

Luke 11:24-26

"A Full House"

June 8, 2025

1. Intro
2. Luke 11:24-26
 - a. *²⁴When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first."*
3. Context
 - a. Unclean spirit
 - i. As Jesus speaks about these unclean spirits, it's important to note that he is continuing his discussion from verses 14-23
 1. We saw last week how Jesus cast a mute demon out of a man, and as a result, he quickly encountered three types of people
 - a. Some of the people marveled at what Jesus had just done
 - b. Some just wanted to see more signs and wonders
 - c. But some in the crowd accused Jesus of casting out the demon by the power of Beelzebul, or Satan himself
 2. Jesus then went on to show how this was a completely foolish argument...
 - a. How could Satan's kingdom stand if he cast out his own demons?
 - b. How could Satan's house remain united if he himself destroyed it?
 - i. Clearly, these two ideas could not stand together logically
 1. And so, the only answer left was that Jesus had cast out this demon by the power of God
 - a. And therefore, the Kingdom of God was truly among them
 - ii. But then, Jesus brings up an intriguing thought in our passage for this morning...
 1. What happens to a demon, or an unclean spirit, when it leaves a person?
 - a. Well, Jesus gives us a look into the spiritual realm here in verses 24-26, and he tells us what happens
 4. First, we see in verse 24 that, when the unclean spirit leaves a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest
 - a. There isn't a conclusive argument for what Jesus was talking about when he referred to these "waterless places,"
 - i. But one possible explanation comes out of the Jewish mythology that existed in those days
 1. In some Jewish folklore, these waterless places, or desert places, were believed to be the haunts of demons
 - a. In Isaiah 34, as Isaiah prophesies the destruction of Edom, he writes this in verses 13 and 14...
 - i. *¹³Thorns shall grow over its strongholds, nettles and thistles in its fortresses. It shall be the haunt of jackals, an abode for ostriches. ¹⁴And wild animals shall meet with hyenas; the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; indeed, there the night bird settles and finds for herself a resting place.*
 - b. So we have this prophecy about the land of Edom being laid waste by the hand of the Lord, due to their evil acts against the people of Israel

- i. And this land that was once lush and beautiful would become a dry and arid wasteland, full of thorn bushes and jackals
 - 1. But Isaiah also says that this land will become the resting place for what the ESV calls “the night bird”
 - a. Older translations of the NASB actually say that it will become the resting place of the night monster
- 2. This Hebrew word used for “night bird” is the word *liyliyth*, which is believed to come from a Babylonian word meaning “night demon”
 - a. What’s interesting about this name, Lilith, is that it eventually made it into the stories of Jewish folklore and Jewish mythology, and a whole backstory was given to her
 - i. According to these tales, Lilith was actually the first wife of Adam
 - 1. NOT created from his rib like Eve was, but instead created from the dust of the earth, just as Adam was
 - ii. Lilith would eventually rebel against Adam, and so she was cast out of the Garden
 - 1. She would then spend the rest of her existence in the wilderness, or in “waterless places” engaging in unnatural relations with demons...
 - a. And producing many demonic offspring
 - 2. Therefore, in some writings, Lilith has become known as the “Queen of Demons”
 - a. And her offspring would continue to inhabit the wilderness and the dry lands... the waterless places
- 3. Now, this MIGHT be what Jesus was alluding to here in verse 14...
 - a. We talked last week about the name Beelzebul, and how that name also came out of the old Jewish traditions, as a sort of parody of the god of Ekron named Ba’al-Zebub
 - i. And so, it is reasonable to think that Jesus is still using these old Jewish folktales to illustrate his teaching
 - ii. But at the same time that we speculate on that, we have to affirm this truth:
 - 1. Even IF Jesus was using these folktales as literary tools to tell his story, he most certainly WAS NOT affirming the validity of the story of Lilith...
 - a. The mythological first wife of Adam
 - i. That should go without saying, shouldn’t it?
 - b. But here is why it MUST be said...
 - i. If you were alive back in 1997... I know many of you were not!
 - 1. You might remember a popular concert tour headed up by the singer, Sarah McLachlan
 - a. This concert tour lasted for many years, and it was designed to highlight the way that many female musicians were being neglected and ignored in the music industry
 - 2. These concert tours would end up becoming one of the most influential voices for modern-day feminism, and a growing rebellion against male authority in society in general

- a. Does anyone remember what the name of this tour was?
 - i. Lilith Fair!
 - 3. Yes, Sarah McLachlan INTENTIONALLY named these tours after the Queen of Demons,
 - a. For Lilith represented the truly courageous female, who throws off the shackles of man – and of God – and paves HER OWN way in the world
 - c. Friends, we must be ever-vigilant about the things that are celebrated in our culture and our society in these days
 - i. If Jesus was in fact alluding to the mythology of Lilith and her offspring residing in the waterless places of the desert, he most certainly wasn't affirming it as anything good or commendable or cool
 - 1. And neither should we
- b. So Jesus talks about these unclean spirits passing through waterless places seeking rest... but don't miss this key point in verse 24...
 - i. They find NONE
 - 1. And in answer to its fruitless searching, this unclean spirit comes to the conclusion,
 - a. "Well, I'll just go back to the person I came out of then!"
 - i. In other words, unclean spirits CANNOT find rest ANYWHERE outside of tormenting those who have been made in the image of God
 - 1. This is the only thing left for them in this world
 - a. OUR rest comes as we find rest in God, and in our Lord Jesus Christ
 - b. But this rest is completely UNAVAILABLE to those fallen angels who rebelled against the God who created them
 - 2. And so, in a terribly twisted sense of the word, these demons are incapable of being "happy" outside of the "house" of a person's soul
- c. Jesus reveals this to us, and he tells us that this unclean spirit will indeed return to the house from which it came
 - i. Now, if you weren't already familiar with this passage, you might think that, when the unclean spirit returned to the house and found it swept and put in order,
 - 1. Then the spirit would be thwarted in his plan, and he would move on to some other house that was in much more disarray
 - a. But that isn't what Jesus says at all, is it?
 - 2. In fact, this unclean spirit goes out and brings SEVEN MORE spirits, and they all dwell in the house – THE PERSON – together
 - a. And these weren't just seven regular unclean spirits
 - i. These were seven unclean spirits, MORE EVIL than the first unclean spirit
 - 1. So there's no surprise when Jesus then concludes his teaching with this sobering statement...
 - a. ²⁶"And the last state of that person is worse than the first."
- 3. So... what are we to learn from this passage?
 - a. I believe that the key takeaway for us today from these verses is this...
 - i. That in this world, there are three types of houses
 - ii. And obviously, by "houses" we are referring to people

1. And so, we'll spend the rest of our time this morning looking at these three houses
5. The first house that we see in these verses is an unclean house
 - a. And what makes this house unclean is the fact that it is filled with an unclean spirit... or maybe even MANY unclean spirits
 - i. We saw at the beginning of last week's passage the mute man who had the mute demon
 1. His house was unclean, because it was filled with this unclean spirit
 - ii. But as Jesus tells us in verse 26, sometimes one person can be filled with MANY unclean spirits
 1. We've already seen examples of this in a couple of different places
 - a. Back in Luke 8, verses 1 through 3, we saw how there was a group of women who followed Jesus and supported his ministry out of their own means
 - i. One of these women was Mary Magdalene, who Luke describes in verse 2 as,
 1. ²"Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out."
 - b. And then just a few verses later in Luke 8, we read of the man in the country of the Gerasenes, who lived among the tombs and was full of an unclean spirit
 - i. And in verse 30, when Jesus asked the demon his name, the unclean spirit replied, "Legion," for MANY demons had entered him
 - iii. So this is the first house that Jesus warns against
 1. And, whether it is one unclean spirit, or many unclean spirits, the outcome is the same...
 - a. This house, or this person, will be in a state of utter ruin and despair
 - b. Another way for us to look at this type of person is to look at Jesus' Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13
 - i. In this Parable, Jesus shares the story of a Sower sowing his seeds in different places
 1. Some of these seeds fall along the path, and the birds came and devoured them
 2. Some of the seeds fell on rocky ground
 - a. These seeds sprang up fast, but since they didn't have much soil, they didn't have any substantial roots
 - b. So when the heat of the sun came along, these plants were scorched and they withered away
 3. Other seeds fell among the thorns
 - a. And as they grew, the thorns also grew, and the plants eventually got choked out and died
 4. It was only the fourth group of seeds, the seeds that fell on GOOD soil, that grew and ended up producing MUCH fruit
 - ii. Later in Matthew 13, Jesus explains to his disciples the meaning behind this Parable
 1. And he starts by explaining to them that the seed that fell along the path and ended up getting snatched up by the birds,
 - a. Is in reality the person who hears the words of the Kingdom... he doesn't understand these words... and so the evil one, Satan, comes and snatches the Word away from him
 - i. Now, this COULD mean those who are literally possessed by evil spirits
 1. I do believe that this is something that can still be very real in today's world

- a. We hear stories of people in places like India or Africa, places where the people are deeply entrenched in the worship of their false gods
 - i. And often these people WILL exhibit actions like we see many times in the Scriptures of those who are truly demon-possessed
 - 2. But I don't think it always has to be so sensational, like you might see in some Hollywood horror movie
 - a. I believe that there are countless numbers of people walking around us every day who..
 - i. While they might not actually be POSSESSED by an unclean spirit, they are certainly LISTENING to the voices of unclean spirits
 - 1. And therefore, when they hear the Word of God proclaimed, it is completely foreign to them
 - 2. And the Evil One snatches it away from them before they even realize it
 - 3. Just think about the experience that one of our groups had a few weeks ago when we went out to pray for our community
 - a. Philip isn't here this morning, but I know that some of you were in that group...
 - i. They knocked on the door... Philip introduced himself and told the man what they were doing
 - ii. The immediate response from this man was, "Did you vote for Trump?"
 - 1. God bless Philip, he was actually caught off guard by this question, and he stumbled through a "Yes..."
 - a. And the man angrily slammed the door in his face
 - 2. Now, on the surface, we might think this was just another disgruntled democrat who was still angry about the election
 - a. But, as Christians, we must think more deeply about things
 - b. I'm not suggesting that there is a demon around every corner
 - iii. But if we take Jesus' Parable to heart, this seemed to be a pretty stark example of the Word being sown, and Satan immediately swooping in and stealing it away
 - 1. And it's not too hard to believe that there could have been an unclean spirit whispering in the ear of this man's heart...
 - a. "This man is your enemy... you hate this man... slam the door in his face"
 - iii. Those who have unclean houses have no tolerance for the light of Christ that will expose the darkness in their hearts
 - 1. We could very well apply to them the words of Jesus in Mark 9, after the disciples were unable to cast out a demon from a young boy...
 - a. Jesus said to them,
 - i. ²⁹"This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer"
- 6. The second kind of house that we find here in Luke 11 is the clean house
 - a. This is the house that is swept and put in order

- i. But, according to the corresponding passage in Matthew 12, this is also the house that is EMPTY
 - 1. The recurring example of this throughout the Gospels is that of the Scribes and the Pharisees
 - a. By all outward accounts, their houses were the cleanest on the block, weren't they?
 - i. But just listen to how Jesus described these religious leaders of Israel
 - 1. In Matthew 23:25, Jesus says,
 - a. ²⁵*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence."*
 - 2. Two verses later, Jesus says again,
 - a. ²⁷*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness."*
 - b. The house of the Pharisees was swept and put in order
 - i. But their hearts were empty, weren't they?
 - 1. At least, they were empty of what truly mattered
 - a. Their houses were full of greed and self-indulgence, and dead people's bones and uncleannesses...
 - b. But they were empty when it came to truly knowing the God whom they claimed to serve
 - 2. But you have to wonder, just thinking back to the Parable of the Sower...
 - a. Jesus talked about the third seed that fell among the thorns, and didn't survive because it got choked out
 - i. And in his explanation of this seed, he says that this is the seed that at first heard the Word and received it...
 - 1. But then when the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke out the Word, they prove to be unfruitful
 - b. You have to wonder if this was the case with many Pharisees
 - i. Maybe at one point in their life, they truly DID have a desire to teach and uphold God's Word
 - 1. And so they worked really really hard to clean up the OUTSIDE of their cups
 - 2. They worked really really hard to whitewash the OUTSIDE of their lives
 - ii. But on the inside, they were still empty
 - 1. The love of God never TRULY took root in their lives
 - a. But they DID love power
 - b. And they DID love the deceitfulness of riches
 - i. So, over time, the last state of so many of these religious leaders became far worse than the first
 - ii. As was made evident when they called for the crucifixion of the Son of God
- ii. But the Pharisees aren't the only ones we see this in
 - 1. We also see this in Acts 8, in a man named Simon the Magician
 - a. Simon was a great magician in the land of the Samaritans

- i. But when Philip came to Samaria and began preaching the Gospel, Luke says that even Simon believed and was baptized
 - 1. Even though Simon, and many others, claimed to believe, they had not yet received the Holy Spirit
 - 2. So Peter and John came down from Jerusalem, they prayed for those who had professed to believe, and the Holy Spirit fell among the Samaritans for the very first time
 - a. BUT, the Spirit DID NOT fall upon Simon the Magician
 - b. Simon was thrilled by what he saw Peter and John doing, so he said to them in Acts 8:19
 - i. *¹⁹"Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."*
 - c. But Peter quickly rebukes him and says,
 - i. *²⁰"May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²²Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."*
 - d. When Simon first heard the Word proclaimed by Philip, he did indeed receive it
 - i. Even to the degree of making a profession of faith and getting baptized
 - ii. But he very quickly showed that his roots were not truly grounded in the good soil of Christ
 - 1. And therefore, the Holy Spirit did not fall upon him
 - 2. He was rebuked by Peter
 - 3. And he was choked out by the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity
 - a. The last state of Simon the Magician was worse than the first, for he had not TRULY filled his heart with what mattered
- iii. And of course, the most sobering example of this is the Apostle Judas, one of the twelve chosen by Jesus
 - 1. We don't know a whole lot about Judas' story before he betrayed Jesus
 - a. But surely, at least at the beginning, Judas saw all that Jesus was doing, and he heard all that Jesus was teaching, and he began to clean the outside of his house and put everything in order, if only he might please his new Rabbi
 - i. But at some point, the deceitfulness of riches began to creep into Judas' heart, and as John 12:6 tells us, Judas began to steal from the moneybag that Jesus and the Apostles used
 - ii. At some point cares of this world began to choke out Judas' heart, as he realized this man Jesus didn't REALLY care about earthly power and worldly titles
 - 1. And so, Judas would betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver
 - 2. He would hand over the Son of God to wicked and lawless men
 - 3. And his heart would be so consumed with grief that he would end up hanging himself upon a tree

- a. The last state of Judas was truly worse than the first, for he never TRULY understood who Jesus was
 - b. And he never TRULY gave Jesus command over his life and his heart
 - b. My friends, this is the dangerous condition of so many unbelievers here in our midst today
 - i. Here in the buckle of the Bible belt, we are surrounded by people on every side who have done a pretty decent job of cleaning the outside of their cups
 - 1. Maybe they make it to church a few times out of the year
 - 2. Maybe they put a Christian bumper sticker on their car
 - 3. Maybe they start a reading plan or two on the Bible app on their phone
 - ii. They aren't like the angry guy who slammed the door in Philip's face a few years ago
 - 1. Instead, they are the people who, when you knock on their door and ask them if you can pray for them, they answer with, "Well, I can't think of anything..."
 - 2. Or, when you ask them if they're plugged in at a local church, they say, "Oh yes, I go to the church over on the other side of town..."
 - a. But they can't seem to remember the name of the pastor, or what the last sermon they heard was about
 - iii. We live among the masses who have swept up their house and put everything in order
 - 1. But their hearts have never truly been full of Christ
 - a. And therefore, they are easy prey to the temptations of greed and the cares of this world
 - b. They are also easy prey to the paralyzing fear that comes from possible trials and temptations
 - i. This is the second seed that Jesus talks about in the Parable of the Sower, the seed that falls among the rocks, and then gets scorched out by the sun
 - 1. These are the people who at first hear the Word with great joy, but when persecution arises because of the name of Jesus, they immediately fall away
 - a. Maybe they professed to be a Christian at one point in their life, but then their friends began to mock them and ridicule them for their newfound piety
 - i. And, over time, all of that mocking and ridicule finally wore them down
 - ii. They might still call themselves a Christian – but there is no fruit in their lives to prove it
 - 2. Whether it is greed or power...
 - 3. Whether it is fear of man...
 - a. Whatever the reason, the house that they worked so hard to get cleaned up now stands in great danger of being surrounded and even filled with more evil than they had known before
 - i. They stand in great danger of their last state being far worse than the first
 - iv. Just to give you some insight into my theology of ministry, and why I do some of the things the way that I do...
 - 1. This passage is one of the main reasons why I don't do a typical altar call at the end of the service

- a. Should we get to the point, Lord willing, that we end up having some sort of Vacation Bible School in the future, this passage will be the reason we won't push for "decisions for Christ" from a bunch of 6, 7, and 8 year-olds
 - i. My concern is that the church has become far too quick in pronouncing salvations for people, rather than taking the time to see if their heart TRULY has been transformed
 - ii. In our rush to get those salvation numbers, we don't take the time to make sure that people truly understand the Gospel
 - 1. We don't take the time to look for the beginning evidences of the fruits of the Spirit in their lives
 - a. We don't take the time to explain to them that there is a cost to following Jesus
 - i. And that cost is our very lives
 - b. And so, we are quick to pronounce someone as saved
 - i. But what happens when tribulation or persecution arises in their lives?
 - ii. What happens when the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches begin to choke out the Word?
 - 1. Sadly, as so many of us have seen firsthand, because it was only the OUTSIDE of their cup that had been cleaned, and their hearts were never TRULY filled with Christ...
 - a. They end up falling away
 - i. And the last state is worse than the first
 - ii. Because now, even though they are wrong in their assessment, they believe that they have tasted Jesus
 - iii. And he has come up short
- v. This is the dangerous road that we walk when we are quick to pronounce salvations, WITHOUT taking the time to really walk alongside of them and disciple them in the things of God
 - 1. Now, don't get me wrong – those who end up in this worse state than they were in before ARE NOT unsavable
 - a. But we have certainly helped them to build up their walls between themselves and God
 - i. My friends, it is not enough to just clean up your house and get everything all nice and swept up and in order
7. The only house that will truly stand, throughout all eternity, is the house that has been completely torn down, and then rebuilt upon the foundation of Christ
 - a. For this is the only house that will be a truly FULL house, as you are filled with Him
 - i. Turn with me in your Bibles to 1 Peter, chapter 2... and we'll finish our time this morning here
 - 1. In 1 Peter 1, Peter praises the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has caused us to be born again
 - a. Through Christ, Peter reminds us, we have been given an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, unfading, and kept in heaven for us...
 - i. And God is guarding us in our faith
 - b. In light of these things, Peter gives us the awesome calling to "Be holy, for the Lord your God is holy."
 - ii. And then Peter goes on, starting in chapter 2, verse 1,

1. ¹*So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.*
 - a. So we see in this passage that there are those who have INDEED tasted that the Lord is good
 - i. Conversely, the implication is that there are those who THINK they have tasted of the Lord, but have not
 - b. But if you are those who have indeed tasted that the Lord is good, then your life should no longer look like the world around you
 - i. Malice toward others should be lessening in your heart
 - ii. Deceit and hypocrisy should be fading
 - iii. Envy and slander should be being put away
 1. For you have been born again – you ARE a newborn infant
 2. So don't long for the milk of this world...
 - a. Long for the PURE milk – the SPIRITUAL milk
 - b. That BY IT you may grow up into salvation
 - iii. For your old house has been torn down
 1. Because God is gracious and merciful, He has taken a bulldozer to the old house that you were trying so hard to keep clean, and he has knocked it all to the ground
 2. But look at verse 4...
 - a. NOW... ⁴*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a SPIRITUAL house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*
- b. My friends, has your house truly been rebuilt?
 - i. Is the house of your soul a SPIRITUAL house, built upon the Rock that is Christ, the cornerstone chosen and precious?
 1. If so, then the promise there at the end of verse 6 is yours to hold onto...
 - a. You will NEVER be put to shame
 - i. When you hear the Word proclaimed, it might cut you like a two-edged sword... it might rebuke you, or correct you, or chastise you
 1. But Satan will NEVER be able to snatch it away from you
 - a. For yours is a spiritual house, built upon the Rock of Christ
 - ii. When you hear the Word proclaimed, you may very well face persecutions and tribulations and suffering and loss
 1. But you WILL continue to bear fruit
 - a. For yours is a spiritual house, built upon the Rock of Christ
 - iii. When you hear the Word proclaimed, you most certainly will be faced with the cares of this world, and the temptations to chase after the deceitfulness of her riches
 1. But you will NOT be put to shame
 - a. You will continue to bear fruit
 - b. For yours is a spiritual house, built upon the Rock of Christ
 - i. The Cornerstone has been laid in good soil

- ii. For it has been laid by God Himself
- c. So friends, the question you have to ask yourself is a simple one...
 - i. Are you spinning your wheels, trying to keep your house all nice and clean and swept up, on the outside?
 - 1. Or have you allowed God to tear that house down completely, surrendering EVERYTHING to Him as he rebuilds you into a spiritual house that is built upon Jesus?
 - a. As Peter says at the end of chapter 2, Jesus has bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin, and live to righteousness
 - b. By HIS wounds, you have been healed
 - c. By HIS wounds, your house can be remade
 - i. In light of this, may we return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul!