

21. Rebellion against God's principles, power and God Himself

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When we hear the words such as, "Renegade," or "Maverick," somehow we think it is a cool thing to be that. Certainly, Hollywood made many heroes to be renegades or mavericks. They don't go by the rules of the authority.

The Webster's Dictionary defines "Maverick" as:

1. An unbranded range animal, especially a calf that has become separated from its mother, traditionally considered the property of the first person who brands it.
2. One that refuses to abide by the dictates of or resists adherence to a group; a dissenter.

The words "Renegade" and "Maverick" have a ring to it and we kinda like them. Why? Because, in a way, we are all renegades and mavericks in our hearts. That is why the Bible tells us that mankind are sinners, because we walked away from God's authority and love in rebellion to make our own.

We are going to see what Jesus talks about the rebellion of mankind.

A. REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S PRINCIPLES

Matthew 12:1-8 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet (1) I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. (2) For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

What Jesus' disciples did was not against Sabbath law by God. It was against the Pharisees' rules and regulations. Jesus deliberately violated their Sabbath traditions on several occasions.

The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. God made Sabbath for men, not men for Sabbath. Religion is made by men, not by God. God desires for relationship which comes from the heart, not religion which is nothing more than self-made sacrifice of humanistic value.

We are going to find several verses mentioned the supremacy of Jesus Christ in this chapter. That is why I asked you to underline and number them.

Jehovah's Witness claims that Jesus had never claimed to be God. They have to eat their words because of this phrase: "*For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.*" Jesus is claiming His deity. There is only One who instituted Sabbath on men. He is God. And Jesus is the Lord of Sabbath, so Jesus is God.

Matthew 12:9-14 Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"--that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.

At best, the religious leaders saw the man with the withered hand as a test case. It is more likely that they saw the man as bait for a Sabbath controversy trap for Jesus. In contrast, Jesus looked at the man through eyes of compassion. Jesus exposes their hypocrisy by showing their greater concern for their own possessions than for a man in need.

Pharisees are so bounded by their own rules and regulations that they would ignore God's law which tells us not to murder. They could care less about a crippled man being healed, because the day of healing broke their rules. The bottom line of their irritation for being challenged is not about keeping Sabbath in their own way. Once their authority gets challenged, there would be more to come against them. That threatens their social status, they didn't like it one bit.

How about us? Do we get irritated if God invades our comfort zone? How do we react if the Lord makes us to change our schedule or tell us to do something for others? Do we rebel in our hearts and try to reason with Him? Let's ask ourselves.

Matthew 12:15-21 But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name gentiles will trust."

Jesus kept a low profile as it was prophesied in Isaiah 42:1-4 as the gentle character of Messiah. The prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament were kept incredibly accurate.

B. REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S POWER

Matthew 12:22-30 Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon

you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

In spite of all the miracles Jesus performed, the Pharisees tried to make Him to be a mere man with demonic power.

Jesus pointed out that their statement was illogical and impractical. Why would Satan fight against himself?

Jesus removes illusions about any "neutral ground" in regard to His ministry. If you aren't for Him, you are against Him.

Matthew 12:31-32 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

One of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible. Jesus made it clear that all sins can be forgiven. Adultery, murder, blasphemy, and other sins can all be forgiven. They are not unpardonable. It has nothing to do with using the name of the Holy Spirit in vain, but has everything to do with rejecting ever-inviting hands of the Holy Spirit who leads us to the Cross and the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 12:33-37 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Jesus points out that the Pharisees are evil from inside and they are doomed by their own words.

Our words reveal our hearts. How many times has a person said something that perfectly revealed their heart, and then said, "That's not what I meant!" when it was exactly what they meant!

C. REBELLION AGAINST GOD HIMSELF

Matthew 12:38-42 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and (3) indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and (4) indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

The Pharisees challenged Jesus to show a sign of His authenticity after He healed so many people from their diseases, gave sight to the blinds, open the mouths of mute and raised the dead. Did you notice that some of their peers called Jesus as a demon powered man? Now they wanted Him to show them more miracles to prove that He is from God.

In my opinion, they have seen enough signs to believe Jesus. They were not seeking Jesus, but trying to trap him. Jesus gave them two illustrations: Jonah and the Queen of the Sheba. Even if miracles by Jesus happen in front of their eyes every half second, they wouldn't believe Him, because their hearts were hardened.

Would this be still true? Yes, I see many Christian ministries on Christian TV emphasize on miracles, signs and wonders, as if they are the ones who are worthy enough to perform miracles, and they forget the miracle Giver Jesus Christ.

Matthew 12:43-45 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

This portion of the verses applies so much to those who are addicted to any type of bondages, such as, alcohol, illegal drugs or overused prescribed drugs, gambling, pornography and so on. After they come out of those bondages, they must fill their hearts with the Word of God. Otherwise, the latter stage will be worse than before.

Matthew 12:46-50 While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and 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 was not rejecting His family relationship with His mother and brother. But He was using this situation to tell us that whoever does the will of our Father in heaven is His true family. That is His will, not our will.

The Roman Catholic idea of the perpetual virginity of Mary is in contradiction to the plain teaching of the Bible.

A group of archaeologists found a box that contains a document has a name, 'Judas' or also known as 'Jude.' The documents says, "Judas, a son of Joseph, a brother of Jesus." It turned out to be the half brother of Jesus who wrote the Book of Jude.

D. APPLICATIONS

1) As we studied, if you are not for Jesus, that means you are the enemy of Jesus, the Son of God, who is God Himself.

When we become born-again Christians, we identify ourselves with our Lord Jesus's death and resurrection. There is no such a thing is a Christian, but not a born-again Christian. If you are not a born-again Christian, you are not a Christian at all. Forget about what you have done for the church or how many times you have attend

the church services. You are an enemy of God. I don't believe I have to tell you where your eternal destiny is going to be, unless you come to Him to receive Him into your heart.

2) We should not put our emphasis on miracles, but the miracle Giver.

Let's remember, satan imitates miracles too. Miracle should not be the source of our faith.

3) We are accountable for what we hear and how we decide.

Wrong choices we make are nobody's fault except our own.

4) Rebellion to God is as the sin of witchcraft.

We might think it is fun to be rebellious, but there is a price to pay. It is not fun.

1Sam. 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king.