

**Jesus' Final Trial—Part 5**  
**"Evil Hearts or Brood of Vipers"**  
**Matthew 12:33-37**

**I. A Standard (v. 33)**

- a. A **tree** and **its fruit** are common imagery in Scripture (Matt. 7:15-20; cf. Deut. 13:1-3; 18:22; Luke 3:8-14; 6:43-46; John. 15:8-10; Eph. 5:9-12; Col. 1:10; Titus 1:16; James 3:17-18; 1 John. 4:1-3, 7-11)
  - i. A redeemed heart is right with God and therefore its **fruit** is **good**
  - ii. An unredeemed heart is separated from God and therefore its **fruit** is **bad**
- b. Jesus is calling the Pharisees out because their Blaspheming of the Holy Spirit proves that their heart is **bad**
  - i. This is meant to bring conviction and repentance because only faith in Jesus Christ can make a heart **good**
- c. Everyone must make a decision, for there are only two paths you can go by (cf. Matt. 7:13-14; Rom 1:24-32)

**II. A Charge (v. 34-35)**

- a. **brood of vipers** is another way of calling the Pharisees the children of Satan (cf. Matt. 3:7; 23:32-33; Gen. 3; Acts 28:3, 6)
- b. Children of Satan are **evil** and therefore cannot **speak what is good** (John 8:44)
- c. Jesus' charge is not harsh or mean; it is graciously loving because to leave someone in their sin is hate!
- d. Our **hearts** are a **treasure** storeroom of our thoughts and sins; when we **speak**, we bring out whatever is overflowing (cf. Matt. 7:16, 20; 15:18-19; Mark 7:18-23; Luke 6:44; James 3:12)
  - i. **heart = kardia (καρδία)** = "the inner self, the volition, the mind, the desires"
  - ii. **treasure = thēsauros (θησαυρός)** = "storeroom or treasure box"

**III. A Warning (v. 36-37)**

- a. Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater that every sin will be ultimately judged, especially the Pharisees Blasphemy of the Spirit!
- b. Even the most **careless** words will be accounted for
  - i. **careless = argos (ἀργός)** = "without thought, indifferent, lazy, useless"
- c. Your judgment will be **by your words**
  - i. Everyone's sins will be paid for; either by themselves in hell for eternity, or by Jesus on Calvary's Cross; what matters is your faith!
  - ii. All unbelievers, who refuse to repent and follow Jesus, will be resurrected for the Great White Throne Judgment and because their names will not be in the Lamb's book of life, they will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15)
  - iii. All believers have already been judged by Jesus and declared righteous by their faith (Rom. 10:8-11)