

**Monday, 30 July 2018** Matthew 10:16-20

*“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.*

I have very limited experience of being flogged in church, or drug before governors and kings for my LORD's sake, actually none at all. But the equivalent exists when I have to face the derision of family and acquaintances. Those who worship at the feet of Carl Sagan scorn any statement that begins with, “The Bible says...”

This is a trust issue. Do I really, truly trust that the Holy Spirit will speak through me in those instances. No, I don't! I start temporizing and trying to change the subject. Isn't this a form of denying Him? Is Matthew 10:32-33 “So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.” burned into my heart?

Forgive me, Lord Jesus, for being the coward that I am. Continue to lead me in the way I should go.

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**uesday, 31 July 2018** Matthew 12:15-21

*Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all and ordered them not to make him known. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”*

This prophecy in Isaiah 42:1-4 had to be well known to the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day, yet they chose to ignore it. See Acts 22:17-22 for an example of their reaction to Paul's statement that he had been sent to the Gentiles.

Do we today chose to ignore our LORD's command to love the lost, the least, and the lonely? His message of mercy and grace is to go out to all the nations, yet we ignore those among us. Our ministries are called to the prisons and ex-inmates, to unwed mothers and fathers, to the unborn, to addicts and alcoholics, and to ...the list goes on and on. Are we the Pharisees of our day? Too proud to acknowledge sin and failures? Are we unwilling to heed the direction of the Spirit to walk the Jericho Road?

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**Wednesday, 1 August 2018** Matthew 12:22-28

*Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.” Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

The poor Pharisees trapped themselves by their arguments.

What all Jesus did was skillfully extend their statements to the logical conclusion and ask an appropriate question. Was Satan casting himself out of a demon-possessed man? I wonder if there weren't some red faces among the Pharisees as they saw where their logic was driving them.

No, the only other supportable conclusion was that the Kingdom of God was being opened to them at that time by Jesus. We need to follow His example and become skilled in the tools of logic.

Many of the favorite arguments against Christianity lead to illogical conclusions when tested by these tools.

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**Thursday, 2 August 2018** Matthew 12:31-32

*Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*

One scary passage, but with a hidden assurance for the believer. Jesus assures us in John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” that our understanding of the need to repent comes through Him. Therefore, we have the assurance that we cannot be in a state of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit when we come to Him in contrition. It becomes another example of an argument taken to its logical conclusion. Jesus can no more be in a state of blasphemy than Satan can cast himself out of a demon-possessed man.

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**Friday, 3 August 2018** Matthew 22:41-46

*Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit*

at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”? If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

I think that the Pharisees were suddenly faced with a pill too big for them to swallow. The answer to Jesus' question is that the Messiah is both Son of God and Son of Man. The correct answer forced them to acknowledge that the Messiah stood before them. As Matthew Henry points out, the next question that they had to ask if they correctly answered was, "What must we do to be saved?" They could not and would not.

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**Saturday, 4 August 2018** *Matthew 28:18-20*

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Three power packed verses. First, the Lord Jesus Christ declares that He has all authority in the Creation. Secondly, He, therefore, commands me to make disciples everywhere my foot treads, to baptize in the Name of the LORD, God, the Almighty, those who accept Him as Lord and Master and to teach all that He has taught. Thirdly, I have His assurance that He is with me until the end of time.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, one who acknowledges His authority, I have these verses as a letter of credence from the LORD, God, the Almighty to carry out His directions for the advancement of His Kingdom on earth. I do not need to be ordained by a denomination or any other instrument of man's devising; I do not need to be a graduate of the proper seminary; I only need to acknowledge Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I am Ambassador John Nunnikhoven, appointed to the Court of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

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**Lord's Day, 5 August 2018** *Psalms 119:66*

*Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe in Your commandments.*

Teach me good judgment, Lord, that is an attribute that I desperately need. My head gets filled with knowledge but to apply it through the heart is another matter that requires proper and sound judgment. How can this come about except through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit teaching and training me? How can I interpret Your commandments and apply them to all aspects of my life except through Your teaching? Lead me, Lord, into a life lived within Your precepts. A Biblical World View Life.

# VOICES TOGETHER

*Daily Meditations from the Scriptures*



*July 30-August 5, 2018*

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Philemon 4-7**

*I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.*

We thank our God as we remember each member of [our congregation] in our prayers as we hear about their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love for all the saints. We pray that we will continue to be active in sharing our faith so we will be led to a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. May each of us be encouraged by the testimonies of the others as they have ministered to the hearts of the saints in their pastures. Amen

**To fear or not to fear, that is the question.**

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

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