A Mind Divided

Opening remarks.

I decided that I am not going to ask you any questions in today’s sermon. Is that okay with you?

Have you ever said something and done something else? Of course not!

Have you ever had someone tell you they were going to do something and then do something else? Of course you have!

Guilty as charged.

Jesus recognized our proclivity to act this way.

This thought reminds me of a parable Jesus taught.

Mt 21:28 “What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

Mt 21:29 “‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

Mt 21:30 “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

Mt 21:31 “Which of the two did what his father wanted?”

It seems that we just cannot help ourselves.

Today’s passage.

Just prior to Jesus’ remarks in today’s passage, Jesus has cast out demons.

The Pharisees have accused Him of doing so through the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

Jesus defends His ministry of exorcism by using two parables.

First, He recognizes that demons could be removed by either God or Satan.

- However, if Satan is casting out Satan’s forces, how could his kingdom stand.
- If Satan is being cast out by God’s Spirit, then the kingdom must be among us.

Second, He likens His work to someone breaking into a strong man’s house.

- Jesus has broken into the stronghold of Satan and brought the kingdom of God among us.
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➢ Jesus continues His defense with scathing remarks against the Pharisees.
  ▪ They start with the last part of what we read.
    • “He who is not with me is against me.”

❖ Present Experience.

➢ What does that mean to us in today’s context?
  ▪ I go back to my earlier question about saying and doing two different things.
  ▪ Are we divided in the way we respond to Christ?
    • When we came to Christ seeking to be His disciples, we came with great expectations and great plans.
    • However, as the newness of our salvation has worn off, how many of us have drifted from being true disciples to just being disciples in name only?

➢ When we do not spend the appropriate time at the Savior’s feet as His disciples, our faith wavers and we stand divided in mind, spirit, and body.
  ▪ James says in the first chapter, “[W]e must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.”

➢ Do you feel blown around and tossed about?

❖ The answer.

➢ So what is the key living a life that is undivided.
  ▪ Deuteronomy 30:20 says, “You can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life.”
  ▪ Notice that this verse does not say anything about your rank, your income, your service, or your knowledge.
  ▪ The key is LOVING the Lord your God.
  ▪ This is where you determine if you are with Jesus or against Him.

❖ Conclusion.

➢ How can you love Jesus?
  ▪ You get to know Him personally.
  ▪ How do you get to know someone personally?
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- You build a relationship with that person.
  - The same is true with Jesus.
  - You cannot love Him fully until you have formed a personal relationship with Him.

➤ Over the last two weeks, Stu has spoken about taking Jesus to work with you and inviting the children come to Jesus by inviting them among us.
  - Who is this Jesus we are taking with us and beckoning them to approach?
  - What relationship do you have with Him in order to be able to answer that question?

➤ Every relationship takes work.
  - It is impossible to get to know a person fully in only a few weeks or months.
    - It takes a lifetime of relationship building in order to really get to know someone.
    - Those who are married know that every time we think we know everything about our spouse, they surprise us with something new.
      - Every relationship is like that.
      - It is no different with our relationship with Jesus.

➤ God has spent every book in Scripture inviting us to get to know Him.
  - Like every other relationship, He reveals Himself a little more over time.
  - Last week, we celebrated rally day.
    - Please hear me clearly---*It is not just for the children!*
    - Opportunities are available for every one of us to get to know this Father who calls us His children and His Son who calls us brother and sister.
    - If you want to be with Jesus and not against Him, you must be with Him.
      - That means spending time with Him.
        - In Bible reading.
        - In Prayer.
        - In fellowship with others learning from and teaching each other.
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- In addition to the Sunday morning activities, like the two adult Sunday school classes, there are disciple-making groups being formed so that you might grow spiritually and in favor with God.
- Look for the opportunity to sign up for the Come to the Table events.
- Young adults are starting a group even as we speak.
- Others will be added regularly.
- Spend time with Jesus.
  ♦ Get to know Him.
  ♦ Be with Him.
  ♦ Be the disciple you promised Him you would be when you accepted His sacrifice for you.

❖ Closing Prayer.

➢ Jesus, we did not mean to tell You one thing and then do another. It happened as a part of who we naturally are. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and renew the fire that once burned so bright in us. Draw us into communion with You and with our brothers and sisters so that the world might see our love for each other and for You and be drawn to You. Amen.