter the Kingdom of God, what is required?

Jesus’ matchless power signals the arrival of God’s kingdom, which brings true blessing to those who hear and obey him (vv. 27-28).

There is no substitute for obedience. True blessedness comes by hearing and obeying God’s word (v. 28). Jesus redirects the woman’s enraptured response by reiterating that it is obedience that brings blessing (cf. Luke 6:47-49; 8:20-21).

- Neither neutrality, family relationship, nor lip service will grant you access to God’s kingdom. Read Matthew 7:21-23. What warning does Jesus give about mere outward profession? Head knowledge and church membership are not sufficient to save. Are you trusting in these things? The only path to renewal is a faith in Christ that leads us to repentance and obedience.

DATE: November 20, 2022

SPEAKER: Chad/Wil

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 11:14-28

Family Dinner Table

A House Divided

Widely recognized as one of the greatest films ever made, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* won seven Academy Awards in 1958. The mostly fictional drama focuses on the construction of the Burma Railway during WWII. A detachment of British prisoners of war under the leadership of Lt. Colonel Nicholson are ordered by the Japanese prison camp commander to construct a railway over the River Kwai. Nicholson becomes obsessed with the project of building a railway, aspiring for it to be a testament in years to come of British design ingenuity.

As the bridge neared completion, a British commando force, “Force 316,” is tasked with the mission of destroying the bridge. Major Warden who leads the special unit not only plans to destroy the bridge but a train carrying important enemy dignitaries and soldiers scheduled for the inaugural crossing of the river. But the weather causes the river level to drop, exposing the trip wire. By chance, Nicholson notices it, and in a fit of passion for his project, he chooses to alert the Japanese of the plot to destroy the bridge. Due to his subversion, many of the British commandos lose their lives that day, even though the plans to blow up the bridge succeed.

- Jesus states in Luke 11:17, “a divided household falls.” As a family, discuss the ramifications division has had in your family or church life. What does Paul have to say in 1 Cor. 1:10 and Gal. 5:13-15?

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

On Point, supported partner ministry
PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Bev and Andy Warren, supported national partners who serve in Ethiopia, where Andy leads MTW’s church planting and mercy ministry team.

¹Ryle, J.C. *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Luke*. <https://gracegems.org/Ryle/111.htm>. November 15, 2022.

²Lewis, C.S. *Christian Reflections*. Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, MI. 1967. 33