

A Harmony of the Gospels

Blasphemous accusation by the teachers of the law and Pharisees Matthew 12:22-37; Mark 3:20-30

- Evidently the practice of “demonizing” your opponent has been around for a long time.
- Jesus shows even the logical inconsistency of the idea that He was casting out demons through that power of the devil.
- Jesus reveals that a more powerful one has come among them.
- The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is rejecting the witness of God’s Spirit within as He draws us to Himself by revealing truth.
- This is not a sin one stumbles upon.
- Jesus shows that their words reveal the real condition of their heart.

Request for a sign refused Matthew 12:38-42

- Seeking signs from God is a sign of lack of faith.
- God often provides wonderful confirming events as we follow Him.
- God has provided many examples in history of His faithfulness and activity in this world.

Only the transforming work of Christ can set a person totally free. Matthew 12:43-45

- The religious leaders in shutting down the witness of the Spirit of God within were in grave danger of opening their hearts to control by the enemy.

Announcement of new spiritual kinship

Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21

- John 7:5 makes clear that Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him.
- Here they had doubtless become concerned about the growing opposition from the religious leaders.
- Jesus establishes that those who have a true relationship with Him are those who do the will of His Father.

Parables

- Greek *Parabole*-proverb, riddle, comparison, contrast, simple stories, complex stories.
- Hebrew *masal*-means all the above plus, taunt, prophetic oracle or a byword. Any veiled saying intended to stimulate thought.
- English Parable-a short narration with two levels of meaning

Parables

- History
 - Until the end of the 19th century allegorizing was the dominant means of interpretation.
 - Gamut runs from rejection of allegory completely to a purely subjective interpretation governed by the readers own context.

Parables

- Four forms of parables
 - Similitude-an extended simile (uses like or as). It is a comparison relating a typical or recurring event in real life and is often expressed in the present tense. e.g. Matt. 13:31-32
 - Example story-presents a positive or negative character (or both) who serves as an example to be imitated or whose traits and actions are to be avoided. e.g. good Samaritan, rich fool, rich man and Lazarus, the Pharisees and tax collector.

Parables

- Four forms of parables
 - Parable proper-an extended metaphor (an implied comparison) referring to a fictional event or events narrated in past time to express a moral or spiritual truth e.g. Luke 14:15-24
 - Allegory-a series of related metaphors in which each element of the story has a specific meaning. These are easily recognized as Jesus will go back and identify the meaning of each element. The only parables we can treat as an allegory are the ones so identified by Jesus. e.g. Parable of the sower