

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 *The Rejection of the King.*

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

The One called Messiah in the OT and Christ in the NT would be both God and Man in one person. The Messiah would be both Deliverer and Ruler. The Messiah would be the KING Who brings in the promised Kingdom. Jesus is this prophesied/promised Jewish Messiah.

The miracles that Jesus performed during His earthly ministry were really kingdom SIGN miracles. They were confirmations that He was the prophesied Messianic King as evidenced in His kingdom miracles.

In Isaiah 61:1 a Messianic prophecy was given that specifically stated the Spirit of the Lord God would be upon the Messiah and that He would proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. The Messiah comes with a ministry of DELIVERANCE.

Tension was mounting between Jesus and the religious leaders in Israel. When Jesus healed on the Sabbath the Pharisees plotted how they might destroy Him (Mt. 12:14). They had a problem with Jesus claiming to be Lord of the Sabbath knowing that God ALONE is Master of the Sabbath. Clearly Jesus was claiming to be Lord-God and they didn't accept this.

When Jesus healed a demon possessed man who was both blind and mute the multitudes were amazed but the Pharisees claimed that Jesus did it by the power of Satan who is the ruler of demons.

Jesus strongly refuted this blasphemous slander in three ways. 1) Jesus showed that it is absurdly irrational to think Satan is divided against himself because that would be self-defeating. 2) Jesus showed their hypocritical inconsistency because their own disciples claimed to do the same thing and they did not say it was done by the power of Satan. 3) Jesus' power over the demons was a clear demonstration that He did so by the power of the Spirit which is indicative of kingdom reality.

The conclusion of the matter is seen in Matt. 12:29.

Slide # 2

Matthew 12:29 (NKJV)

29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he **first binds the strong man**? And then he will plunder his house.

Only Jesus is shown to be STRONGER than the strong man (Satan) as seen in His ability to bind Satan and plunder his domain by casting out demons and setting people free. Only Jesus has this kind of power! Only Jesus is THE DELIVERER! Only Jesus ultimately has a DELIVERANCE ministry.

The phenomenon of casting out demons is unique to the time of Christ and the apostolic era early in the Church Age. It is confined to the Gospels and to the book of Acts. The New Testament epistles were specifically written to instruct the church on how it should conduct itself (1 Tim. 3:15). NEVER in the epistles are we instructed to cast out demons or to confront Satan in any kind of power encounter. Instead, we look to the LORD for help. He ALONE is our source of power and deliverance.

Casting out demons is shown in Matthew 8:16-17 to be a sign of deliverance that fulfills Messianic prophecy. Jesus the Messiah uniquely had the power of God over Satan as seen in his power over demons. Jesus had the power to cast out demons, and in Matt. 10:1 He conferred this special power upon the apostles as His special representatives as seen in the Gospels and the book of Acts. The casting out of demons had special kingdom sign significance and always reflected back to the source of power being Jesus doing it by the power of the Spirit which showed Him to be the Messianic King with unique kingdom power.

There are a few, what I would call “**outlier**” exceptions, to Christ and His apostolic representatives alone being able to do this. For example, in Luke 10, Christ for a specialized mission, also appointed 70 to go out in His Name. And they too had power over demons in Jesus Name (see Lk. 10:1, 17). But that seems to have been a unique and limited occasion very closely connected to that particular mission and not an ongoing experience.

On another occasion a man is said to have been seen casting out demons in Jesus’ name in Luke 9:49 but we know nothing about the context. Was he actually doing it – or just well-intended? Was he merely going through the activity of seeking to do this or was it actually happening? We are not told specifics. Was he one of those who became part of the 70? Did Christ allow this in a specialized way to make a point with the disciples about not having a sectarian spirit - which is the emphasis in context. We simply are not told background specifics. However, we do see the connection that this was done in Jesus Name – again showing that if this was really happening Jesus was the power source behind it which Christ in this case then allowed on this occasion.

Another “outlier” exception is that Phillip in Acts 8 did miracles involving the excising of demons. But note that Phillip had a very close connection to the apostles and was one that the apostles had laid their hands on in Acts 6:6.

The bottom line is that miraculously casting out demons was a phenomenon uniquely associated with Christ’s earthly ministry and by extension essentially through His apostles who uniquely represented Him. **There are a few “outlier” exceptions, but they are not the rule.**

Consistently this phenomenon was closely related to Christ and His apostles and is confined to the Gospels and the book of Acts. The epistles, which present what is normative in the Church Age do not instruct us in

regard to casting out demons or the kind of supernatural deliverance ministry carried on by Christ and His apostles. That was unique!

Today we preach the gospel and implore people to in FAITH call on the Name of the Lord Who ALONE can deliver from both the penalty of sin and the power of Satan. When people do this, they are set free by Jesus.

Slide # 3

John 8:32 (NKJV)

32 And you shall know the truth, and the **truth shall make you free.**”

John 8:36 (NKJV)

36 Therefore if the **Son makes you free**, you shall be free indeed.

Slide # 4

Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the **gospel** of Christ, for **it is the power** of God to **salvation** [DELIVERANCE] for everyone who **believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because it is the POWER of God for deliverance (salvation) for everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16).

When the religious leaders, representing the people, sought to destroy Jesus, He quietly withdrew from them fulfilling prophecy from Isaiah 42 that the Messiah would not come forcefully “in takeover mode” (not at His first coming) but rather would come with a ministry of APPEAL.

The ministry of appeal is a ministry in which the evidence is clearly set forth before the people and the invitation is given to respond to it in FAITH! It is a ministry in which the Holy Spirit convicts and endeavors to draw people to the truth. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself but rather testifies of Christ (Jn. 15:26).

The Holy Spirit was behind everything that Christ was doing (Acts 10:38). He made the evidence very clear. He is the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). And it is for this reason what the Pharisees were saying about Jesus – that He was casting out demons by the power of Satan - was inexcusable and exceedingly blasphemous.

After presenting cogent arguments showing the absurdity of the idea that He was casting out demons by Satan, Christ then said:

Matthew 12:30–37 (NKJV)

30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

Jesus has all power – power over all the forces of darkness as clearly demonstrated in His ministry. But to know His deliverance from the forces of darkness one has to side in with Christ. And we do this by FAITH! Each person has to decide on where they will stand. Will they in FAITH stand with Christ and His ultimate freeing POWER or will they stand against Him?

There is a great spiritual war going on between God and Satan and people are caught in the middle. Christ invites all who labor and are heavy laden to come to Him and find rest (Mt. 11:28). And there is no neutral ground. You either side with Satan or you side with Jesus! Who are you with?

There were MULTITUDES of people who followed Jesus because He was a miracle worker. Yet, many of these people were fickle enthusiasts not willing to personally sell out and commit to Jesus Christ. They were more fascinated observers instead of being committed followers.

On the one hand the multitudes in amazement at Christ's miracles skeptically wondered about Jesus being the Son of David (Mt. 12:23). On the other hand, the Pharisees were seeking to influence the people by saying Jesus did these awesome miracles by the power of Satan. So, the people were caught in the middle?

What would they do with Jesus? Jesus makes it very clear there can be no middle ground. And the reason this is so very serious is because the Spirit makes the truth of Christ very CLEAR for which people are then accountable! Consequently, he who is not with Christ is against Him. We must decide! To remain undecided is to decide against Him! It is an either-or proposition. He who does not gather with Christ scatters abroad.

Slide # 5

In Mark 9:40, Jesus said, "...he who is not against us is on our side." This seems to be a flat reversal of His words here in Matthew 12:30. The difficulty is resolved when we see that in Matthew it is a matter of

salvation. A man is either for Christ or against Him; there is no neutrality. In Mark, the subject is **service.** – **William MacDonald**

**31 “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.
32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.**

In view here is an especially egregious sin. It is called “**blasphemy against the Spirit**”. Blasphemy is the idea of irreverent speech. It is “extreme slander”. It has been called “defiant irreverence”. It is insulting speech against God and in this case specifically against the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says every sin and blasphemy can be forgiven but not this level of blasphemy against the Spirit. Jesus even says that whoever speaks against Him can be forgiven but not the one who speaks against the Holy Spirit.

In view is an especially offensive sin against the Spirit. In context this is exactly what this sin was.

Slide # 6

The **blasphemy against the Spirit** was attributing to Satan the miracles that Jesus did in the power of the Holy Spirit while He was upon the earth.

This EXACT sin cannot be committed today because Jesus is no longer upon the earth working miracles as He was during His earthly ministry.

It would seem that speaking against Jesus in isolation of the Spirit was not as grievous a sin because of how Christ came in a veiled position of lowliness. He looked like a regular person. There was nothing outwardly impressive about Him.

Slide # 7

Isaiah 53:2 (NKJV)

2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. **He has no form or comeliness;** And when we see Him, There is **no beauty** that we should desire Him.

It was forgivable if people initially didn't understand Who Jesus was and therefore slighted Him. Even his own brothers were initially in this category of people (cf. Jn. 7:2-5).

Jesus was so common and ordinary in appearance that His glory was veiled in humility. So, it is understandable why people on that level would be dismissive.

Slide # 8

The title Son of Man was used in contexts that emphasized His humility associated with the incarnation (see 8:20). Perhaps speaking against the Son of Man was pardonable because Jesus' identity was veiled. – ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

But then bring in the Holy Spirit and that changes everything. The miracles that Jesus did by the power of the Spirit were undeniable. They were good benevolent miracles that were beneficial to people. They were powerful miracles that logically could only be attributed to the power of God because of the very nature of them.

Slide # 9

Acts 10:38 (NKJV)

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Along with the evident power of God on display through Christ's ministry was the internal conviction of the Spirit. This is the work of God in the heart that only the Spirit can do.

Back before the Genesis flood of Noah's day God in Genesis 6:3 said, "***My Spirit shall not strive with man forever***" as God was giving humanity 120 more years before the judgment of the flood. The Spirit convicts and He works in people wooing them to respond to the truth. Stephen, the first martyr of the Church said to the Jews, "***You always resist the Holy Spirit***" (Acts 7:51). In the last invitation in the Bible in Revelation 22:17 we are told that the Spirit is saying "***Come!***" in conjunction with the gospel ministry of the Church.

We share the truth outwardly, but it is the Spirit who does the work in the heart. Thus, we are completely reliant upon the Spirit to help people see the truth spiritually.

Slide # 10

1 Thessalonians 1:5 (NKJV)

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also **in power**, and **in the Holy Spirit** and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 (NKJV)

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in **demonstration of the Spirit and of power**,
5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the **power of God**.

True converts are the result of the Spirit working in the hearts of people. Only He can make it happen in the heart. This is why the blasphemy of the Spirit was so serious. If you shut the door on the Holy Spirit, there is no hope. There is no means of seeing the truth. There is no way of responding. That is the point of no return.

Slide # 11

Hebrews 3:7–8 (NKJV)

7 Therefore, as the **Holy Spirit** says: “Today, if you will hear His voice,

8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,

The blasphemy of the Spirit was not a sin of ignorance. It was sinning willfully and knowingly against the plain truth – made plain by the Spirit. In the OT there was the sin of a high hand which was unforgivable (cf. Num. 15:30-31). There is such a thing as sinning against the truth of God with your eyes “***wide open***” as in the case of Balaam in Numbers 24. That becomes unforgivable in the sense that the person is rejecting the full light of God’s truth brought forth by the Holy Spirit.

If a person rejects that level of truth, there is nothing more that can be done. As I say this exact sin of blaspheming the Spirit cannot be committed today because Christ is not here physically in person doing miracles in the

power of the Spirit. However, a similar sin of rejection is seen in Hebrews 6 and 10.

Slide # 12

Hebrews 6:4–6 (NKJV)

4 For it is **impossible** for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

6 if they fall away, **to renew them again to repentance**, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

These people intimately know the truth and intimately know the ministry of the Spirit and yet walk away from it. That becomes a point of no return! Truth CLEARLY presented by the Spirit and brazenly rejected is a most serious issue.

Slide # 13

Hebrews 10:26–29 (NKJV)

26 For if we **sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth**, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has **trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?**

This is willful rejection of known truth! It's not that these people don't know. They do and yet willfully reject it. There comes a point of no return for these people. Only God knows where that line is but it is clear that there is a point where it is impossible to bring people back to considering true repentance. They have hardened themselves to the place of no return. But again, only God knows when a person has crossed this line.

Slide #14

This is apostasy, and it involves a break with what one has formally adhered to. The universal witness of the NT is that apostasy if persisted in not only damns but shows that salvation was never real in the first place. The NT reveals how close one may come to the kingdom – tasting, touching, perceiving, understanding. And it also shows that to come this far and reject the truth is unforgivable.

– **D. A. Carson**

I would emphasize that people who are concerned about whether they have committed this sin have not. People guilty of this don't care. They are hardened in their rebellion and have absolutely no desire for the truth.

Ignorance is one thing but hardened rebellion against the knowledge of the truth is another thing.

Slide # 15

1 Timothy 1:13 (NKJV)

13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I **did it ignorantly** in unbelief.

Ignorance is forgivable, but purposely, knowingly, and willfully sinning against the truth of the Spirit can eventuate in a hardened state of no return. That is why we are warned to respond while we can – while the Spirit is working with us. Don't play games with the Spirit. If He is convicting you - respond. If He is calling you - come! No one can do it for you! Only you can respond to the Spirit and in order to be saved you must do so!

The Pharisees in view in Matthew 12 deliberately sinned against the truth made exceedingly clear in the most powerful way possible by the Spirit as seen in the ministry of Christ. Such a level of rejection was unforgivable (cf. Jn. 11:48; Acts 4:16). It wasn't that they didn't know the truth. They did! They just flagrantly sinned against the brilliance of the light given them.

Slide # 16

John 11:47–48 (NKJV)

47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For **this Man works many signs.**

48 If we let Him alone like this, **everyone will believe in Him,** and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

They didn't deny the truth of what was happening, they just had sinful self-serving motivations for not accepting it.

Slide # 17

As far as it applies today, it is not the thought that one seeking pardon will not find it, but rather that the one who rejects the Holy Spirit will not seek pardon. It is the ultimate in unbelief.

– **John Walvoord**

When Jesus says that blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven “**either in this age or in the age to come**” He is saying it will NEVER be forgiven. They are locked into an unforgivable position forever. That is hell!

The Jews recognized two ages: The present age in which they lived and the Messianic Kingdom Age which was yet to come. They did not see the intervening Church Age in which we live, which was not revealed until New Testament revelation (cf. Eph. 2-3).

33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.

This is a truism repeatedly stated by Christ here in Matt. 12:33-35; and also stated repeatedly in Matt. 7:16-20. How simple and yet profound. “*The nature of the tree determines its fruit.*”

I have learned (sometimes the hard way) that you can’t tell exactly what kind of fruit a tree will bring forth just by looking at the tree. You have to wait a little while to see the fruit and that takes a little time. But in the end the telling is in the kind of fruit brought forth.

Fruit very consistently tells a very accurate story. Fruit doesn’t lie. That is true in reference to good fruit, and it is true in reference to bad fruit. The kind of tree it is - is seen consistently in the kind of fruit that is brought forth. The NATURE of the tree determines the NATURE of its fruit! This truism is very consistent and hence is repeatedly stated by the Lord as a principle of discernment.

The good tree bringing forth good fruit is represented in this context by the Lord Himself and His good fruit ministry. The bad tree bringing forth bad fruit is represented by the Pharisees and their bad fruit ministry as seen in their blasphemy of the Spirit.

I have pointed out many times that everything about Christ’s first coming ministry was benevolent, kind, and good. He didn’t harm anyone. He only

did GOOD, and He did it in regard to EVERYONE. He healed everyone. He offered the truth to everyone. That is in keeping with how the OT prophets said the Messiah would come (the first time).

The Scripture says, “**grace and truth came through Jesus Christ**” (Jn. 1:17). John 3:17 says, “**God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world through Him might be saved.**” The Messiah came preaching good tidings, healing the brokenhearted, proclaiming liberty and setting the captives free. This is all GOOD stuff which is characteristic of God-like goodness indicative of what the prophets indicated would characterize the true Messiah’s ministry (cf. Isa. 61:1).

In contrast the devil is all about destroying peoples lives. He never actually helps people. He deceives people. He harms people. He kills people. Jesus said the devil “**was a murder from the beginning**” and that he is “**a liar and the father of it.**” (Jn. 8:44). The nature of Christ’s ministry was so CLEARLY of the good God of the Bible as to be incontrovertible. The Spirit’s testifying that it was God-ordained was so very obvious that only the slanderously evil could possibly attribute it to the devil. And the reason their sin was so evil is because they actually knew better. In their evilness they just did not want to accept it!

And evil does that. It perverts or twists the truth where evil is said to be good and good is said to be evil. That is devil-like.

Slide # 18

Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV)

20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Christ calls it like it is! His ministry was clearly good through and through, indicative of being rooted in God, but in contrast the bad fruit of the Pharisees totally exposed them. Jesus said to them...

34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

A **brood** is a “family” and vipers are snakes – poisonous snakes. Deadly dangerous snakes full of venomous poison. Christ called these religious leaders a family of poisonous snakes (cf. Mt. 3:7; 23:33). They work in concert like a brood. And they are deceptive in that sometimes it’s hard to see their true colors until they strike.

Christ here connected the fruit of a person’s life to what comes out of their mouth. And consistent with the truism in verse 33 He asks, “**How can you being evil, speak good things?**” They couldn’t because they were evil.

The word “evil” (Gk. poneros) denotes that which is morally bad. Satan is called “**the evil one**” (1 Jn. 5:18). Their nature was evil and therefore they could not speak good things that were right and true. What was needed was a changed heart! They fundamentally had a HEART problem. That is always the problem!

And then Jesus gave forth another truism: “**Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**” The mouth tells on the heart. “Out of the abundance” refers to the overflow of the heart. It’s like the heart is a reservoir in which words are stored up and as the reservoir gets full what flows out of the mouth is indicative of what is in the heart.

In the Scriptures the idea of heart relates to the core of a person involving the thoughts, intentions, and will of a person which is in contrast to merely the emotions. Thus, the HEART of the person really represents the character of a person. Therefore words that come out of the heart reveal the nature or character of the person. Fruit tells - words tell! Words tell on a person because they are the overflow of the heart.

Listen to what a person talks about and you will soon discover the condition of their heart. People that talk incessantly about self are all about self – no matter what they say. People who talk about God are God focused. People who are bitter speak constantly in bitter tones. Our speech consistently tells on the state of our heart.

The mouth tells, but the origin of what it tells comes forth from the HEART. It starts in the heart and moves to the mouth from there.

Slide # 19

Matthew 15:18–19 (NKJV)

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Life is about the HEART and what goes on in the heart comes out in the life – what goes on in the heart comes out of the mouth (cf. Isa. 32:6).

Slide # 20

Proverbs 4:23 (NKJV)

23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

This is consistent with the principle just laid out in verse 33. Commentators point out that “*treasure*” here could perhaps better be understood as “*treasure box*” – the place where things are collected and stored. “*The heart is the treasure box of the soul.*” (Ed Glasscock)

What you “treasure” – what you value in your heart - is valuable to you – what you want to hold on to is stored up in your heart.

A person brings out in life what is stored up in their heart. And that is true whether it be GOOD things or EVIL things. What is in your heart is eventually brought out in life.

Again, this is true in both directions – whether for good or for evil. We see this principle in conversion. Paul tells us that the mouth tells on the heart.

Slide # 21

Romans 10:10 (NKJV)

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The order is believing in the heart FIRST and then the mouth confesses what the heart believes. That is consistent with Jesus saying that “*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*”.

The point is this: What is real in the heart comes out of the mouth. Want to know what a person's heart looks like – listen to what they say. It reveals the heart.

Verse 35 makes a tight connection with v. 33: what a person truly is determines what he says and does. – **D.A. Carson**

36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

Jesus here gives another general truism. All people are facing judgment before God. Believers will be judged according to our works with the issue being the quality of reward we will receive. Unbelievers will be judged according to their works with the issue being the degree of eternal punishment they will receive.

Idle words are empty, careless, useless, unprofitable words. We should be very careful what we say because one day we will have to give account for every IDLE word. I don't know about you, but I regret saying a lot of "idle" unprofitable words. They just slip out sometimes – which tells me the state of my heart at that moment is not what it should be.

Slide # 22

Jesus is saying that every spoken word reflects the heart's overflow and is known to God. Therefore words are of critical importance (cf. Eph. 5:3-4, 12; Col. 3:17; James 1:19; 3:1-12). – **D.A. Carson**

For James the tongue is a major barometer of our spiritual maturity.

Slide # 23

James 3:2 (NKJV)

2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

The tongue is the hardest thing in the world to control. We all stumble over it regularly. To perfectly control the tongue speaks of perfect maturity. And none of us have reached that point yet. We all stumble in many things in regard to the tongue.

How would you like to stand before Jesus and give account of every idle word you have spoken? Now we won't do so in a penal sense because

Christ has paid the penalty for our sin in total. But we will give account in terms of the evaluation of the quality of our service for Jesus. All our works will be evaluated including the use of our tongue!

Slide # 24

1 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV)

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who **will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts.** Then each one's praise will come from God.

This has the believer's judgment in view in context. If He is going to reveal the secret thoughts of the heart – well it is a given that every idle word will also be examined. Praise God for forgiveness. Praise God for salvation. But let us not glibly think then that it doesn't matter how we then live or how we speak. It will matter on judgment day as Christ evaluates the quality of our workmanship in relation to the heart (cf. 1 Cor. 3:11-15). It will matter in terms of rewards!

The New International Bible Commentary makes this thoughtful comment: "*A man's premeditated words are seldom a safe guide to character, the unpremeditated are.*" That is so true. It is the unpremeditated spouting off behind the scenes that really tells the story! Often we say things behind the scenes that are inappropriate – but in fact it is openly known to God. He takes note of every word.

When a person is arrested, he is warned that anything he says will be used against him; similarly the Lord warns us that our words will rise up against us. – **John Phillips**

37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The word "*justified*" means "*to declare righteous*" or "*to declare right*" but is sometimes used in the sense of being vindicated or proven right (cf. Lk. 7:35; Mt. 11:19; 12:37). We are not justified by our words in the sense of being saved by speaking.

The Bible is clear that we are justified "declared righteous" purely on the basis of faith and faith alone - the mouth then confesses what the heart believes. However, justification in the judicial/legal sense before God is by

faith alone! God as the JUDGE declares us right on the basis of our faith alone.

Slide # 25

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

So the sense here in Matt. 12:37 is that if faith is real in the heart it will demonstrate itself in our words as a pattern of life. In that sense our words will serve to vindicate or reveal our true character as God's children. Again, the words are the fruit, but the fruit in this case gives evidence (proves) that the tree is good.

On the other hand, a lost person's words will serve to condemn them – that is they will reveal the true nature and pattern of their evil character.

We need to have our incriminating words blotted out. We need God to say, "I will remember them no more." If He doesn't destroy the evidence, we will stand condemned by our words. – **John Phillips**

Slide # 26

Jesus' point is not that words are the basis of salvation or condemnation but that they are reliable evidence of the reality of salvation. The speech of a redeemed person will be different because it comes from his renewed heart. – **John MacArthur**

In effect words are the mirrors of the heart – they reflect the spiritual condition of the heart whether regenerate or unregenerate.

Those who have yielded to the convicting work of the Spirit in conversion demonstrate that in changed lives of which a leading indicator is seen in their speech. Those that are in rebellion to the Spirit of truth also reflect that in their speech.

If our faith doesn't affect our tongue, it probably is not a genuine saving faith. Certainly, none of us are perfect in our speech patterns but people are known by the fruit of their lips as the mouth reliably tells on the heart.

When I was in Bible College we had a dean of men who was also over the Pastoral Ministries department of which I was involved. This man was

named Harold Sanders and he also happened to be the first pastor of Southview Bible Church – on the scene for 5 years before I became the first full time pastor of the church.

Harold had a favorite verse that he often quoted to us, and it was Proverbs 23:7 which says that as a person thinks in their heart so are they.

The essence of a person's life is what they are in their heart. We all come with an evil heart. It's part of depravity. As the Bible says, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

The only answer to a wicked heart is FAITH in Jesus as Lord and Savior! When we put our faith in Jesus God cleanses our heart!

Slide # 27

Luke 8:15 (NKJV)

15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

Acts 15:8–9 (NKJV)

8 So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us,

9 and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

The great dividing line is found in the HEARTS of people. As Jesus said, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things." (Mt. 12:35).

The heart of the matter is that its all about the HEART and the mouth tells on the heart! That is why Romans 10:9-10 says, "**For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**"

What a person really believes and what their mouth says goes together.

Now of course one can mouth lies, and many do! Many will say, "Lord, Lord" on judgment day only to be exposed as liars! That is why the Bible says it is with the HEART one must believe. It must be real in the heart! The KEY issue is all about the HEART!

What does your mouth reveal about the treasure box of your heart? It ever remains true: "***Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.***"

What say you?