



THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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THE DANGER OF TURNING BACK

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We want to take our Scripture text from **Matthew 12: 43-45**, *"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return to my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."* I want to begin today by asking you a simple question: do you intend to overcome evil? If so, it is imperative you replace that evil with good or else, as Jesus warns, the evil may return with its friends, producing more evil than you could ever imagine. When I was a young pastor, I was once admonished by a now deceased Minister friend, the Reverend George Offard: *"David, it is mandatory that you keep the coffin lid of your old life nailed shut so that Adam can never get out."* My dear friend went on to tell me: *"David, if Adam ever gets out of the coffin he will cause you more problems in one day that you can fix in a lifetime."* I was about 30 years of age when he made that statement to me; 34 years later I still remember it. Satan will do everything in his power to trick you and deceive you so that he may perpetually mar and disfigure your life. Jesus warns us to persevere in our journey of faith. That can be hard to do, when everything in us sometimes wants to quit. It is like the long-distance runner who is exhausted, and

tired, and wants to drop out of the marathon. We must be in this race for the duration because it is not a sprint, but a marathon. This is why Christ says to us in **Matthew 24:13**, *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* I want to emphasize the word saved here. The Greek word for saved is **Sozo #4982** and it means: *the future deliverance of believers at the second coming of Christ*. It will be at the second coming of Jesus Christ when the believer finally lays down this old corruptible body and it is raised or changed into an incorruptible one. The emphasis is placed upon enduring until the end. Besides, you may not realize it right now, but you have already covered too many miles in this race and you dare not turn back having come this far. That is Satan's master plan concerning every believer: he wants us to turn back, knowing we have covered so many miles in our pilgrimage. Satan does not want you thinking soberly concerning your pilgrimage and journey. He wants to create havoc within your life so as to get you discouraged so that you will ultimately quit before you finish the race. Hell is filled with those whose lives have been pillaged and plundered by Satan; not knowing neither understanding how close they were to the finish line. This is why we are admonished by Solomon found here in **Proverbs 27:1**, *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."* For all we know, some of us may have an appointment with God Almighty

before the sun sets. The individual in our Scripture text once came to the knowledge of Christ because the unclean spirit was gone out of the man. We now see as the unclean spirit walking through dry places, seeking rest for his weariness, but he finds none. In verse 44 we witness the contemplation and stratagem of the demon as he speaks to himself concerning his desire for re-possession. Just as you think within yourself, this demon also thinks within himself. The demon says to himself, I will return unto the house from whence I came out. The problem with this convert or believer is when the demon returns, the demon finds the earthen clay jar or vessel empty, swept, and garnished. What I find so disturbing is the word *garnished* here in the Greek: it means specifically, *to snuff as in a wick*. The fact that his wick has been snuffed out demonstrates the backslidden condition of this individual, because the wick or better yet the candle of the Lord has been snuffed out. The Bible declares in **Proverbs 20: 27**, *"The spirit (breath of God) of man is the candle (or lamp) of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly."* Because the spirit of God dwells in every believer they now have a candle or a lamp which deals with their conscience regarding each and every portion of their lives. Jesus warns the church in Ephesus that if they do not repent of their sins he will remove the candlestick out of his place. Please read with me here in **Revelation 2: 4-5**, *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee,*

because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. This is exactly what happened to the individual found here in our Scripture text. The candlestick of the Lord had been removed or snuffed out in this person's life. This allowed the demon an open door concerning repossession. This is why every believer must continue to seek the Lord so as to keep their cup running over so there is no room for anything else than the spirit of the Lord to fill our lives. If you take a cup and place it in a sink and turn the spigot on and it begins to fill and to overflow with water it is absolutely impossible to pour anything else into that cup. The overflowing of water will not allow anything else in the cup. But just as surely as you turn the spigot off and drink some of the water; there is now room in the cup for something else. Now you can understand why David rejoiced in ***Psalms 23:5, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: without anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."*** If your cup is running over there can be no room for Satan to set up shop within your life. Stopping short of finishing your race will bring certain disaster. It is a terrible thing to fall away; however, this is Satan's ultimate desire for each of us. After receiving Christ as your Lord and Savior, Satan now seeks your demise. If you do not fill your cup with the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, you're making room for the devil and his minions. We are warned in ***Ephesians 4:27, "Neither give place to the devil."*** For Satan to be afforded an opportunity to retake possession of anyone's life they must give him place or make room for him.

It is evidenced by our Scripture text the lamp of God went out in this individual's life and not only did the demon return but he brought seven more demons with him. When you add the one demon with seven more you come up with the number eight. The number eight in biblical numerology simply means, "*new beginnings.*" Because of this new beginning, Jesus says the last state of the individual is far worse than the first. When anyone gives place to the devil and allows him the opportunity for repossession, it is only natural for that person's life to be far worse than their beginning. The reason being is because this individual once tasted of the goodness of God and has now disregarded His Word and His shed blood. Therefore the last state of that person is far worse because they once experienced the very essence of God within their lives. I know many believe you cannot lose your salvation, but that doctrine is so erroneous. How can one embrace that heresy when reading ***2nd Peter 2:20-22, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge (forgiveness of sins) of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again (their own entanglements); and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."*** This passage of Scripture is one of the most profound passages that clearly teaches anyone having been born again through the blood of Jesus Christ and then returning back to the dregs and wretchedness of sin will be

eternally lost. Peter warns the Christian after they have come to the knowledge of Christ Jesus and they again become entangled with sin: then their soul will be lost eternally because they were overtaken by their besetting sins. Peter goes on to say their latter end is far worse than their beginning. This is what happened to this individual in our Scripture text. They became born again, but somewhere along the way they suffered the candle or lamp of God to go out. Once that happened the demon came back and brought seven more demons with him and reclaimed that person's soul. No wonder we are warned in ***Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*** I admonish you today: do not toy or play with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. You can read what happened to Eli and his sons when they allowed the lamp to go out in the temple of God: ***1st Sam. 3:1-21.*** If you haven't already registered I strongly encourage you to register for our upcoming conference April 5-7, 2019. This year's theme is called "***The Age of Deception.***" Again, we want to thank you for your generous love and support for the ministry.

Serving With You All,

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