

True and False Conversion

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Luke 11:14-26

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Now, Luke 11 beginning with the 14th verse. There are three powerful lessons taught in these verses. And without delay I am going to get right into them, three powerful lessons.

In verse 14 of Luke 11 he was casting out a devil, Christ our Lord and it was dumb, a dumb spirit. And it came to pass when the devil was gone out the dumb spake and the people wondered and some of them said, “He casteth out devils by the power of the devil or through Beelzebub the chief of devils.”

The first lesson tonight I want us to think about and look carefully at is this. Our Lord of glory is never in league with Satan to accomplish his purpose or to cast out evil spirits. Charles Spurgeon said the Lord of glory is never in league or compromises with the dunghill deity, Satan. In fact, there is now an always has been since Satan fell a deadly eternal, infinite hatred between Satan and Christ. God said to the serpent, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed.” Enmity.

John wrote in 1 John 3:8, “For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

Now there is never—and I am leading up to something here that is very important. There is never any compromise between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil, never. No quarter is ever given. The Lord Jesus Christ never uses Satan’s help to subdue Satan. Our Lord said that. He said, “I cast out devils by the finger of God. If I cast out devils by the power of the devil, then the kingdom of the devil is divided. It is divided against itself and it cannot stand.”

And the kingdom is not divided and the kingdom of God is not divided and there is a deadly, eternal infinite hatred between the two. There is no compromise. Christ never fights evil with evil. Christ never uses carnal weapons to cast out Satan.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 10. I want you to look at this carefully. 2 Corinthians 10. Now, here is what I am leading up to. There is a wicked and blasphemous philosophy that has gotten a grip on today’s religion and today’s church. It is a wicked and blasphemous philosophy and it is the same thing the people are saying here. He is pasting out demons by the power of demons. He is casting out devils by the power of the devil. And here is the philosophy which this world of religion promotes today. Our goal...as long as our

goal is good it doesn't matter what means we use. As long as our goal is to cast out Satan we can even use carnal weapons, fleshly tools, Satan's own weapons, craftiness, deceit and God will bless it.

God won't bless it because Christ our Lord said, "I cast out demons not by the power of the devil, not using the tools of the devil or the weapons of the devil, but the finger of God and only the finger of God."

Christ never allies himself with Satan to accomplish his purpose. To begin with that would be our Lord compromising righteousness and it would be Satan surrendering. It would be Satan's kingdom divided against itself.

Listen to Paul in 2 Corinthians 10. "The weapons of our warfare, and this is a spiritual warfare. This is to accomplish God's glory and God's purpose. And these weapons are not carnal. But they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Now, Satan uses deceit, but God doesn't. Those are Satan's weapons, carnal weapons. He uses deceit, but God doesn't. He used deceit in the Garden of Eden.

Now here are some of the things that are said today. "Our goal is to get people to receive Christ as Savior. Our goal is to cast out Satan. Cast him out of a man's heart. Our goal is to get people to worship God, to attend Church, to recognize God. So we will avoid using those Scriptures and those doctrines that are offensive. We will avoid using those Scriptures and those doctrines which men despise. And we will present the Word in such a way that men can understand it and accept it.

What kind of weapon is this? This is a carnal weapon. This is a deceitful weapon. This is carnal reasoning. And if God blessed this it would be God compromising. And if Satan permitted it would be Satan's kingdom divided against itself.

I hear people saying this. "Now our goal is to get young people to attend church, to get young people and others into religion. So the thing to do is offer them entertainment. Offer them activities. Offer them socials which are church oriented and church centered. Don't bother them with the preaching of the cross. Don't bother them with repentance. Don't bother them with the conviction of sin. Don't bother them with godliness. Don't bother them with doctrine. Just get them into the church any way you can. It will keep them off the streets and it will bring them to the house of God."

You think God would honor this? Do you think God would stoop to this type of compromise, this type of Satanic evil? Do you think Satan would permit it?

There was a church not long ago, not too far from here that had River Sunday. This is the truth. I saw the ad. They went up and down the countryside to get people to attend church that Sunday because they were going to take one of the deacons, clothed in his

Sunday suit and throw him in the river. And they invited everybody to come and see the deacon thrown into the river.

You say, "Well, it got people out."

Do you think the Lord of glory would stoop to that sort of evil, satanic entertainment to accomplish his holy purpose?

I hear people say this. "Well, our goal is to build a church, to build a building for God's glory. Our goal is to send missionaries. Our goal is to do great things for God, to build orphanages and all types of things. So we will call in bonding companies. We are not going to use God's way of raising money by the free will offerings and gifts of his people. We will bring in bonding companies. We will have ice cream socials. We will have all the ladies make some candy and we will sell candy to raise money for the glory of God."

What kind of God do you worship? Do you think the holy God of heaven would stoop to using this type of carnality, this type of flesh to accomplish his glory?

"Well, our goal is to get people to profess faith in Christ. Our goal is to get people to say they believe Christ died on the cross, was buried and rose again and get them into our churches and build up the kingdom of God. So why wait for the sowing of the seed? Why wait for the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost? Why wait for real conviction of sin? Why wait for a genuine, heart sorrow and repentance toward God? Why wait for a genuine faith in Jesus Christ? Why trouble the sinner with these doctrines and with these truths and with these things that the disciples taught? Take a short cut. Have a lot of good music. Give away some prizes. Invite people to services. Pack up pews. Fill the church. Tell a few sob stories about heaven and mother. Promise the rebel eternal life. Pressure him to come down the aisle and decide for Christ now."

Carnal weapons. Carnal reasoning. That would be God almighty casting out Satan by the power of Satan. That is God using the deceit of Satan. And our God never deals in deceit. Impossible. Our Lord Jesus Christ, when they said to him, "You are casting out demons by the power of the devil."

He said, "I am casting out demons by the finger of God. And the kingdom of God is come down here among you."

And with all my heart this is the reason, right here, this Scripture is the reason I resent this type of dealing with men and women. I believe they ought to be dealt with in honesty and truth and sincerity from the Word of God. That is the reason Paul said to that church, "I kept back nothing profitable unto you. I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God almighty. And if the whole counsel of God offends you, you will have to be offended. If the whole counsel of God is despised by you, you will just have to despise it. If the holiness and righteousness and justice and truth of the cross offends you, you will just have to be offended. Because our God deals not in deceit. Our

God uses not carnal weapons. Our God uses not carnal reasoning. Our God offers no compromise whatsoever to Satan. No compromise.

When a man stands in the pulpit and opens the Word of God he is not the deacon's man. He is God's man. He is not the town's man. He is God's man. He is not the church's servant, he is God's servant. And he must not stoop to carnal weapons and carnal reasoning and carnal compromise. It must be the whole truth of God almighty. And that is the only thing our Lord will bless.

Now watch the second division of this beginning with verse 21. Our Lord describes true conversion. He describes how Satan is dealt with and how Satan is cast out and how sinners are brought to a true saving relationship with God almighty. And it is not by catering to the flesh. It is not by compromising with Satan. It is not by buttering up sinners. It is not by offering something that appeals to their flesh. This is the way God saves sinners.

He begins in verse 21. He says, "When a strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace."

Who is that strong man? Do you know who that is? That's Satan.

I had a man write to me who watches our television program and he said, he asked a question and in asking the question he proceeded to state this. He said, "We know that Satan is omnipresent and omnipotent."

And I wrote back in answering his question and I said, "Now, to begin with, Satan is not omnipresent. Satan is not everywhere at the same time. Only God is omnipresent. There are aids to Satan. There are assistants to Satan. There are demons and evil spirits who do the will of Satan, but he is not omnipresent and he is not omnipotent. He could do nothing to Job without God's permission. And Satan can do nothing today without God's permission. He is not omnipotent. He is not all powerful, but he is powerful.

You ask those who have stood toe to toe with him. Ask Job how strong he is. He destroyed everything Job had. Job, a righteous man, a godly man, a son of the living God, and yet when he entered conflict with Satan he was no match.

Ask Sampson how strong he is. Sampson, the strongest of men slew thousands of Philistines, but he was no match for Satan.

Ask Solomon how strong he is, Solomon, the wisest of men. I guess the smartest man who ever lived. But he was outwitted by Satan.

Ask Peter how strong he is. Peter said, "Lord, I will never deny you." He was the only one who really did.

Ask the angel Gabriel when he was disputing over the body of Moses with Satan he aid, "Satan, Lucifer, the Lord rebuke thee. I am no match for thee."

So when this strong man, armed... What is he armed with? He is armed with deceit. And his deceit is so deceitful we can be deceived and not know it. His weapon is the lie. He knows how to use it. Oh, he knows how to use a lie. It was by a lie that he overthrew this human race. He has ways of making the sweet appear to be bitter. He has ways of making the bitter appear to be sweet. He can make a man believe his lie and reject God's truth and believe he is accepting the truth. He is a shrewd, subtle, crafty, deceitful power.

When the strong man keeps his palace he is armed and oh, he has got weapons for which you are no match and I am no match and he knows how to use them. He has been using them for years and years and years. He has handled folks like us before. And he always, except by the power of God, wins, always wins. You are not match for Satan.

When a strong man armed, armed with deceit and lies and subtlety and craftiness... Watch it. He keeps his palace. What is that? Do you know what that palace is? It is man's heart. It is the unregenerated man's heart. A palace is the abode of a king. A palace is where a sovereign reigns and rules. A palace is that place where he has authority. And you know man's heart was intended to be the throne of God. But because he submitted to Satan his heart became the dwelling place of the evil one and he has taken possession of the human heart and that is where he reigns and that is where he rules.

Christ said, "You are servants of sin."

Turn to Ephesians two. Look at it. Here it is right here. You are the servants... I am talking about natural man. I am talking about fallen sons of Adam. In chapter two of Ephesians, verse two Paul writes, "In times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. And we were by nature children of wrath, sons of Satan."

He reigned on the throne of our hearts. He controlled. He controlled our thoughts, our affections, our wills, our thoughts, our imaginations, our actions, our deeds. He controlled them. From the sole of the foot to the top of the head no holiness, no soundness, no righteousness, all evil, all under the power of Satan.

But, watch this now. "But," verse 22, "When a stronger than he shall come upon him." Now, this is conversion. You have the picture of man in his natural state, the strong man Satan armed with prejudice, armed with bigotry, armed with envy, armed with lies, armed with all of these evil works of the flesh. He keeps his palace. His goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he..." You know who that is. That is the Lord Jesus Christ. "When a stronger than he." This is not the man himself. We are not stronger than

Satan. This is not the man. This is not the minister. I am not stronger than Satan. This is the spirit of God who is stronger. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

This is the Spirit of God for salvation is of the Lord. He comes upon that strong man. He comes upon Satan. He makes war upon him right where he is and he overcomes him. There is a struggle between God and Satan. It is not just a struggle between me and which church I am going to join. It is not just a struggle between me and the crowd with which I run and the business in which I am engaged. This is a warfare between heaven and hell. Satan holds on to his palace. Satan holds on to his subjects. Satan holds on to his servant. And God has determined to take him away. And God has determined to save him. So God comes upon him and he struggles. How long he holds out is not known, but Christ is always victorious. The heart will be broken. The imaginations will be thrown down. The high places will be destroyed. The will will be broken. The heart will be broken. Satan will be drive out because God never surrenders.

And, brother, you don't...you don't win this battle here by throwing deacons in the river. You don't accomplish this by giving two dollar bills to the children that ride the buses. You don't accomplish this by bringing in quartets and trios and soloists and having a gospel sing all night long. No, you don't accomplish this by standing up telling jokes like that fellow down in New Orleans. This is God. This is God moving. This is God working. You don't accomplish this with socials and entertainment. You accomplish this when the power of God is pleased to come upon a sinner's heart and overcome Satan.

Watch it. He overcomes him, too. How long it takes I don't know. God may do it in five minutes. God may do it in five weeks. God may take five years, but he will whip him. He will drive him out.

And what does he do? He takes from Satan all his armor. He has defended his palace. He has kept his palace. He has kept it in subjection with all of these weapons. What were the? Prejudice. God takes it away. Ignorance. God takes it away. Tradition. He has defended himself against the truth with tradition, religious tradition. God destroys it. Hatred. God destroys it. Hard heartedness. God destroys it. Rebellion. God destroys it.

You don't do this by getting a fellow to come down the aisle and shake your hand. You don't do this by slapping a wafer in some wine and sticking it on a fellow's tongue. It won't be accomplished. Satan reigns in his palace. He sits upon his throne. He laughs at the world. This is his home, his palace, his throne and nobody can move him except God almighty, a stronger one. And when he comes upon him, he overcomes him. He overcomes him.

O sovereign grace my heart subdue I would be led in triumph, too. Drive that old dragon from his seat with all his hellish crew.

And you can put this down. When God comes in and overcomes Satan he disarms him. He taketh away all his armor wherein he trusted. He takes away the lie and puts in truth. He takes away hatred and sheds abroad his love. He takes away prejudice and gives a

universal spirit. He takes away all of these things and he gives the grace of God in the fruits of the Spirit in that place and divides his spoil. And this is the results. He that is not with me all the way, he is against me.

You see, God and Stan are not going to divide Berlin like the allies and Russia did. God is going to rein in Berlin and nobody else is going to reign there. Nobody else. And God is not going to divide you with the arch enemy. God is not going to compromise. God is going to move in or move out. That is so. That is true conversion. And there isn't any other kind.

Now, you can talk about this compromise all you want to. You can talk about somebody is gradually slipping into the kingdom of God all you want to, but you don't slip in. You are born into the kingdom of God. And our God will not compromise. He doesn't need to because he doesn't need me and he doesn't need you. And there is no use in me dilly daddling around with a 13th Street Baptist Church or anybody in the tri state area. Present the Word of God. There it is. If they don't take it God said, "Shake the dust off your feet and go somewhere else. Go somewhere else. Shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them."

God doesn't need them. God can raise up of these stones children to Abraham. If you don't praise him the rocks will praise him. Somebody is going to praise him, though.

What we need to pray is that God almighty will do this kind of work for us. Are we going to do our best to et everybody into the kingdom of heaven even if we have to use carnal weapons, even if we have to compromise with the kingdom of evil, even if we have to compromise with neo orthodoxy and half truths and everything else? Slip up on peoples' blind side.

God doesn't. he comes with a frontal attack. He meets Satan nose to nose and eyeball to eyeball and toe to toe and slays him. And he slays him with the truth of Christ. That is what Satan said to our Lord Jesus Christ on the mount of temptation. "Make these stones bread and folks will believe you. Your hungry, aren't you? Take a short cut. Cast yourself off. People will believe you. Fall down and worship me." Anything but the cross, anything but the cross.

All right. Watch false conversion here now. This is remarkable here. Now, get the picture. Satan sits on the throne in a natural unregenerated man or woman's heart. That is his territory. He is the prince of he power of the air. He is a spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. That is his territory. He occupies it totally. It is not a joint operation. He occupies it. he totally reigns.

Well, one day...here is reformation. The unclean spirit, verse 24, is gone out of a man. Now, watch this carefully. He wasn't driven out. He wasn't conquered, over come and turned out. There was no conflict. There was no struggle. There was no overthrowing of evil powers. He just went out. He just left. He took a vacation. And the man, after Satan

left he was a different man. Naturally a man would be different if Satan was out for a time being. The unclean spirit was gone.

All of a sudden he is religious. All of the sudden he is a saint. He was a sinner yesterday. He is a saint today and nobody knows exactly how. There was no conviction. There was no struggle. There were no tears. There was no groaning. There was no crying. There was no conflict. He just joined up. No seeking the Lord. No crying out for mercy. No searching the Scriptures. No agonizing pleas. No wrestling with Satan. No counting the cost. He just became a Christian. He had an experience, Satan left.

And then it says Satan left and he walked through dry places seeking rest and he didn't find any rest. Satan never finds any joy or delight or rest except occupying the human heart in opposition to God. That is his joy. That is his rest. That is his delight. It is to destroy and to wrangle against God almighty. He was at his best in the garden. He was really having a good time as he tempted Eve and as he drew her away from the truth and away from God. That is his domain. That is his delight. That is his occupation. And he doesn't find any rest except in doing that.

So what did he do? He said, "I will return to what? My house." It never ceased to be his house. It was his when he lived there. It was there while he left there. It was his while he was on vacation and it was his when he returned. He just came back.

Now how long he was gone. It varies in different circumstances. A man reforms and joins a church and gets religion and sometimes he lasts for a week, sometimes two weeks, sometimes six months, sometimes a year, sometimes longer than that. But unless Satan is driven out, he is coming back. Unless Satan is conquered he is coming back. Unless he is overthrown he is coming back. Unless the Lord Jesus Christ does the work and occupies the house Satan is coming back. I don't know when, but he will be back I can guarantee you. That's the reason, brethren. We just must leave this work of Holy Spirit conviction to the Holy Spirit.

That is the reason in the case of your children and your friends and your neighbors and your husbands and your wives and those people to whom I preach, we have got to wit on God. It can't be just a commercial contract between me and a sinner.

I can't just lay down a plan and a purpose and say, "Now, will you accept this, will you believe this?"

"Well, I guess so."

"Then you are saved."

He is not saved until God does something, something miraculous, something supernatural, something great by coming into the heart and driving Satan out and taking his rightful place on the throne.

Matthew chapter 12, verse 14 says that when the evil spirit came back he found the house, now watch this, he found it three things. He found it empty, empty. Now, brethren, no saved man is empty. He is indwelt with the Holy Spirit. Anybody whom God saves, Christ said, "I am my father will come in and take up our abode. Now ye not your body is the temple, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit? The love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost. If any man have not the Spirit of God he is none of his."

Satan may be at home or he may not be at home, but if God is not at home it is not God's home. And when Satan came back, he found it empty.

What else did he find? He found it swept. The fellow had quit drinking. He had quit cursing, a little bit. He was swept. He wasn't washed in the blood. He wasn't bathed in the blood.

Do you know what sweeping does? Sweeping picks up the loose dirt and leaves that old in ground dirt. It leaves that dirt that is deep. That is dirt that is part of the fixture. It leaves that dirt. It just sweeps off the loose dirt. That is what reformation does for a fellow. It quits some of the outward things and leaves the hatred and leaves the gossip and leaves the jealousy and leaves the envy and leaves the blasphemy and leaves the temper and leaves all these things in there.

The only way that can be removed is for God to do it, God to do it. He found it empty. He found it swept, not washed, just swept, just tidied up a little bit. On the outside it looked clean, but on the inside, oh boy, it was full of dead men's bones. It was full of spiders and gnats and cobwebs and wiggle tails and all kind of evil fixtures of hell because God hadn't been there with cleansing stream and the flowing blood and that which gets to the corners and that which wipes out everything.

And then he found it garnished, decorated. What was it decorated with? Well, he had crucifixes. And she bought her a cross and started wearing it around her neck. That looks real religious. That looks real religious.

That looks real religious, pagan, but religious. And usually they get the biggest Bible they can carry. They get one of these big family Bibles, you know, with a cross hanging down here, a good Samaritan Bible, the bigger the better. Buy you some pictures of Jesus. Put them up around the house, you know, pictures of Jesus. [?] head of Christ, Christ praying in the garden.

I am not making fun, now. I am being serious. That is graven images. The Word of God speaks against those pagan pictures. You got any in your home you better go throw them away.

You say, "Well, that's Jesus."

That is not Jesus. By not even the wildest stretch of the imagination is that our Lord. That is a graven image. That is an image of things in heaven and God says you are not to make unto yourself any graven image of things in heaven or earth.

And then they will get these little clichés, these little slogans. And they will put them all over the house, you know, decorated up real pretty.

You are not going to replace the fruits of the Spirit with that sort of thing. If you are really...if God almighty really does something in your heart you don't need a cross on here to tell folks about it. Your life will tell them about it. Your attitude will tell them about it. Your walk will tell them about it. You don't need pictures on your wall to show that your home is occupied by Christ. Folks won't be there long. They will find it out. It will leak out on you.

You don't need little old clichés everywhere, "Just one life will soon be passed, only what is done for Christ will last." And that is not so. The only that is going to last is what Christ did for me, not what I did for him. And you don't need that to prove you are religious. If the Holy Spirit comes in to dwell in your heart, people will be able to know it before very long.

But when that old unclean spirit came back he found that house empty. Oh, it as cleaned up on the outside. It was swept up. It was decorated. It fixed up real pretty. It appeared righteous. It appeared beautiful. It looked good. But it was empty.

And do you know what he did? Then he goeth, verse 26, and he found him seven other devils more wicked than himself and they entered in and they dwelt there and the last state of that man was worst that the first.

If you want to find a real renegade, you find you a used to be Christian. If you want to find you a real renegade, a real rebel, you find you a fallen religious man or woman. I will even tell you the names of these seven devils he brought back. He brought back seven with him and I can name every one of them. I have seen it a thousand times. I have seen folks reform. I have seen them get religion without God. I have seen them make a decision without Christ, without the work of the Holy Spirit, without that inward work, without God reigning and God occupying and God giving a birth, bringing forth a new creature. And I have seen them after they quit it. And these are the demons that occupied their hearts. Here the are all seven of them.

First of all, there is that gospel hardened spirit. This man is no longer moved by the things that used to move him. He is no longer interested in the things in which he used to be interested. He is no longer brought to tears by the Word of God. There are no groanings in his soul, in his heart. He is no longer interested. He is no longer moved. He is no longer held by those things that used to be his primary affection.

Secondly, he is indwelt with a spirit of pride. He resents anyone preaching to him. "Don't preach to me." He resents anyone questioning his condition. He resents anyone offering any advice. He is a proud man now. He is all right. He is all right.

And then he is occupied with a spirit of covetousness. He once was interested in spiritual things and now his whole affection, he is craving materialism and the things of this world. The things of this world become his God. His God becomes the material. It becomes the physical. It becomes occupying a high position and a higher place and getting the honor and fame of this world, laying hold upon these things, fleshly things. That is the spirit of materialism, covetousness.

And then he is occupied and indwelt with a critical spirit. Everyone who has a zeal for God to him is a hypocrite. "They are no better than I am." He resents spiritual people. He resents those who are interested in God and who have a concern for their soul. He resents them. He has a critical spirit. He is critical of everyone. He finds fault with them. You will see what's wrong with him.

And then he is usually indwelt with a spirit of intellectualism. He is a theologian without a heart. Cold doctrine he enjoys, but a message that reaches the heart and the affections he doesn't want to hear it. he is not interested in it. He is not moved by it. A message of grace and a message of love and a message of the glory of Christ, he is not interested in that, but he will stand around with you and argue all night about some point of doctrine. He is a theologian. You will find him out there at the mill. You will find him where you work. These used to be preachers and used to be Sunday school teachers, used to be Christians. Why, they know all about the Bible. They are theologians. But you talk to them about heart warmth and heart grace and heart faith and they are not interested.

And then he gets a selfish spirit. He can't find anyone who agrees with him. Everyone is wrong on something. He can't go to church over here because they do this, that and the other. He can't go to church over here because they don't do this, that and the other. He can't go to church because they are not premillennial. He can't go to church over here because they don't have an altar. He can't go to church over here because they pass the plate. He can't go to church over here because the women wear hats. He can't go to church over here for something else. He has a critical spirit.