



## BLASPHEMY!

1. The Pharisee's accusation against Christ (and against the Holy Spirit) was apparently considered by Jesus to be blasphemous. (Matthew 12:31-32)
2. What does it mean to blaspheme? Here is the Webster 1828:

*To speak of the Supreme Being in terms of impious (unholy, ungodly) irreverence; to revile or speak reproachfully of God, or the Holy Spirit.*

*To speak evil of; to utter abuse or calumny (slander) against; to speak reproachfully of.*

3. In Scripture, blasphemy is a very serious thing. In the OT, the penalty was death. In the NT, we see it result in stern church discipline. Followers of Jesus are given warnings not to promote it with our behavior! (Lev 24:16; 1 Tim 1:20; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Tim 5:14-15)
4. Blasphemy is also in the character of the **devil** (and his beast) (Rev 13:4-5).
5. The Pharisees accusation against our LORD was an attempt to bring reproach upon Him and **slander** Him before the very people he came to save...a devilish act. To speak evil against God and His works is blasphemy. The Pulpit Commentary states:

*To defend their unbelief and to retain their credit with the people they invented the libel that Jesus had cast out devils through the prince of the devils. Thus the work of the Spirit of God was blasphemously attributed to diabolical agency. Thus the blessed Spirit of God was blasphemously confounded with the very devil.*

## HYPOCRISY!

1. In our day, a hypocrite is generally defined as someone who says one thing and does another. But Scriptural hypocrisy is a bit deeper...
2. The Webster 1828 defines a biblical hypocrite like this:

*One who feigns to be what he is not; one who has the form of godliness without the power, or who assumes an appearance of piety and virtue, when he is destitute of true religion.*

*A dissembler; one who assumes a false appearance.*

3. The word *hypokrite* is often used by Jesus to refer to the Pharisees means "an actor, a stage player, a pretender."
4. As we read, the leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy...having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.
5. To put it more bluntly, they were fakes...and deceived fakes at that! Jesus had much more to say about this, pronouncing seven woes upon them. (Matt 23:13-29) The phrase, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" is used by our LORD over and over again!
6. The essence of hypocrisy is **deception**, whether intended or not. Lying is what the devil does! (2 Cor 11:3; Rev 20:2-3)
7. Because they feigned a desire for true righteousness and the coming of the King (whether they intended to fake it or not), their accusation was hypocritical. They could obviously see the power of God and **chose** not to believe. (John 5:37-40)

## ACCUSATION!

1. In the Bible, an accusation has three parts. 1) It is an assumption of the **worst**. 2) It is an attempt to lay **blame** for a crime. 3) It has a **judicial** component.
2. Instead of believing the good about Jesus, they chose to believe evil. Instead of praising God for the deliverance of the possessed man, they attempted to assign hellish blame (Beelzebub) to Jesus.
3. Again, we see that accusation is in the character of Satan (in Hebrew, “an adversary.”)

*Revelation 12:10 (KJV) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

4. Remember, one of the goals of the Pharisees at this point was to see Jesus destroyed. A successful accusation of dealing in demons (witchcraft) carried the death penalty.

*Leviticus 20:26-27 (KJV) And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine. 27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.*

5. The Pharisees’ pattern of accusing and slandering Jesus would continue, eventually accusing the Holy One of blasphemy against God, the very sin they were committing! (John 10:30-33; Matt 23:63-66)

## APPLICATIONS:

1. Let us take care in what we **think, say,** and **do** as it relates to the things of God. We must realize that our thoughts, words, and actions are not only open to God, but can also influence others. (Rom 14:11-12; Matt 15:18-20; 27:20)
2. Let us beware of the leaven of the Pharisees...faking a true **love** for God. Let us learn to be real...naked and open before our King. (Heb 4:12-13)
3. Let us be careful how we **judge** spiritual things, lest we accuse wrongly and find ourselves fighting against God. Bearing false witness is another serious thing! (Exodus 20:16). Therefore, let us:
  - Be quick to hear, slow to speak (Prov 18:13; Jam 1:19)
  - Ask God for wisdom in faith (Jam 1:5-6)
  - Not despise spiritual things (1 Thess 5:19-20)
  - Test all things in light of Scripture (1 Thess 5:21)

Amen!