

**The antagonists return with a stark request: "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you" (Fair enough?)**

- Jesus had just healed and delivered a **blind, mute** man (16 verses ago)
- Before that He healed the man with the **shriveled** hand (12:13)
- Before that He healed two **blind** men at the same time (9:30)
- Before that He raised a girl from the **dead** (9:25)
- Before that He healed a **paralyzed** man (9:6)
- Before that He calmed the **storm** (8:26)
- Before that He cleansed a **leper** (8:3)
  - That is just in the last 4 chapters!
  - And these religious leaders were present for 4/7 (the rest they heard about)

That is why when they come and ask Jesus for a sign He responds by calling them **wicked and adulterous** (v. 39)

- **Wicked** because they were refusing to acknowledge who He was (in spite of clear evidence)
- **Adulterous** because they refused to be faithful to God (should have known better)

**The point is not** that it is wrong in general to seek confirmation or proof when someone claims to be from God

- Their own Scriptures (the OT) warned against false prophets and gave criteria for testing a prophet's validity<sup>1</sup>

**Rather** the situation was that they had **already seen and heard** of Jesus' demonstrations **and yet refused** to acknowledge Him as the Messiah

- This was just plainly indicative of the fact that they **did not want to get on board** with what God was clearly doing ( = **wicked and adulterous**)

**The issue:** The Pharisees has seen so much and **believed/trusted** so little

- They **should have known better** (they had context... Messianic expectations)

As opposed to **Nineveh** and the **Queen of the South** (Sheba) (**vv 41-42**)

- The Ninevites repented at Jonah's preaching and turned to God (**Jonah 3:6-9**, NIV)
- The Queen of Sheba glorified God when she witnessed the wisdom of Solomon (**1 Kings: 10:9**, NIV)
  - "**Something greater than Jonah is here**" + "**Something greater than Solomon is here**"
  - **They had no excuse for not believing!**
  - Therefore, Nineveh and the Queen were witnesses of Judgment against the Pharisees

**There is a warning here for us**

- We who follow Jesus have seen and heard so much
- Admittedly, it may not look like this (though some)
- And still, if we have experienced the forgiveness of sins, then we have become direct participants in the greatest miracle—the Cross
- **Romans 8:32**, NIV
  - If we ever doubt that God loves us and is good... Look at the Cross!
  - **Romans 8:33-35** and **37-39**, NIV

**Why do we then, often **doubt/not trust** God?**

- His Word
- His determination of right from wrong
- His values on things like generosity, sexuality, forgiveness, sacrifice
- His sovereignty
- His care for us
- His plan for us
- What He withholds from us
- His presence in storms
- **Romans 8:28**

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy 18:14-22

It is not only that we are participants in the greatest miracle—but we are also **recipients** of the greatest testimony **(The Scriptures)**

- There we see the faithfulness of God
- There we see the love of God
- There we see the power of God
- There we see the plan of God
- We see God's track record
- = we have no excuse!

And more than by miracles, our faith is actually built up by the Word

- **John 20:27-29**, NASB
- **Romans 10:17**, NASB
- **Hebrews 4:12**, NLT
- **1 Peter 1:23-2:3**, NASB
- **Hebrews 2:1**, NASB
- **Hebrews 3:7-15**, NASB

The Pharisees **should have known better**—in what ways and places and spaces should we “know better”?

**Jesus gives an analogy here that was meant to wake the Pharisees up to their own falsehood and lack of faith**

- **Verses 43-45**
- The point is not about demons... they are just the analogy
- The point is about the life that refuses to actually go God's way—when having enough evidence of God's grace and goodness
  - **Verse 43** = **An impure spirit leaving a person** (Cf. **Evidence** of God's grace and goodness)
  - **Verse 44** = **House that is unoccupied, swept clean and put in order** (The **evidence** of a life that has not fully embraced God)
    - Religious (**swept clean and put in order**) but not fully given to God (**unoccupied**)
    - Cf. **Whitewashed tombs** (playing games with God)
    - **2 Timothy 3:1-5**, NLT
  - **Result** = **verse 45**
    - **2 Peter 2:19-22**, NASB
  - **The point** = if we have experienced God's grace and goodness, we must respond in **true faith**

**What does that response look like?** The next story is positioned perfectly to illustrate that

### **Verses 46-50**

Not so much a rejection of his natural family<sup>2</sup> (half brothers... Cf. **John 7:5**) as it was a **clarification of the true family of God**

- The family of faith—spiritual family
- **“Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my true family”**
  - Not works based: **John 6:35-40**, NASB
  - There is a family code: **Matthew 6:9-10**, NASB
  - There is the doing of God's will: **Ephesians 2:4-10**, NIV
  - There is always a battle of the wills: **“Thy will be done”**

**Jesus did say that there would be one defining sign... (verse 40)**

- His resurrection from the dead!
- **“Jesus was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead!”** (Romans 1:4)
- **Romans 6:4-12**, NLT

When is enough enough? When do our excuses come to an end?

<sup>2</sup> John 19:25–27