



The King in Conflict Pt 7: Let Us Gather with Him!

July 28, 2019

Holy Text: Matthew 12:30

1. Our verse is best understood in context of spiritual war...of the LORD entering the strongman's house and spoiling his goods. There can be no truce!
2. This declaration of **zero neutrality** has to do with the great spiritual battle we've been discussing: the truth of Christ being the unique Son of God, the war for God's holiness, and the conflict over the deliverance of precious human souls made in the image of God! In this fight, there can be no unprejudiced, nonpartisan territory!
3. On that Great Day, there will be no purgatory...no **middle** ground! (Matt 25:31-34, 41, 46)
4. Now let us be clear: what is not being said is as important as what is being said. This verse isn't saying...
 - That there is nothing **amoral**; most "things" are! (Cars, money, homes, nature, etc.)
 - That believers should not strive to live in peace with all; we must try! (Rom 12:18; Heb 12:14)
 - That saints cannot involve themselves in the necessary means of life: we do! (Jer 29:5-7) These necessary means aren't evil. Homes and cars, the right handling of money, and earning a living are all good things.
 - In other words, this text is NOT saying that Christians should totally withdraw from the world! (John 17:14-18)
5. In context, however, our text is clearly declaring that to stand with Christ is to NOT stand with Satan. At a minimum, it might mean that:
 - Believers should take no part in the works of **darkness**! (Eph 5:11-12)
 - Where the battle rages over Christ, believers must hold fast to the **truth**! (1 Tim 3:15-16; 2 Tim 1:13-14)
 - When it comes to spiritual things...things addressed by Scripture...we must **pick** a side! (Ex 32:26; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Jam 1:21-22; Ps 119:30)
 - There is no neutral "white-flag" area when minds and souls are being **influenced** and **disciplined**! Remember, *"... the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."* **2 Corinthians 4:4 (KJV)**

Let us think this last point through:

- Since the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2) wants to keep people blind to the truth, what methods would he use to do that?
- How is a mind influenced? How is a soul trained? How is a heart prepared?
- Where do we get our values and sense of right and wrong? How is a "worldview" developed?
- Upon what do we base what we feel is true? By an objective or subjective standard?
- What did God give us that we might be free from deception?

- By what means does our LORD want the generations saved and taught the truth?
- What sorts of things deeply affect the mind and heart?

Answer these questions and you'll see where the enemy is working hardest!

6. In Scripture, **Spiritual Dichotomy** is the rule, not the exception! (A *dichotomy* is a division or contrast between two things.)
 - There is the old man and the new man; there is no in-between man! (2 Cor 5:17)
 - There is hot or cold; our LORD does not like warm! (Rev 3:15-16)
 - There is light and darkness! (John 1:5; 3:19)
 - There is God and false gods, the LORD and Baal! (1 Kings 18:21)
7. There are blessings for obedience, cursing for disobedience; in Scripture, there is a firm “choose this day whom you will serve” motif. (Deut 30:19-20; Josh 24:15)
8. Even the character of our God speaks to this truth:
 - He is holy and can ultimately tolerate no unrighteousness!
 - He is loving and His love is everlasting!
 - He is just, and therefore His wrath is final!
 - He is omnipotent, with nothing escaping His rule and authority!
 - He is omnipresent, being everywhere at once!
 - He is omniscient, knowing all things!

Applications and Encouragements:

1. Know that there is only one true God and LORD of all; therefore **repent** and **believe** in Jesus! (Mark 1:14-15)
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to do His **sanctifying** work in you (2 Thess 2:13) that we might be better “gatherers” with Him!
 - A passionate pursuit of holiness is gathering; unholiness sounds like scattering.
 - Time in prayer is gathering; prayerlessness leads to scattering.
 - Studying to show oneself approved of God and holding fast to Truth is gathering; a lack of zeal for our LORD and His Word will surely lead to scattering.
 - A love for people and a longing for them to know Christ leads to gathering; indifference to the plight of the lost soul leads to scattering.
 - Being a peacemaker...one who keeps the brethren together is gathering; sowing discord amongst brethren is surely scattering.
3. Resist the **cultural** paradigm of spiritual neutrality! (2 Cor 6:14-18)
4. Tell everyone, including those “stuck in neutral,” that Jesus Christ alone **saves!**

Let us be about the business of gathering with Him! Amen!