

**Jesus' First Trial—Part 7**  
**"Religion vs. Relationship"**  
**Matthew 12:43-50**

I. **An U\_\_\_\_\_ Parable (v. 43-45)**

- a. What is the Context:
  - i. Jesus had just cast out a demon
  - ii. His defense alluded to a man's soul as a demon's house
  - iii. Even though the Pharisees were zealously and meticulously religious, they were the lost and evil generation
- b. What Happens:
  - i. An **unclean spirit** (a demon) leaves a man, but we aren't told why
  - ii. He finds no **rest**, so he decides to **return to my house** (the man's soul)
    1. Demons seem to prefer humans and animals to being disembodied spirits (cf. Matt. 8:28-34)
  - iii. The man has cleaned up his life leaving his soul **unoccupied, swept, and put in order**
    1. Many of the people Jesus healed and cast demons out of were not saved (cf. Luke 17:11-19)
    2. A soul that is not occupied by Jesus' Holy Spirit is vulnerable
    3. If someone fixes themselves, they are often in even greater danger because of a deadly self-reliance (cf. 2 Peter 2:20-22)
  - iv. The demon returns with **seven other spirits more wicked than itself**
    1. The man ends up **worse than the first**
- c. What does it mean: **That is the way it will also be with this evil generation**
  - i. Israel is the man, and while John the Baptist and Jesus were there, they cleaned themselves up

- ii. But the **house** of their hearts was still empty and in love with their worldly man-made Religion
- iii. And after Jesus leaves it will be worse for them, both temporally and eternally

II. **An U\_\_\_\_\_ Promise (v. 46-50)**

- a. Jesus had four half-brothers (**James, Joseph, Simon and Judas**) and at least 2 sisters and they did not believe in Him (Matt. 13:55; cf. Mark 3:31; 6:3; Luke 8:19-21; John 7:3-5)
- b. They probably came to Him because they were afraid **'He has lost His senses.'** (Mark 3:21; *Mere Christianity*, 55-56)
- c. Jesus did not disrespect His family; He taught that it doesn't matter who we are in relationship with through our blood, but instead Who we are in relationship with through His blood!
- d. Jesus ends this difficult chapter with a Promise: **<sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.**
  - i. This is not referring to a works-based salvation, because Grace & Faith are the Root of Salvation and works are the Fruit of Salvation (Eph. 2:8-10; cf. John 1:13; Rom. 12:1; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:17-18; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18; Heb. 13:20-21; James 1:18; 1 Peter 2:13-15; 1 John 2:17)
  - ii. Jesus is referring to God's will/desire that all men repent, believe, and be saved (cf. Ezek. 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9; John 6:39-40; Matt. 18:14)
  - iii. And when they do, Jesus is promising that they will become a part of God's forever family!