

## 2. Jesus' Authority

### WEEK 4

7. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?
8. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?
9. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Matthew 12:25-29; Mark 3:23-27; Luke 11:17-22 (NKJV)

25 Knowing their thoughts, He told them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is headed for destruction, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, who is it your sons drive them out by? For this reason they will be your judges. 28 If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you. 29 How can someone enter a strong man's house and steal his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house. Matt 12:25-29 (HCSB)

25 Jesus confronted their slander. "A judge who gives opposite verdicts on the same person cancels himself out; a family that's in a constant squabble disintegrates; 26 if Satan banishes Satan, is there any Satan left? 27 If you're slinging devil mud at me, calling me a devil kicking out devils, doesn't the same mud stick to your own exorcists? 28 "But if it's by God's power that I am sending the evil spirits packing, then God's kingdom is here for sure. 29 How in the world do you think it's possible in broad daylight to enter the house of an awake, able-bodied man and walk off with his possessions unless you tie him up first? Tie him up, though, and you can clean him out. Matt 12:25-29 (MSG)

### *Reflections:*

The context of this passage was Jesus healing a blind, deaf man who was possessed with a demon. The Pharisees accused him of doing this through the power of Satan. One of the amazing things about this passage for me is that fact that Jesus knew the Pharisees thoughts as He began addressing them. They were always trying to find ways to discredit Him. However, in this case, Jesus took the offensive and began asking them questions. Eugene Petersen's "The Message" states it in everyday language: Matthew 12:27 If you're slinging devil mud at me, calling me a devil kicking out devils, doesn't the same mud stick to your own exorcists? 28 "But if it's by God's power that I am sending the evil spirits packing, then God's kingdom is here for sure."

Jesus had a way of asking practical questions like how can you steal a strong man's goods unless you first bind the strong man. I think this helped his listeners understand the points he was trying to make. In some ways, the Pharisees could handle the questions of Jesus better than dealing with his breaking the rules...like healing someone on the Sabbath. However, Jesus' authority would not be shaken by their questions or by keeping their man-made rules.

Perhaps one lesson we can learn is allowing the questions of the Bible and the questions of Jesus to penetrate our hearts and change us from within.

### *Questions to Ponder:*

- a. Is it ever appropriate to be on the offensive with your enemies when defending the gospel?
- b. Are you ever intimidated when someone asks you a question about your faith?
- c. How do you feel when you don't know the answer to a Biblical question?

### *Prayer*

Lord, give us faith this day, not be afraid of asking the hard questions about our faith. Lord, give us courage to live with not knowing all the answers. Amen.