

# Wednesday with the Word @ Wheat Street Baptist Church

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## Good or Evil: Reading the Signs

### A Tree and Its Fruit: Do we believe what we see?

Matthew 12:33-37

**33** A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. **34** You are a bunch of evil snakes, so how can you say anything good? Your words show what is in your hearts. **35** Good people bring good things out of their hearts, but evil people bring evil things out of their hearts. **36** I promise you that on the day of judgment, everyone will have to account for every careless word they have spoken. **37** On that day they will be told that they are either innocent or guilty because of the things they have said.

Why don't we believe what we see?

Why do we discount what we hear?

How do we discern and then discriminate (create distance / mark / watch out for / label) between that which is evil and that which is good?

### 2nd Timothy 4:9-18

**9** Come to see me as soon as you can. **10** Demas loves the things of this world so much that he left me and went to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia. **11** Only Luke has stayed with me. Mark can be very helpful to me, so please find him and bring him with you. **12** I sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

**13** When you come, bring the coat I left at Troas with Carpus. Don't forget to bring the scrolls, especially the ones made of leather.

**14** Alexander, the metalworker, has hurt me in many ways. But the Lord will pay him back for what he has done. **15** Alexander opposes what we preach. You had better watch out for him.

**16** When I was first put on trial, no one helped me. In fact, everyone deserted me. I hope it won't be held against them. **17** But the Lord stood beside me. He gave me the strength to tell his full message, so that all Gentiles would hear it. And I was kept safe from hungry lions. **18** The Lord will always keep me from being harmed by evil, and he will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. Praise him forever and ever! Amen.

What do we see Paul doing here? Who is he calling out and why?

What is Paul saying about the Lord?

### **Good Fruit: The Fruit of the Spirit - the signs...we should see!**

#### **Galatians 5:16-26**

**16** If you are guided by the Spirit, you won't obey your selfish desires. **17** The Spirit and your desires are enemies of each other. They are always fighting each other and keeping you from doing what you feel you should. **18** But if you obey the Spirit, the Law of Moses has no control over you.

**19** People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. **20** They worship idols, practice witchcraft, hate others, and are hard to get along with. People become jealous, angry, and selfish. They not only argue and cause trouble, but they are **21** envious. They get drunk, carry on at wild parties, and do other evil things as well. I told you before, and I am telling you again: No one who does these things will share in the blessings of God's kingdom.

**22** God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, **23** gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways.

**24** And because we belong to Christ Jesus, we have killed our selfish feelings and desires. **25** God's Spirit has given us life, and so we should follow the Spirit. **26** But don't be conceited or make others jealous by claiming to be better than they are.

What do you see in you?

What do you need to work on or increase?

What do you see in others?

Do you ignore what you see (in them and you)?

### **The Battle In Me**

#### **Romans 7:13-17**

**13** Am I saying that something good caused my death? Certainly not! It was sin that killed me by using something good. Now we can see how terrible and evil sin really is.

**14** We know that the Law is spiritual. But I am merely a human, and I have been sold as a slave to sin. **15** In fact, I don't understand why I act the way I do. I don't do what I know is right. I do the things I hate. **16** Although I don't do what I know is right, I agree that the Law is good. **17** So I am not the one doing these evil things. The sin that lives in me is what does them.

### **The Battle & The Victory**

Identify your battles and then engage in spiritual warfare:

\*Prayer

\*Fasting

- \*Solitude
- \*Meditate on God's Word
- \*Spend time in silent reflection
- \*Sing spiritual songs
- \*Read God's Word
- \*Study God's Word
- \*Serve God in Ministry
- \*Faithfully Participate in Worship with your whole heart
- \*Speak to evil, cast it out, talk back to temptation, engage in the battle for your mind
- \*Find support and support groups when necessary
- \*Seek professional help / counseling when necessary

### **A Sign from Heaven: Faith is Your Sign - if you have faith!**

#### **Matthew 12:38-42**

**38** Some Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses said, "Teacher, we want you to show us a sign from heaven."

**39** But Jesus replied:

You want a sign because you are evil and won't believe! But the only sign you will get is the sign of the prophet Jonah. **40** He was in the stomach of a big fish for three days and nights, just as the Son of Man will be deep in the earth for three days and nights.

**41** On the day of judgment the people of Nineveh will stand there with you and condemn you. They turned to God when Jonah preached, and yet here is something far greater than Jonah. **42** The Queen of the South will also stand there with you and condemn you. She traveled a long way to hear Solomon's wisdom, and yet here is something much greater than Solomon.

They are looking at Jesus and they want a sign. They can't see what God is showing them. They refuse to see because they are evil because they refuse to believe. People of no faith or little faith always want a sign and even when they get a sign they still don't believe. They don't believe the written word, the preached word or the lived word. When we sit around and or listen to evil it can mess us up. Their lack of faith attacks our faith. We find it hard to believe when we sit around evil folk who don't believe. As a believer you have to watch the company you keep. You have to be careful who let speak into your life. You have to choose who you listen to because their deposit in you will affect you, your faith and your journey.

Who is it you need to spend less time around?

Who is it that you need to stop listening to, fighting with and getting into arguments with?

How do you shut them down before they shut you up?

Return of an Evil Spirit: Evil Doesn't Retreat  
Matthew 12:43-45

**43** When an evil spirit leaves a person, it travels through the desert, looking for a place to rest. But when the demon doesn't find a place, **44** it says, "I will go back to the home I left." When it gets there and finds the place empty, clean, and fixed up, **45** it goes off and finds seven other evil spirits even worse than itself. They all come and make their home there, and the person ends up in worse shape than before. That's how it will be with you evil people of today.