

Mark 9:38-42. Christ Directs His Disciples Not to Forbid the Man Who Cast Out Devils in His Name.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus teaches his disciples that there is no such thing as being neutral in religion and that all men are either on the side of Satan or on the side of Jesus.

Scripture: Proverbs 11:14, Matthew 7:7, Matthew 12:30, Mark 9:38, James 4:6

Topics: "Humility In Faith", "Serving Christ"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the importance of humility and honesty in seeking counsel from God, using the example of John expressing his doubts to Jesus. The sermon highlights the dangers of presumption and false notions, as seen in the disciples forbidding a man from casting out demons. Jesus emphasizes the significance of taking a stand for or against Him, stating that neutrality in religion is not an option. Those who boldly acknowledge and serve Christ, like the man who cast out demons in Jesus' name, are blessed and should be supported and encouraged by fellow believers.

Transcript

When our Savior was instructing his disciples, he permitted them to ask him questions, and to express their doubts. While he was teaching them the duty of humility, a doubt occurred to John's mind respecting his own conduct on a late occasion.

It was frank and ingenuous in the apostle to express this doubt to his Master. He suspected that he had acted wrong, but he did not on that account conceal his conduct. How apt we are to conceal from the friends we most revere, those actions which we fear have been faulty while, if we were frankly to acknowledge them, we might obtain valuable counsel.

Though it was John only who mentioned the circumstance, yet it appears that all the disciples had united in forbidding the man to cast out devils. Nine of them had very lately, from unbelief, failed in working a miracle; and yet they ventured to forbid a man whose faith was evidently greater than their own. Did not this conduct betray much presumption? How dreadful, too, was the calamity from which this man released his fellow-creatures, even from Satan's bondage! Could the disciples see the poor demoniac just before writhing and foaming, now peaceful and thoughtful, and forbid a brother to attempt to deliver others from

their sufferings? Yes, they were so blinded by one false notion, that they overlooked all other considerations. They imagined their Master would set up a temporal kingdom, and that it would consist of those only who were called (as they had been) to follow him from place to place. But our Lord had servants who were not required, or even permitted to follow him, as the apostles did; yet they also were dear to him. They were dear to him, because they would not lightly speak evil of him. The world spoke evil of Christ, of his words, of his works, of his people. Those who did not speak evil of him, spoke well of him; for there is no such thing as being neutral in the cause of Christ.

What did Jesus mean by these words--"He who is not against us, is on our part?" He meant, that there is no such thing as being neutral in religion. All men are on one side, or the other. There are many who wish to keep neutral. They are afraid of being on the side of Satan, but they have not resolved to be on the side of Jesus. The devil reckons these among his most trusty servants; such cowardly spirits are less likely to escape from him than those who openly do his work.

But the man who cast out devils in the name of Jesus was not one of those undecided characters. At a time when all the rich and great were joined together against the Son of God, he was not ashamed to acknowledge him. Such are the men respecting whom our Savior declared, that those who give them a cup of cold water shall be blessed. How careful we ought to be never to discourage the least of God's servants! They may not belong to our party, but they may belong to Christ. They do belong to Christ, if, instead of speaking lightly of him, they take delight in praising him before an ungodly world; and especially, if by the power of his word, they release sinners from the bondage of Satan. We must wish those to prosper, who convert sinners from the error of their ways, save souls from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

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