

## Luke 11:14-28 home group questions

By Phil Bailey

**Theme:** in Jesus, the kingdom of God arrives, overpowering Satan and plundering his kingdom.

**Aim:** Hear and obey the Word of God continually to safely enter and remain in Jesus' kingdom.

- 1) Why do we need Jesus to rescue us from Satan's kingdom? Why couldn't we rescue ourselves? *Ephesians 2:1-10 summarizes this more neatly than any one place in Luke's gospel*
- 2) Where do you think you would be if Jesus, the stronger man, had not rescued you from Satan's kingdom? What sort of trajectory was your life on before you were saved (if you can remember)?

Spend some time giving thanks in prayer for Jesus' saving work in each other's lives.

- 3) How does this passage (and the sermon) warn us against complacency in the Christian life? *See note on vv.24-26 below if you need your memory jogging.*

Where do you most need to heed those warnings?

- 4) Taking Luke 3:16 and 11:13 into account, we see that Jesus and the Father give the Holy Spirit to fill the void left by the devil when he or his minions are driven out of a person's life. How is this a comfort?
- 5) Increasing numbers of people in the UK engage with the spiritual realm through witchcraft, the occult, and many other practices. As they do so, they open themselves up to more overt demonic influences, including demon possession. What confidence should this passage give us if and when we encounter overt signs of demonic influence in a person's life?
- 6) Compare Luke 10:17 and Mark 9:28-29 in their contexts. How might these help us if and when we encounter those harassed or possessed by demons?

N.B. it was admittedly a careless over-generalisation to suggest in the sermon that everything about the European Enlightenment was demonically influenced. Concerns for things like equality between human beings and freedom from oppressive and corrupt government were good. They even rested upon Christian assumptions about human dignity! But things like the exaltation of human reason above all other authorities, the denial of human sinfulness and assumption that we are basically good, and the growing exclusion of God and the spiritual realm from our understanding of the world, were all deeply unhelpful.

A note on vv.24-26. The warning here applies primarily to those delivered from demon possession, but who then fail to hear and obey the word of God from Jesus, leaving themselves wide open to further spiritual attack. But these verses also apply in a secondary sense to those who encounter God's kingdom through things like the preached word, the witness of individual Christians, or who experience something of God's power and presence among his people. Again, if they receive these benefits from Jesus and don't act upon them by hearing and obeying (v.28), they miss the opportunity for salvation and remain under the devil's tyrannical rule. Similarly, there is some application to people who appear to be Christians, but who don't *continue* to hear and obey the word. If they unwittingly allow the devil to lead them astray, they'll be much worse off than if they'd never believed (e.g. Hebrews 6:4-7 and 2 Peter 2, especially vv.17-22). Their hearts are perhaps like the rocky or thorny soil in the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:1-15). Finally, there is also a warning for Christians. Though Jesus elsewhere assures us that he will not drive away any who come to him and he will not lose any whom the Father has given to him (John 6:35-40), it is ultimately for him to know who is elect and not us. So we must be warned against complacency if we do not want to end up like those who fall away. The warnings are part of how he keeps us persevering. And we do well to remember the example of King David, who did not ultimately fall away, but went far astray when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and had Uriah murdered. Though forgiven, he suffered serious consequences for these sins for the rest of his life. So we must remain vigilant against all the devil's deceptions and attempts to regain a foothold in us. John Calvin's commentary on Matthew, Mark and Luke (freely available online) has many useful things to say on these verses.