

JESUS GREATER THAN...

26: Jesus > Greater Than... (Matthew 12:33-50)

Jesus made the incredible claim that He is Greater than anyone or anything, the greatest prophet, priest, or king - the greatest man or woman...*ever*. Is it any wonder that the faith family of Jesus trusts Him and follows Him.

beourguest

Thanks so much for joining us today! Please register with our **CONNECT CARD**.

- Use our **WI-FI: Worship Center Guest**



getourapp

Download our **CHURCH APP** for sermons & notes, ways to connect, upcoming events, online giving, & more.

teachingnotes

Words Are Windows to the Soul

Matthew 12:33-35 (NIV) Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for **a tree is recognized by its fruit**. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For **the mouth speaks what the heart is full of**. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that **everyone** will have to **give account on the day of judgment** for every empty word they have spoken. For **by your words you will be acquitted**, and by your words you will be condemned."

Jesus really isn't talking about TREES, but about PEOPLE. Jesus compares the claims of the Pharisees (**tree**) to the **fruit** they produce. And *the fruit is NOT GOOD*. Jesus calls them a **brood of vipers** - referring to a dozen or more small snakes the emerge from their eggs/mothers, to grow and ambush it's prey.

The mouth speaks what the heart is full of. *What we SAY, shows what's down in our souls.*

- Dirty language, dirty jokes, speaking unkindly to or about others, speaking lies - shows what's 'down in the well' of hearts.
- Clean language, clean jokes, speaking kindly and truthfully to and about others - shows what the soul looks like.
- ② What do the words of the Godly people you know say about their hearts? What about the words of hypocritical or ungodly people you know - what do their words say about their hearts?
- ✓ Our words don't determine our eternal home (heaven or hell), but **our words DO show WHOSE WE ARE - followers of Jesus or not.**

Jude 14-16 (NIV) Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, **the Lord is coming** with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones **to judge everyone**, and to convict all of them of **all the ungodly acts** they have committed in their ungodliness, and of **all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against Him**." These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

- Notice that **grumbling, faultfinding, boasting, and flattering** is all done with **defiant words**.
- ✓ Followers of Jesus should be known for responding to Jesus with **obedient words**, being *thankful & encouraging* others, speaking **humbly & truthfully**. What we SAY, shows what's down in our soul.

Show Us A Sign

Matthew 12:38-41 (NIV) Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see **a sign** from you." He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for **a sign!** But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so **the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**."

Jesus hadn't given enough convincing proofs already? No other signs will convince them, which is why Jesus calls them a **wicked and adulterous generation**. There is only one **sign** that Jesus will show - *a future sign* which could only be denied by those who refused to believe the evidence - **the sign of Jonah**.

- Just as Jonah was delivered from the **fish**, Jesus - **the Son of Man** - would be delivered from the grave.

Most scholars say the phrase, "**three days and three nights** was a Jewish idiom referring to any part of 3 Jewish days (even if it's just one hour).

JESUS DIES & BURIED	JESUS IN TOMB	JESUS IN TOMB UNTIL...
FRIDAY LATE AFTERNOON	FRIDAY SUNDOWN- SATURDAY SUNDOWN	SATURDAY SUNDOWN - SUNDAY MORNING
DAY 1 CRUCIFIXION	DAY 2 SABBATH	DAY 3 RISEN!

A Greater Prophet

The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now **something greater than Jonah is here**.

When the people of **Nineveh** listened to the **preaching of Jonah** (with no miraculous signs) and heard the warning of judgment, **they repented** of their sins. Jesus demonstrated much convincing evidence of His authority. Yet, despite the powerful **preaching** and multitude of miracles of Jesus, many who heard and saw Jesus did not repent of their sin. Jesus rising from the dead would prove that He was **greater than Jonah**. Yet many from **this generation** would still refuse to repent.

A Greater King

Matthew 12:42 (NIV)

The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now **something greater than Solomon is here**.

The Queen of Sheba (SE of Israel in lower Arabia) traveled some 1,200 miles including crossing the Arabian Desert¹ to **listen to Solomon's wisdom**, the wisest king who ever lived. Her caravan of camels brought treasures of spices, vast amounts of gold, and precious stones - as gifts to honor the wisdom of King Solomon (2 Chr 9:1-12).

Jesus claims that **now something greater than Solomon is here**. *Who would have made that claim and been able to back it up?*

BIG TRUTH: Jesus is Greater than anyone or anything

Jesus is **greater** than any *prophet* (like Jonah), *priest* (like those who served in the temple), or *king* (like King David or King Solomon)!

✗ Many Jews did NOT respond to Jesus in repentance, like the pagan Ninevites responded to **Jonah**.

✗ Many Jews did NOT seek & listen to the wisdom of Jesus as the pagan **Queen** of Sheba had done with **Solomon**.

✗ Many Jews lived clean lives by following rabbinical rules, instead of turning from their sin and trusting Jesus.

Cleaning a Vacant House

Matthew 12:43-45 (NIV) When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds **the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order**. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.

The number **seven**, typically a *symbol for perfection* OR *completion*, probably represents **complete domination by demons**. But Jesus isn't talking as much about demonic possession of people as He is drawing a picture of those who seemed to live clean lives (e.g. Pharisees), but refused to allow their soul to be filled by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.

This is exactly what the Pharisees were encouraging the people to do, *sweep your house, put it in order, follow the biblical laws and the rabbinical rules, but DON'T allow your house to be occupied by Jesus, this false messiah*.

Those who followed the Pharisees would be held accountable for rejecting their Messiah who came to make them **CLEAN**. Instead, they would live like they were clean - right with God - even though they weren't. Their religious self-righteousness left them in a **condition** that was **worse than the first**, *thinking they are clean, when they weren't*.

Matthew 12:46-47 (NIV) While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, **his mother and brothers** stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "**Your mother and brothers** are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

Mark's gospel gives us some insight that Matthew doesn't mention.

Mark 3:20-21 (NIV) Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When **his family** heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they **said, "He is out of his mind."**

Two of these brothers (James & Jude) later became followers of Jesus, believing Him to be the Messiah.

Family First?

Matthew 12:48-50 (NIV) He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"

Pointing to his disciples, he said, "**Here are my mother and my brothers**. For **whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother**."

Jesus didn't put his own family in a place of prominence. Instead, he told needy people around Him that *THEY could be His family!*

• While Jesus certainly loved his family and His **mother**, He NEVER told His followers to seek their help in prayer. If you've been told to seek Mary's help in prayer - this is FALSE. That is NEVER, EVER taught by Jesus, nor His apostles, & is not found in the Scriptures.

If you are a follower of Jesus, then WE are FAMILY!

② Wondering if you are part of the family of Jesus...(check the fruit from your tree). **Do you KNOW the will of your Father in heaven?** - **Do you DO the will of your Father in heaven?**

BIG TRUTH: Jesus is Greater than anyone or anything

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., Matthew, vol. 2, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 331.

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!

* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156), **Mark & Dot Mancil** (850-253-5405), **Boss & Amelia Mulkey** (850-464-6717), or **Tom & Martha Waddail** (850-973-0011).

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you *most* from today's teaching?
2. **Read Matthew 12:33-37 & Jude 14-16.** While many church folks are quick to call out sexual sin, theft, and such, why is it that few people talk about what comes out of our mouths as seriously? What do our words say about our heart condition? Does it scare you to give an account for what you say on the day of judgment?
3. **Read Matthew 12:38-42.** What "sign" was Jesus saying would later occur to prove His authority? Discuss and compare how the Ninevites responded to Jonah's message, how the Queen of the South responded to King Solomon, and how the Jewish people responded to Jesus.
4. **Read Matthew 12:43-45.** Why was Jesus using this demonic illustration as a picture of what was happening with the people He referred to as "the wicked generation"? Have you ever known someone who lived such a good life that they did not see their need to repent of sin and turn to Jesus? If so, tell us the story (without using names if known to your family/group).
5. **Read Matthew 12:46-50.** While our families should be our first ministry, how should followers of Jesus view/treat other Christians? Share about some Christian brothers/sisters who are dear to you and why.
6. What does God want YOU to do with what we studied today?
7. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.