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Luke

Chapter 11 - A Polarizing Wish
Efforts to Subvert the Wish (vs. 14-20)

Luke 4:12-22: And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons." Others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven. But He knew their thoughts and said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he attacks him and

overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

We're probably only going to make it to verse 20. And I'm not sure if we're going to make that. This passage comes in the narrative and in the surroundings of the disciples asking Jesus, "How do we pray? What are we supposed to say?" And Jesus gives them this wonderful platform, not of words to be repeated, but of a sentiment that is to be felt. And that is that you need to desire more than anything else for God to be your Father, the One that you want to imitate and emulate, the One that you want to follow, the One that you want to receive your directives from. You want Him to be your Father. He uses a possessive pronoun, which you are embracing Him for yourself. Above everything else, that's what you want. And you want to understand that He's not like anybody else. That's why He uses the phrase, "Hallowed is His name." There's no one like Him. So, you can't kind of

match what somebody else says and then what God says. He's going to tell you stuff that there's nothing like Him. And you accept that as whatever He does. It is a desire for His kingdom to come. And that means that you desire His rule and His standards, His way of doing things. Now, you may request something, obviously, that you desire. But ultimately, within that prayer, the sentiment is, "But I want You to give me what I know is best for me." And He'll kind of reveal that as He goes on. You know, "If a son asks for a fish, will his father give him a serpent? What, do you think I'm going to give you something bad?" It doesn't matter even if you ask God for something bad. He's not going to give it to you. Because as James says, "Every good and perfect gift comes from God, from the Father of lights. There is no variance or shadow of shifting." He's a good God. He's going to do good things. Pray this way. And so, there is a thought that you come before God in which you desire His kingdom and doing things His way. And that means that you have a forgiving spirit. You desire His forgiveness, but all the more you desire for others to be forgiven. And so, you come to Him with that mindset, which means that your prayer fundamentally is

not going to be, “God, cut off their heads.” Your prayer is going to be more like, “Forgive them.” Because that's going to be your sentiment, and that's going to be your heart throughout. And though we have many different and various requests, the same heart should be in this. The same heart should fundamentally be, “Don't let me not trust You throughout every single day for everything.” So, He uses the very basics, “Give us this day, our daily bread. I want to trust You for everything. I want to come to You for everything. I want every moment of my day to be reliant on You.” And then ultimately, “I don't want anything to draw me away from You. Keep us from the temptations that would draw us away from You.” And this is the sentiment that you have.

What's interesting is, as the disciples are coming to Him, and He's really demonstrating this, He goes on, He says, “Now, never let this sentiment leave you. You always desire this.” And He gives an interesting picture of one that with great endurance and perseverance continues to want that thing. “Lord, I just want Your will. I want Your desire.” And there have been many times where I brought

a request before the Lord. And as I come to the end, I go, "But Lord, I want what You desire more than anything else." And we know that this is the Holy Spirit within us. You could not want or think that way without the power of the Spirit of God within us. And that's why He ends the text, "Will God not give you the Holy Spirit?" That's how He ends the passage there as He begins to talk about prayer. So, we know that the Holy Spirit causes us to yearn for things that we wouldn't normally yearn for. In fact, let me just kind of give you an example of this. Romans 8, if you look there with me.

(Romans 8:6) "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

(Romans 8:7) because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so."

It's not our nature.

When we read certain passages of Scripture, we go, "I don't want that. I want this." Because it's just our nature to want something different.

He says in verse 9,

(Romans 8:9) “However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you...”

It is within this context that he really displays as you go down into verse 14,

(Romans 8:14) “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

And it shows the evidence of this.

(Romans 8:16) “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit...”

Well, what does that Spirit look like? Well, it looks like a son. What does a son look like?

And he says in verse 15,

(Romans 8:15) “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!””

So, you're coming to God believing that He loves you and that He cares for you. You're not coming with a spirit of slavery. What does he mean by that? Well, what he

means by that is, you're not coming to God going, "If I have to, okay, I'll do whatever you tell Me to do." No, you're coming to God with, "I know You're my Dad. You're going to give me the greatest thing in the world. You're going to give me far better things than I would want."

That's why within the passage, verse 26 reads,

(Romans 8:26) "In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray..."

See that? And that's why he puts that within the passage, because he makes reference to the fact that it's not within us to think right. It's not within us to have the right sentiment. It's not within us to have the right thoughts and to have the right desires. God, through His Spirit, placed them in us. So, no matter what we pray for, as a child of God, as a son of God, we ultimately come back to, "We want You to work out the answer to this solution Your way." And there is something within our hearts that desires that.

Now, what's bizarre about the passage is that by the time we come to verse 14, it almost seems like an abrupt change from topic, because we come from Jesus teaching

them how to pray in a very amiable setting to a very hostile and adversarial setting. And it's almost abrupt. If, in fact, we see it as a separate passage, we would be reading erroneously because of the fact that the beginning of Luke 1, in verse 3, Luke reminds us, "I've written these things in consecutive order for a particular purpose." And so, he's let us know that each one is connected. Though some particular passages may seem abrupt and not fitting into what is being said, it is exactly what is tied to that. And so, as we come to this, we come into a very hostile setting, and it seems to abruptly bring us here.

And so, we'll pick up in Luke 11:14,

"And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute..."

That is to say, unable to speak. It comes from the fundamental word "blunted," almost like somebody blundered his tongue, so to speak. And it gives an interesting picture of an oppressive force.

"... and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed."

It's very clear that one of the things that the evil one wants to do is to keep us from giving credit to God, keep us from praising God, keep us from even crying out to God. Certainly, that is his desire.

It goes on and says in the midst of this that though Christ healed him, and the multitudes are marveling this great celebration at that particular moment,

(Luke 11:15) “But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.””

I mean, where did that come from? That's clearly not out of the blue, out of the pits of hell. And you're going, “Why would somebody even say that at this particular juncture?” Because it's very clear that the multitudes are celebrating. It's very clear that everybody's pretty happy about the fact that some great miracle has happened. And then it's just this major wet blanket. “This is Beelzebub. This is who's done this.” And He's accused of this.

I'm going to do something that I don't normally do, and that is I'm going to give you a fundamental principle before we even go into the passage. So that my hope is

you'll see it throughout. But there's a fundamental principle here that basically says this, if we come to God any other way than the way He tells us to come to Him... And once again, if you're confused about how you should come to Him, go back to Luke 11:2-4. That's how you should come to Him, with that mindset. That's what it's talking about, with this mindset. Whatever the prayer request you have is, still, with this mindset, you ought to be coming to Him. If, in fact, you come to God with any other sentiment or mindset or desire, other than that, other than His will be done, other than the forgiveness of others, other than staying close to Him and depending on Him every day, if there's any other kind of mindset, that is to say your mindset, and you're coming to God in prayer, what you're going to ultimately come to the conclusion of is that you will inevitably see God as an adversary. You will inevitably see God as destructive in your life. Now, you probably wouldn't turn heavenward and say, "You're Beelzebub." You probably wouldn't say that. But you're thinking it. You're thinking, "Why are You robbing me for what I want? Why are You in some way coming into my life and distorting the very wishes that I have?" Because

our perception is that every wish that we have is a wonderful wish, right?

There are two passages in Scripture that make reference to God coming to individuals. One is Solomon and the other is Ahaz. And in both cases, God comes to the individuals. He comes to Solomon and goes, "What would you like Me to do? What do you wish?" Once again, we were making reference to, what does prayer mean? Prayer means wishing to God. That's what it means. So, what do you wish? What do you wish for? And of course, Solomon wished for discernment, understanding that he might rule the people well in judgment. It was a good wish. We would ultimately have to come to the conclusion that it wasn't the best wish. But it was a good wish, and God was pleased with the wish that was given. He comes to Ahaz and He goes, "As high as the heavens and as deep as Sheol, wish whatever." And Ahaz goes, "I'm not going to even ask." So, you have both incidences, one in which one won't ask, and the other is that he asks according to his own desires, which once again, were not bad things in and of themselves. But in each case, we see

them being robbed of things. So, of course, with Ahaz, great, great problems ensue because he didn't ask. And of course, with Solomon, pride came in and all kinds of things came in that were hurtful to him. And if you don't believe that, just read Ecclesiastes. But we see God giving us that ability to come to Him. The Spirit of God comes within us and cries out things that are best for us. He won't let us go into those realms that would be hurtful to us. And it's the graciousness of God that does that as we come. When man comes before God, not in the Spirit of Christ, which says, "Father, I trust You, I love You, I know You love me, I'm expecting only the best from you because I know that you care for me." If you come to Him in any other spirit than that, you basically come to Him seeing Him as a genie that is there for the sole purpose of fulfilling your desire. And so, you have these lists or you have these desires and you come, "Why can't I have this?" Sometimes the thought is, "Well, I'll just pray longer. I'll pray harder." Some of you may have even fasted to get what you wanted. It's sort of like the Jews in Isaiah. They go, "Why have we fasted and we haven't got what we wanted?" God goes, "You're praying for the

wrong stuff.” But, you know, we go into this and our thought is, “If I just wish enough, if I just pray enough.” As it's clearly stated, “You think by your many words or by your repetition, I'm going to hear you.” That's the way the Gentiles work, He says. What He's looking for is the right heart. And so, what we have in this particular passage is literally this playing out, and this is the connection to the prayer. There are those in the audience that just virtually see God as somebody that's supposed to give them what they want. When in fact He does things that they don't want, then they're upset. Now, you would think that everybody would be thrilled to death that somebody was feeling better, that they were healed. You know, here you have a dumb man and now he's speaking. Not only that, but the demon is actually taken out of him, so he's speaking with sanity. Nevertheless, they're not. And this kind of brings into the play the name that they use.

Now, there is some confusion with the name, whether it's Beelzebub, Beelzebub, and a lot of debate about that. They're actually, probably, I perceive, two sides of the same coin. That the name is used a little bit different. The

name here, Beelzebul, that you see within the passage, seems to be, from what we understand, and if you're to go to Matthew 10:25, it will kind of affirm this, that Beelzebul has a picture of a head of a household. And that's going to fit in within the passage as well as we go in, that we have one that is in charge of a household and that is a malevolent spirit but has power. And he's oftentimes associated with Lucifer. So, strangely enough, "god of light". The name Lucifer making reference to that. And when you go even a little bit further, you realize that this is an evil spirit that is like a god of light. As Paul will say, even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, right? As an apostle of Christ. But you have this influence that comes in, and they believed that this Beelzebul actually stimulated people to be envious. In other words, to want something that someone else has. By the way, there are two words in Scripture that refer to this kind of thought, one, jealousy and then envy. And you'll see them actually sometimes seemingly interchange, but they are very different words. Jealousy, "*zēloó*," is making reference to wanting something that somebody else has. You see something, and that's not always bad, you know?

“This person loves the Lord. I want to have that same relationship.” That's not necessarily bad. And thus, sometimes the word goes into zeal, because it's something that you want. Then there's the word “envy,” which is what we're seeing within this particular passage. And the word “envy” is you not wanting somebody to have something. In other words, you want to deprive them of what they have. And in this passage, you see that sinister spirit that comes in. And I think sometimes the thought is that this evil spirit that comes into our life, we're basically victims, that we want something and somebody's holding us back from getting what we want. Let me show you an example of that.

James 1, if you turn there with me. You're familiar with the passage, right?

It says this,

(James 1:12) “Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

Persevering is not something we're real fond of, because that means you have to wait, and that means that sometimes it's difficult; in difficulty you have to wait, and that's hard for us to do. So, in the process of us having to wait... And I would say you could actually combine in that scenario, not only are you having to wait, but you're having to wait for something that you want and God's not giving it to you. Right? So, that just really upsets people. And me too.

(James 1:13) “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God” ...”

You know, sometimes we don't get what we want, and you know what we say? “That's God tempting me to be envious. He's making me want something that somebody else has, and He's wanting me to deprive them.” There's something inside me that wants to deprive other people. I see other people doing well. I don't want them to do well. I mean, it's true that misery loves company, right? So, there's something in me that wants to deprive them of that. Here's this guy healed. And it's like they're coming around Jesus and they're going, “You're making me

envious by virtue of You healing this person because I'm not getting what I want.”

If you go in the passage, Luke 11, this is why it goes on and says that not only were some calling Him Beelzebul, the ruler of demons,

(Luke 11:16) “Others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven.”

In other words, we don't want them to have it because we're not getting what we want. Therefore, everybody's upset, and this is the work of a demonic spirit. It's causing upset, so to speak. Now, there's actually another name, and that is Beelzebub. It seems to be interchangeable. However, it is making reference to a different force. And the Jews referred to him as the god of dung, or the lord of flies. It was sort of a way of criticizing more specifically, but he is specifically mentioned in 2 Kings 1. So, I'm going to have you turn there. We're doing a little bit of history. But if you look with me in 2 Kings 1, you're going to see the king of Samaria, and he actually turns to this false god. Beelzebub was the god of the Philistines, it actually says from Ekron.

So, if you look with me in Chapter 1,

(2 Kings 1:1) “Now Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.

(2 Kings 1:2) And Ahaziah fell through the lattice...”

It's pretty bad. You know, you're made king and all of a sudden you fall through something, and now you have a sore, you have pains, whatever. And on top of that, you become sick. It's like just one thing after the other. You should be enjoying your new job, but you're not.

“And Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber which was in Samaria, and became ill...”

Instead of turning to God, what does he do? Read the passage with me.

“... So he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub...””

So, what we know, according to this particular god, is that he was the god of the Philistines. Of course, there are other passages I can give you in reference to this, and it's going to mention this as far as the god of Ekron at the end of verse 3. But what we know is that he was perceived to

be a god of healing. That's pretty interesting. I mean, what other reason would he go to this particular god if he was ill? Why would he go to him? Because he was actually perceived to be a healing god. Now, of course, what this passage is going to prove is just the opposite. He's not the god of healing. But isn't it just like the world to... I've oftentimes said, "Health-care;" it's just an oxymoron. But the point is we'll use words to ultimately say the opposite. Isaiah 5 says they call good evil, evil good. You look at some of the argument against Christians and they're calling you wicked. Really? Because why? Because you're doing things that are right. Well, that's evil to them.

So, in this passage, he tells his messengers, "You've got to go to Ekron; you've got to go to this god and see if he can heal me." The whole story, and here again, I won't go into all the details of the story, but Elijah kind of meets him on the way. And we know Elijah's not shy. So, Elijah stops the messengers and he goes, "Why are you guys going to Beelzebub? I mean, you should be going to God." And then he makes this statement, "Because of this, the king's going to die." Well, they go back and they tell the king,

“We got stopped by Elijah.” And the king goes, “What does this guy look like?” “Well, you know, he's hairy, he's got this belt, he looks like a vagabond type thing.” “Oh, that's Elijah,” like John the Baptist. “That's Elijah. I know who that guy is.” So, the king goes, “Okay, I know what I need to do. I just need to send a greater entourage. I need to send more people.” So, he sends 50 men. And you know the story. We've talked about this before. He sends 50 men. And then as they come to approach Elijah, basically, Elijah says, “If I'm not the prophet of God, may these men live.” And God strikes them down and 50 men die. And he sends another 50 and they die. So, now a third 50 is sent. We're on our 150th group. And now a third 50 is sent. And the leader says, “Please,” and he falls on his knees, “Don't kill us.”

And so, Elijah says this, if you pick up with me,

(2 Kings 1:13) “So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to him, “O man of God, please let my

life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.

(2 Kings 1:14) Behold fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”

(2 Kings 1:15) The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king.”

Now, here again, this is basically what the king's been looking for, because his thought is, “Maybe if I have audience with Elijah, maybe he'll see things my way.” I don't know if he thinks that maybe Elijah will be intimidated or perhaps even impressed by his presence or perhaps he will feel sorry for him, “But if I could just talk to this guy face to face, he's going to change what he said.”

So, it says this in verse 16,

(2 Kings 1:16) “Then he said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in

Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”’”

“The prophecy has not changed,” in other words. “You're a dead man.”

Because of this, the Jews saw Beelzebub as the god of waste or the god of death or the god of flies, the lord of flies, which actually swarm around death, so to speak.

And why did they use that particular slur? The reason is, because he just brought death. By going to that god, you bring death. So, in many respects, they're accusing him of these things. In other words, “You're robbing me of the things that I want. You're causing me to be jealous. You're causing hurt in my life by doing the things that You're doing.” And really, everything that Christ has been doing up to this point, the worst of it all is He's proving people to be hypocritical. But He's healing, and he states in particular in Luke 4 that's what God has called Him for. And that is the lame walk, the blind see, those that are prisoners are set free, and God proclaims His favorable grace upon them. And this is what He's doing.

Nevertheless, because He's not doing what they want Him to do, He's seen as a malevolent spirit. And that's fundamentally the principle within the passage. This thought that oftentimes comes within our minds as we find ourselves getting upset at God because He's either late, He's not giving us what we want, He's not doing it the way we think, is a blasphemous spirit.

And let me show you something in Mark 3, if you look there with me. It kind of puts this particular scenario in an interesting context in which Jesus had been performing great miracles and people were coming, inundating Him in His own household. And of course, the people in His own household were going, "We can't even eat."

But Mark 3 reads this way,

(Mark 3:20) "And He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal.

(Mark 3:21) When His own people..."

That would be family, I guess.

“... heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, “He has lost His senses.”””

That's very interesting when you think about it because really that's the hand of Satan that comes in, that “What are you, an idiot for trusting in Jesus?” And when you consider the temptation or the testing of Christ with Satan, how does he begin? “You see these rocks right here? Now, I know You haven't been eating for a while. You know, like that 40-day thing? So, I know You're really hungry. But hey, I mean, if You are the Son of God...” That's actually how he starts off, “If You are the Son of God, then just take these stones and turn them into bread, right?” What is he doing? What he's virtually saying is that “You're not thinking right. If You're not at least practically thinking, ‘Well, I could have bread,’ but You're not?” This is one of the great attacks of Satan in following God, by the way. If he can prove that you look nonsensical, “Why would you deny yourself bread if you could eat it? Why would you do that? Why would you go without? You're not thinking right. You Christians, you're trusting in Jesus? What is wrong with you?” And it begins

to come from that perspective. “There must be a crazy thought in your head. Are you possessed?”

Continue reading with me.

(Mark 3:22) “The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” ...”

There it is again. “Yeah, this nonsensical God that's just coming to bring mayhem.” I mean, basically, isn't that what God is doing? He's just making everybody crazy? I mean, some are literally threatened by the fact that Jesus comes in, and He changes the whole status quo of their life. They don't like that. They don't like the way that Christ comes in, and “He's just a troublemaker. He's causing trouble. I mean, look at the trouble He's causing in His own home. We can't even eat.” And because things aren't happening the way we think they should happen, because they're not happening in the way that we want them to happen, “God must be crazy.” I know you wouldn't say that, but they did.

“... and “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.””

(Mark 3:23) And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan?”

And we understand, and we almost have the same text that is paralleled within this passage.

However, Mark will add this, if you drop on down to me in verse 28,

(Mark 3:28) “Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter;

(Mark 3:29) but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness...”

Why? Because you're attributing to the Holy One, unholy things. And when you come to God and you're saying, “You're just doing evil. You're just trying to hurt my life. You're just causing mayhem in my life. You're just causing destruction in my life. You're making me jealous. You're making me feel this way.” What is it that James says? No, when you're being tempted, you're tempted by your own lust. And just remember this, every good and perfect gift comes from God, and that even means waiting. That even

means trials. That even means hardships. Those are God's gifts. If you're God's son, you know that. The Spirit of God says that in your heart. You won't say anything different. But if you start attributing that God is a danger to your life, that He's working destruction in your life, how could that be? The Holy One. How could He possibly do that?

What I have found through the years is that it's one of the reasons why it's always been a strange phenomenon to me as a pastor. My endeavor has always been to do the right thing, to do what God tells me to do. Some people have accused me of being influenced by other people. I think if you've been with me long enough, you know that's not true. And I think pretty much you know that I try to stay just "What does God say about this?" I try not to as much put in my opinion. There are times I give my opinion, but I don't emphasize that that's something you should follow. In fact, a lot of times you shouldn't. But my goal is to proclaim what God says. This should be, of every disciple of Christ, the goal of the church; as we've oftentimes quoted that the church is the pillar and support of the truth. The bizarre thing that happens is

much like this particular passage, that oftentimes as we as a church do the right thing, people begin to attack us. And sometimes, you hear it within the body, sometimes you hear it outside the body, and it's not that we've done anything hurtful to that person, except take a stand, tell them what's right, and encourage them to follow Christ.

So, when you look at a passage like John 15, if you look there with me, Jesus will turn to the disciples and He says this,

(John 15:17) “This I command you, that you love one another.”

And by the way, if people aren't loving the body of Christ, then there's something wrong with them. Do they have the Spirit of Christ within them? What should be your sentiment? The same thing that God told you to do. You ever heard somebody say, “I'm not going to forgive somebody?” That's anti-Christ! Now, I have to admit, forgiving somebody is hard to do because you have to be humble. But that's what it's about, isn't it? “Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you.”

But the passage states this, if you look with me in verse 17,

“This I command you, that you love one another.

(John 15:18) If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

(John 15:19) If you were of the world, the world would love its own...”

Jesus will even say, “Woe to you when all men speak well of you.” I mean, if everybody likes me, I'm doing something wrong. But if there's turmoil and people are speaking against me, then I must be doing something right. And what I have found is usually it's because I haven't given them what they wanted. I have found that there are certain people within the church that will come up to me, and they'll ask me a question, and I'll basically tell them, “No, don't do that.” And they'll go, “Well, I'm going to ask somebody else.” And they ask somebody else. They'll find somebody that will agree with them. And they're the nice person. But I'm the devil because I won't give them what they want. And this is what Christ is

literally promising the disciples of Christ, that they're going to hate you for this.

There's a passage in 1 John, if you look there with me as well. I told you I wasn't going to get very far. But if you look with me in 1 John 4; it's interesting the way this chapter starts off.

It says,

(1 John 4:1) “Beloved, do not believe every spirit...”

What spirit are you looking for? The Holy Spirit. That's the One you're looking for. And what does the Holy Spirit look like? Well, you love one another, you're forgiving, and you're going to do the right thing. You hurt somebody, should the church say nothing? You betray somebody, should the church say nothing? You lie, should the church say nothing? No, we're going to say something. Now, people are not going to like the fact that you say something. And they're not going to like the fact that you point them to what the truth is. They'll argue with the truth. Of course, as Proverbs says, they'll argue against all sound judgment. But then they'll turn and call you crazy.

But if you look with me in 1 John 4, it says this in verse 4, (1 John 4:4) “You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

(1 John 4:5) They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world...”

Now, once again, a lot of times when the world talks to you, it's very altruistic or it sounds that way. It sounds very benevolent, very gracious, and very generous, “Yeah, you ought to have everything You want. You deserve the best.” I often tell my kids that the only thing we deserve is hell. And how gracious it is that God keeps us from that. And not only that, but we're now joint heirs with Christ, and He has bestowed upon us every blessing in heavenly places. But that doesn't mean He's going to bestow upon us things that are going to be destructive in our lives.

Nevertheless, he says,

“They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.”

You want to know why sometimes the world doesn't listen to the church? Because they're not of the church. They're of the world.

It says in verse 6,

(1 John 4:6) “We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us...”

I don't think you're getting any clearer than that.

You know, Paul will talk about this in 1 Timothy 4, that men will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires. They just want to have their ears tickled, “Tell me what I want.” And that's why the church is filled with churches that are telling people exactly what they want, rather than, “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done.” This is the Spirit of Christ within us.

Once you begin coming to God in your prayers, under any other premise than the sentiment of, “I just want Your name to be elevated above all. I want Your rules, Your way of doing things to happen. I want to put my trust in You, and I don't want anything to draw me away from You. And if by having this thing, it would draw me away from You, I don't want it. I don't want it.” If you come in

any other way besides that, you're going to see God as an adversary. They actually accuse Him of being Satan in the text. Jesus says, "I know who you're talking about; you're talking about Satan." You know what the name Satan means? Adversary. So, they're accusing him of being an adversary, and He is. He's an adversary to their way of thinking. But He's not there to destroy them. He's there to heal them. They see it destructively. This passage is a good springboard for the whole concept of how you should pray, and how prayer will oftentimes go into a realm that is actually adversarial towards God, and it creates a form of blasphemy against the Spirit of God, which is not forgivable.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and our desire is to follow You. You have to admit that we oftentimes come selfishly with our prayers and our thoughts are, "Why aren't You giving us what we want?" And because of that, we are upset at You. We haven't thought this one through. You're not our enemy; You're our Savior. You are

the only One that really does love us. Father, we come before You in prayer, and we just ask for Your will to be done. We bring each and every request before You. Everything that happens in our life, we can talk to You about. But the underlying premise in all of this is Your will be done. Because we trust You more than anyone.

Dearly beloved, if you'll come to the Lord with this heart, not one good thing will He withhold. Not one. What we're asking you to believe is that God loves you. For God so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son. If He spared not His own Son, how would He not with Him freely give us all things? You should believe that every time you pray.