

Responding to Obtuse Reactions to Recognizable Gospel Ministry

Luke 11:14-36

October 21st 2018

1. Recognized Release from Satan's Tyranny

A demon's exorcism was one example bystanders observed of Jesus' recognizable and undeniable release of people from living in the tyranny of Satan's kingdom to enter God's Kingdom.

Bystanders can see the Kingdom of God's growth as they witness the Gospel ministry of Jesus' disciples releasing others from the tyranny of Satan's kingdom.

2. Reactions of Obtuse Bystanders

The crowd's reaction to Jesus' public and undeniable release of the man from Satan's kingdom ranged from surprise, slander, skepticism to simpleminded exuberance.

Many who witness the releasing impact of Gospel ministry will explain away what they see, call it a one-off, or interpret it to fit their misguided beliefs, anything but believe.

3. Response to Bystanders' Obtuse Reactions

- Slanderers
- Skeptics
- Simpleminded Exuberant
- Spiritual Blindness

Jesus responded to the slanderous and skeptical with persuasive logic, the woman's substandard response with redirection to faithful obedience and called them all on their spiritual blindness behind their reactions.

- Jesus' goal was to get them to carefully listen and obey
- Jesus used examples familiar to the crowd
- Jesus used the truth that they knew to be true

God works through disciples' Spirit enabled challenging of bystanders' thinking with familiar examples and with what the bystander knows to be true to move them towards faith and obedience to Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. In addition to a witnessed exorcism of a mute demon, what are other things resulting from Gospel ministry in Jesus' name that bystanders may be surprised by?
2. How may today's bystanders try to explain away or diminish what they have observed as being God's power working through us in Jesus' name as his disciples?
3. What may be some additional proofs that skeptics may demand to prove that Jesus is the real deal?
4. An individual is quite exuberant about what they see and hear of Gospel ministry in the local church they have begun to attend. However, rather than responding in faith and obedience to the Gospel they misinterpret what they see as fitting in with their new age style of Buddhism. What could you say to help redirect this person's reaction towards more careful listening and obedience to the Gospel?
5. Bystanders at work have seen an incredible transformation in Frank's life as a result of the Gospel ministrations of Winston, a fellow worker. Although some are amazed at the transformation of Frank from being bitter to so much better, others slander Winston as a manipulative and selfish individual who should not be listened to. What could you use as material for persuasive logic to challenge this slander as being absurd?
6. Others who see Frank's transformation want more proof before they will acknowledge that God is the one who is at work through Winston. What everyday things or knowledge could you use to point out that their skepticism is absurd?
7. We cannot use Jesus' image of the eye as the lamp of the body to call modern day bystanders to consider that spiritual blindness is behind their slander, skepticism or simpleminded reactions. What could we use or do instead to move them towards considering that spiritual darkness has impeded their perception?