



Jesus Rebukes the Pharisees

Matthew 12:22–37



LESSON GOAL

The child will respond to God's revelation by believing and bearing good fruit.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- Tell what the Pharisees accused Jesus of doing.
- Explain how Jesus refuted the Pharisees' accusation.
- Explain what it means to blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
- Describe what Jesus' picture of trees and fruit reveals about the heart of man.

KEY VERSE

“He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.” —Matthew 12:30

APPLICATION

- Examine what your words reveal about your heart.
- Don't blaspheme the Holy Spirit by not responding to His revelation.
- Determine if Jesus would describe you as “for Him” or “against Him.”

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to...

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are...

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed:

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... you shall teach them to your children.” —Deuteronomy 11:18–19

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here that will aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Introduction

After recording a number of Jesus’ miracles (chapters 8–9), Matthew describes how the Jews responded to Jesus (Matt. 11–12). Matthew records the response of the general population in chapter 11 and the response of the religious leaders in chapter 12.

In chapter 11, Jesus rebuked the population because they watched His miracles but did not obey His message. Because of their refusal to repent, the Jewish cities were going to be judged more severely than pagan cities. While the general population responded to Jesus with indifference, the Jewish leaders flagrantly opposed Him. In chapter 12, Matthew records three (possibly four) encounters between Jesus and the Jewish leaders to typify their aggression against Him. In the first two encounters, the Jewish leaders tried to portray and trap Him as a Sabbath breaker (12:1–13). The leaders were so angered by Jesus’ responses that they “went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him” (12:14). In the third encounter, the Jewish leaders actually accused Jesus of casting out demons through Satan’s power (12:22–24). Jesus’ refutation not only reveals the ridiculousness of the accusation, but also warns of the danger of rejecting God’s revelation (12:25–37).

Accusation (Matt. 12:22–24)

In Matthew 12:22–24, Matthew summarizes both the crowds’ and the Pharisees’ responses to one of Jesus’ miracles. In just a few words Matthew describes the miracle: “Then one was brought to Him who was demon–possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw” (12:22). The miracle revealed Jesus’ magnificent power over both the supernatural and natural world. While much more could have been written about the miracle, Matthew quickly records the most basic facts and then proceeds to describe the various reactions.

When the crowds saw Jesus’ miracle, they “were amazed” but not convinced that Jesus was the Messiah (12:23). They were astonished by what He did but did not believe what He said. The crowds still asked themselves, “Could this be the Son of David?” (12:23). While His miracles testified to His being the Messiah, His manner, ministry, and message fell short of what the crowds expected from the Son of David. Their question was not a revelation of righteous curiosity but of a hardened disposition. Jesus had warned crowds like this that they would be judged more severely because they responded to His miracles with amazement instead of repentance.

While the crowds postponed their verdict on Jesus’ identity, the Pharisees had already determined that Jesus was not the Messiah. After seeing Jesus heal the

demon-possessed man, the Pharisees accused Jesus of being Satan's servant: "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons" (v.24). The Pharisees were so confident in their opposition to Jesus and so desperate to explain away His miracles that they actually accused Him of casting out demons through Satan's power. The Pharisees' self-righteousness and religious power rested on their ability to find another source for Jesus' miracles. The Pharisees knew that if Jesus was empowered by God, then His rebuke of their hypocrisy and worship was true. Unwilling to let go of their self-righteousness, the Pharisees did the unthinkable and accused Jesus of being Satan's servant.

Refutation (Matt. 12:25–29)

Jesus was aware of the Pharisees' attacks, not because He heard them but because He "knew their hearts" (12:25). The Pharisees were most likely secretive in their criticism of Jesus since they were trying to undermine His authority without entering into public debate. Jesus did not let the Pharisees' lies go unchallenged. He refuted their attacks by using simple metaphors.

Jesus began to show the foolishness of what the Pharisees were saying by appealing to common sense. Common sense demands that neither a kingdom nor a house can survive if the inhabitants or occupants are attacking each other (12:25). Internal strife will eventually destroy either. Based on that obvious principle, Jesus ridiculed the foolish accusation that He was casting out demons by Satan's power. The Pharisees were ultimately saying that Satan was casting out Satan from his own dominion! Jesus rhetorically asked, "How then will his kingdom stand?" (12:26). Satan wanted to dominate man, not destroy his own kingdom!

With their foolish accusation, the Pharisees not only criticized Jesus but also unwittingly criticized their own followers. Jesus asked, "And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?" (12:27). The Pharisees' followers (or "sons") claimed the ability to cast out demons. Following the Pharisees' logic, if Jesus cast out demons by Satan's power, then the Pharisees' followers must also be empowered by Satan. Of course, the Pharisees would never willingly say anything so absurd! Concerning these "sons," Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Therefore they shall be your judges" (12:27). The Pharisees' willingness to praise their own exorcists but to blaspheme God's Messiah would result in their judgment.

Since Jesus obviously did not cast out demons by Satan's power, the only explanation for His power was God Himself. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you" (12:28). Jesus had turned the Pharisees' argument on its head. Satan would never cast out his own demons. The only logical source of Jesus' power was the Spirit of God. But if God's Spirit performed miracles through Jesus, then Jesus must also speak the truth. The Spirit's power revealed that God's kingdom had come in the person of His Son.

Instead of proving He was under Satan's authority, Jesus' casting out demons was proof that He had authority over Satan and was more powerful. Jesus asked, "How can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?" (12:29). The strong man was a picture of Satan, and the house was a picture of Satan's dominion. Since Jesus "plundered" Satan's house by rescuing those who were demon-possessed, He clearly proved that He was more powerful than Satan. Jesus had enough power over Satan to bind him up. Jesus had successfully refuted the foolish claims of the Pharisees, first by demonstrating that the claims were absurd and then by arguing that He was not subject to Satan but

Satan was subject to Him. The Pharisees had no logical choice but to believe that the kingdom of God had arrived.

Warning (Matt. 12:30–37)

Jesus knew the spiritual state of those around Him. He knew that many were in danger of rejecting the clear revelation of His identity. Because of the intense danger that the crowds and Pharisees were in, Jesus warned them that a neutral response was impossible. Jesus said, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with me scatters abroad” (12:30). Although the crowds and Pharisees were tempted to postpone a response to Jesus, Jesus clarified that there are only two types of people: those who are with Jesus—who are His followers and who are supporters of His ministry; or those who are against Him—who are His enemies, and who seek to destroy what He has done. Jesus did not let either the crowd or the Pharisees deceive themselves and think that there was a third party of undecided “truth-seekers.”

Jesus warned the undecided crowds and Pharisees that their lack of conviction would not prevent their being judged. Instead, he warned the undecided that they were on the verge of committing an unpardonable sin. The very concept of an unforgivable sin seems out of touch with Scripture’s revelation of God’s forgiveness (Ps. 86:5; 103:3; Mic. 7:18–19). Perhaps the most profound example of God’s forgiveness is the apostle Paul who before conversion was a “blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man” (1 Tim. 1:13). Paul was a rabid persecutor of the early church. He gave approval to Stephen’s death (Acts 8:1) and even blasphemed the Son of God. (Blasphemy is the intentional mocking and rebuking of deity.) Jesus Himself said that “every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men” and “anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him” (Matt. 12:31–32). Before speaking about the sin that the Father won’t forgive, Jesus first testified to the amazingly comprehensive forgiveness of God who will forgive men an incredibly wide array of offenses.

Jesus described the one sin the Father will not forgive as the “blasphemy against the Spirit” or “speak[ing] against the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 12:31–32). Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the intentional and determined rejection of the Holy Spirit’s revelation of God’s truth. Those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit know that the Spirit’s revelation is truly the Word of God. They are believing unbelievers, those who know God’s Word for what it is but reject its authority over their life. At the same time, they are convinced in their mind but obstinate in their will. In Jesus’ day, Israel was full of those who recognized that Jesus was sent by God but who would not respond to God’s revelation through Jesus. As wicked as he was, Paul was different than these people. Paul explained, “I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (1 Tim. 1:13). Before conversion, Paul was a Pharisee who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and thus persecuted the church. His sin was forgivable. Many other Pharisees were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah but still rejected His authority and killed Him. To rephrase Paul, “They rejected Jesus knowingly in belief.” Any who knowingly reject God’s truth are guilty of speaking against the Holy Spirit. Jesus says that such an offense “will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come” (Matt. 12:32).

Although some in the crowd or among the Pharisees had probably already blasphemed the Holy Spirit and would not come to repentance, Jesus did not point them out. Instead, Jesus warned that those present were in danger of judgment for what their words revealed about their hearts. Jesus used a tree and its fruit as a picture to explain how a man’s words reflect his heart. Just as good fruit is the evidence of a good tree and bad fruit is the evidence of a bad tree, an evil man reveals his heart condition by saying bad things (12:33–34). Jesus said, “For out of

the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (12:34). A man with a good heart bears good words but an evil man bears evil words (12:35). Because a man's words reflect his heart condition so well, man "will give account of it on the day of judgment" (12:36). Ultimately, God will be able to determine if a man is justified or condemned by whether his words are good or bad (12:37). Both the Pharisees and the crowds were evidencing their true nature when they spoke evil things against the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

Jesus' warning equally applies to every generation. There is no middle ground in a man's response to Christ. Either a man is Jesus' disciple or His enemy. Either he is serving with Christ or sabotaging Christ's service. A man reveals his relation to Christ through his words. Christ's followers will bring forth good words, but Christ's enemies will bring forth bad words. God the Father will judge whether a man was for or against Christ on the basis of his words. Because a man's words are such an accurate reflection of a man's heart, a man must examine what his words reveal about his faith in Christ. The Pharisees' accusation that Jesus did miracles through Satan's power revealed that they were in danger of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Jesus demolished their foolish accusation, leaving the Pharisees with no choice but to believe that Jesus did miracles by the Spirit of God. If the Pharisees (or the crowds) believed Jesus did miracles by God's Spirit but refused to repent, they were in danger of never being forgiven.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."
—Psalm 78:1

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Was Jesus upset at the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum?
Yes.

Why was Jesus upset at the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum?
Because they saw His miracles and did not believe that He is God.

Should the people have believed that Jesus is God because of His miracles?
Yes.

Where did Jesus say that the people of Capernaum would be sent because they did not repent?
Hell

What does Jesus invite people to do?
Jesus said those "who labor and are heavy laden" should go to Jesus and He will give them rest.



What's Inside—Must Come Out

In contrast to the teaching and practices of the Pharisees, Jesus taught that the source of all behavior is the heart and therefore what is inside must ultimately come out. Although we may be able to fool people for a while, God is never fooled by actions which do not come from right motives. This can be illustrated to the children by filling a ketchup bottle with chocolate sauce before class. Show the children the bottle and ask them whether they know what is inside the bottle. Are they sure? Demonstrate to them that what we see on the outside is not always what is really on the inside. God always knows what is really on the inside of our hearts, so we can never fool Him.



Take Down Tag

Have groups of children work on a project as a team, such as building a wall with blocks. Whenever the teacher touches a child, they must stop building the wall but instead start trying to take each block down. Perhaps the teacher can keep touching children until more of them are tearing down than building. Afterwards, talk about what happened then read Matthew 12:25. How do teams work together to get things done? What happened when someone started working against them?



Gather and Scatter

This could be done during clean-up time. As the children are “gathering” the toys and putting them away, the teacher is “scattering” them by putting them back out. Talk about what happened and read Matthew 12:30. How do teams work together to get things done? What happened when someone started working against them? Variation: Play a game where two children try to bring all the things out of a bucket to the other side of the room, and one child takes the stuff back to the bucket.



No Middle Ground

Directions: Direct students to stand up in the center of the room. Tell them you will be asking a series of questions (you may use the question bank provided or create your own questions). Explain that to answer each question they will need to walk to either side of the room depending on where you point. In the beginning, allow students to remain standing in the middle of the room if their answer to the question is “both” or “neither.” Halfway through the game, change the rules and tell them there is no longer middle ground. Explain that they will have to make a choice between one or the other. Use this game to introduce this application: Determine if Jesus would describe you as “for Him” or “against Him.”

Question Bank:

Would you rather eat a hot dog or a hamburger?

Do you like dogs or cats?

Would you rather ride a bike or skateboard?

Do you like to play inside or outside?

Would you rather live in a cold location or a hot location?

Do you like to go to church Sunday morning or Sunday evening?

Would you rather ride on a roller coaster or a Ferris wheel?

Do you like chocolate or vanilla ice cream?

Would you rather watch T.V. or play a video game?

Do you like to drink milk or soda for dinner?

At this point change the rules of the game by eliminating Middle Ground
Would you rather play in the ocean or in a swimming pool?
Do you like to wear tennis shoes or sandals?
Would you rather read a book by yourself or have someone read the book to you?
Do you like to color with crayons or markers?
Would you rather play soccer or baseball?
Do you like the color red or green?
Would you rather visit the zoo or an amusement park?
Do you like to brush your teeth in the morning or at night?
Would you rather spend time with your family or your friends?
Would Jesus describe you as “for Him” or “against Him?”

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.” —Psalm 78:4

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use alongside the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done right from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Passage Outline

Accusation (Matt. 12:22–24)

Refutation (Matt. 12:25–29)

Warning (Matt. 12:30–37)

Introduction

Have you ever been cleaning up around the house or in your room and a little brother or sister makes a mess right behind you? It can be frustrating when two people are working against each other. In today’s lesson the Pharisees say that Jesus is doing His miracles and casting out demons by the power of Satan. This would mean that Satan was working against himself. This would be like someone making a mess while another is cleaning up. Let’s see how Jesus responds to the Pharisees wrong accusations.



Lead-off Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: Why do we find the multitudes amazed at the beginning of today’s lesson?

Answer: The crowds were amazed because Jesus was able to miraculously heal a man from being both blind, mute, and demon possessed. This display of power proved that Jesus had control over both the supernatural (spiritual) and natural worlds.

LOQ: What was the response of those who had witnessed Jesus heal the man?

Answer: Matthew records that the crowds still asked themselves “Could this be the Son of David?” The people were still uncertain as to whether or not Jesus was truly the Messiah that was to come from the line of King David. Even though His miracles had proven Him to be the Messiah, His ministry and message of repentance were not what the people were ready to receive. They had responded to His miracles with only amazement instead of repentance.

LOQ: How do the Pharisees choose to answer the crowd’s question about Jesus?

Answer: The Pharisees could not deny that Jesus had incredible power. But rather than recognizing these miracles as a display of God’s power, they accuse Jesus of doing the work of Beelzebub, or Satan. Even though they knew that Jesus had been sent by God, the Pharisees had chosen to falsely accuse Him of being from Satan. They would rather lie about Jesus’ identity than to answer His call for them to repent of their sins. The Pharisees had made up their minds that they were not going to be obedient to Jesus’ call of repentance.

LOQ: How does Jesus answer these lies of the Pharisees?

Answer: Jesus answers the lies of the Pharisees by first pointing out that their accusations made no sense. The Pharisees were saying that Satan, through the working of Jesus, was casting out those demons that had loyally chosen to serve him. By using the images of a kingdom and a house, Jesus begins to show the foolishness of what the Pharisees were saying. Just as a kingdom would not fight against itself, so Satan would never cast out his own demons. Satan wanted to rule both man and the world, not destroy his own kingdom. If Jesus was from Satan as the Pharisees had said, the last thing He would be doing was casting out demons.

LOQ: What does Jesus point out with His teaching on the strong man and his house?

Answer: Matthew records that part of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees was in talking about binding up a strong man and taking over his house. In telling them this illustration, Jesus was explaining that He had power over Satan. Instead of proving He was under Satan’s authority, Jesus’ casting out demons was proof that He had authority over him. His removing the demons from the man that was brought to Him clearly proved that Jesus had the power to bind up Satan. Jesus had proven that the lies of the Pharisees were completely false.

LOQ: What warning does Jesus give to the Pharisees and people listening to Him?

Answer: Jesus said “He who is not with Me is against Me.” Jesus clarifies that there are only two types of people: those who are with Jesus, His supporters, and those who are against Him, His enemies. That the people had seen Him heal the man now demanded that they respond to Him. They had the choice of either accepting or rejecting Him as their Savior. There would be none that were undecided.

LOQ: What is the unforgivable sin that Jesus warns the Pharisees of being judged of?

Answer: Jesus describes the one sin that the Father will not forgive as “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” Blasphemy against the Spirit is the determined

rejection of the Holy Spirit's revelation of God's truth. The Pharisees were part of those who had recognized that Jesus was sent by God but who would not respond to God's revelation through Jesus. They had believed Jesus to be God's Son but rejected his authority over their lives. Because they had knowingly rejected God's truth they were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that for such a sin there would be no forgiveness.

LOQ: What did Jesus mean in saying, "a tree is known by its fruit"?

Answer: Instead of pointing out those who were guilty of the sin just mentioned, Jesus goes on to warn the Pharisees of what their words revealed about their hearts. Jesus here uses a tree and its fruit as a picture to explain how a man's words reflect his heart. Just as good fruit is the evidence of a good tree and bad fruit is the evidence of a bad tree, so do the evil words of a man serve as evidence of his evil heart. Jesus says, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (v.34). A man with a good heart bears good words but an evil man says evil words.

LOQ: At the end of today's lesson, what does Jesus say will happen to all men?

Answer: Jesus says that all men will either be saved or judged according to his words. Ultimately, when Jesus comes back to judge the earth, He will be able to know whether a man should be saved or judged by whether his words are good or bad. The Pharisees' evil words against Jesus, and blaspheme against the Spirit revealed that their evil hearts had rejected Jesus as their King. Because of this rejection, the Pharisees were going to be judged in hell for their sin.

Summary

In Matthew chapter 11 Jesus rebuked the Jewish people for rejecting both His message after seeing His miracles. Because of their refusal to repent, the Jewish people were going to be judged for their sins. In today's lesson Jesus confronts the religious leaders of their rejection. Many people had responded to Jesus with indifference but the Jewish leaders openly opposed Him. In Matthew 12 the Pharisees say that Jesus did something that that He did not do. After completely healing a man who was blind, unable to talk, and was demon-possessed, the Pharisees said that Jesus did His miracles by Satan's power. Jesus responds to their accusation with stories of a kingdom and a house. Jesus goes on to warn the Pharisees of their sin. The Jewish leaders were in great danger of rejecting the truth that was being revealed through Jesus and His miracles. Jesus describes this type of rejection as being a "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." For such a sin Jesus said there would be no forgiveness. The Jewish leaders' lies against Jesus were a clear example of their rejection of Him. Their words, like the fruit of a tree, revealed their condition. Their evil words had revealed their evil hearts, and because of this evil the Jewish leaders would be judged and condemned.

Application

Jesus' warning to the Pharisees applies to us all. We, like the Pharisees, have the truth revealed to us in Jesus Christ. In knowing him to be God's Son, we are called to respond in repentance to Christ. Since there are only two ways in which we can respond, we must choose whether or not we are going to be for Him or against Him. Those who accept Him as their Savior will be saved from their sins, those who reject Him will be judged and condemned to a life in hell. Because our words are a reflection of this response to Him, each of us should examine what our

words reveal about our faith in Christ. Although God will forgive a multitude of sins, one sin He will not forgive is if we reject His Son Jesus Christ.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book® Flash–A–Cards®

Use appropriate A Beka Book® Flash–A–Cards® with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannel Graph

Use appropriate flannel graph pieces with the lesson.



Guilty or Not

The lesson in Matthew 12 can be presented or at least introduced in the form of a court case with a Judge, accused (Jesus), prosecutor (Pharisees), defendant and jury. The interesting thing about this court case is that the Pharisees were accusing Jesus of being energized by the devil, but He, after proving His innocence, charges the Pharisees with blasphemy! Jesus is definitely the kind of advocate we would want at our side! (1 John 2:1)



The Real Enemies

Today's lesson has all the elements of a murder mystery. While the Pharisees are attempting to make Jesus appear guilty, He turns it around and shows who the real culprits are. It may be fun and illustrative to present three scenes of a skit before each of the three major sections of the lesson in order to present a modern day equivalent of the events. Scene one could have a strong man (representing the devil) who has some people tied up. Another man (representing Jesus) comes and ties up the strong man and frees his captives. This portion of the biblical narrative can then be told. In scene two, the police (representing the Pharisees) arrive and incorrectly accuse Jesus of working with the strong man and they want to arrest him. The second section of the biblical narrative can follow. In the final scene of the skit, the man explains what he was doing and then pulls off the police uniforms revealing that they are not police after all, but actually accomplices trying to make captive more people. The final portion of the biblical narrative can be told in which Jesus unmasks the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and their real motives.



Treasure Boxes

Have two treasure boxes (either decorated boxes, or two–dimensional boxes made out of brown construction paper). Have good “things” to put in one and bad/evil “things” to put in the other. These things might be coins and jewels vs crinkly ripped dirty paper, or pictures of fresh foods vs rotten foods or apple cores, or a list of kind words vs. hurtful words. Put the good things in one and the bad/evil in the other (children could certainly help with this). Then have someone take them out. Talk about Matthew 12:35 and that they will always get the good things out of the good box and the bad things out of the bad box.



Whose Team?

When getting ready to discuss Matthew 12:24–28, describe two baseball teams and put two different baseball hats (or other sports caps or shirts) up on a felt board to represent each team, with a line down the middle between them. Identify one team as “Beelzebub” and list the other names on the team from these verses, Satan and demons. Identify the other team as representing the kingdom of God. Using a

felt picture of Jesus, describe how the Pharisees accused Jesus of being on Beelzebub team, and put his picture on that team's side. Then review Jesus' comments about working for or against a team in verse 25–30. As they see that Jesus does not work on Beelzebub team, decide to move Him to the kingdom of God. Part 2: When you're ready to discuss the next section of Scripture, read verse 30, then ask the children which team they are on. Then discuss how they can know whose team they're on by reviewing Matthew 12:21–27, and look for the signs of a true believer.

Praise and Worship

Praise the Name of Jesus

I Lift My Eyes Up

Seek Ye First

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." —Psalm 78:7

Choose ideas from this section that review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



The Unforgivable Sin

The children must be brought to realize the seriousness of ignoring the revelation of the Spirit of God through His Word. Draw a heart on the board and have the children give you a list of sins which people commit. Write in permanent marker the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Ask the children which sins can be forgiven. Use the eraser to erase each of the sins. The only one which cannot be erased is that of blasphemy. Use this to remind them what Jesus meant and the seriousness thereof.



"The Good and the Bad"

Materials: copies of "The Good and the Bad" craft pages, scissors, glue, crayons

Directions: Each student should receive one base sheet with the main title, the subtitles and the verses. Identify the things on the left as the good side and the bad on the right. Glue two trees at the top on either side of the verse. Have them draw good fruit on the tree on the left and bad fruit on the tree on the right. Next, have them cut out the lips and the cards. Cut a slit into each set of lips. Glue the lips to either side of the second verse and insert the cards into the appropriate set of lips. Finally, cut out the two treasure chests and fold them on the dotted lines so the treasure chest can open and close. Glue one to each side of the third verse. Glue a red heart to the center of the treasure chest on the "good" side and the black heart to the center of the treasure chest on the "bad" side.



Heart Language

Materials: Photocopy of craft page on cardstock, scissors, four brads for each student

Directions: Pass out the Heart Language craft page and scissors. Instruct students to cut around the perimeter of the rectangle, and also cut the four slits open. Next, instruct students to cut around the outside of the mouth, and then down the center

to divide the mouth in half. Pass out the brads. Instruct the students to poke a brad through the small circles in the corner of each mouth. Before opening the brad, slide it through the slits in the rectangle to attach the mouth in the closed position, covering the heart beneath. Open the ends of each brad to secure in place. Show the students how to slide the top two brads upward, and the bottom two brads downward to open the mouth, revealing that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34).”



“Jesus rebukes the Pharisees”

Use this worksheet to reinforce the key truths of today’s lesson. The worksheet is located at the back of the lesson.

Coloring Pages

Give each child a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. He or she can color the pages in class or take them home to color.



MEMORY VERSE

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” —*Matthew 12:34b*

The Good and the Bad

Your Actions

“Either make the tree
good and its fruit good,
or else make the tree
bad and its fruit bad;
for a tree is known
by its fruit.”
—*Matthew 12:33*

Your Words

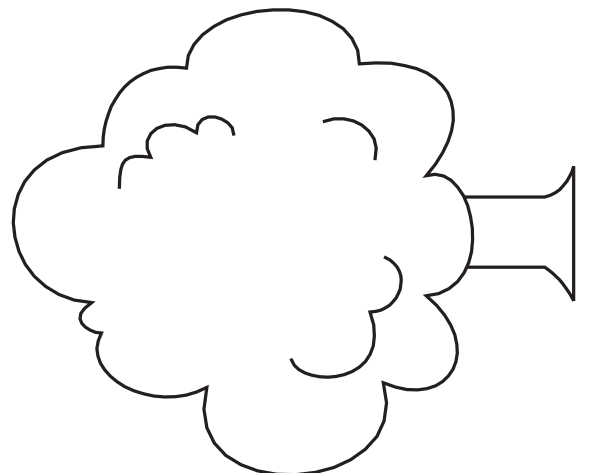
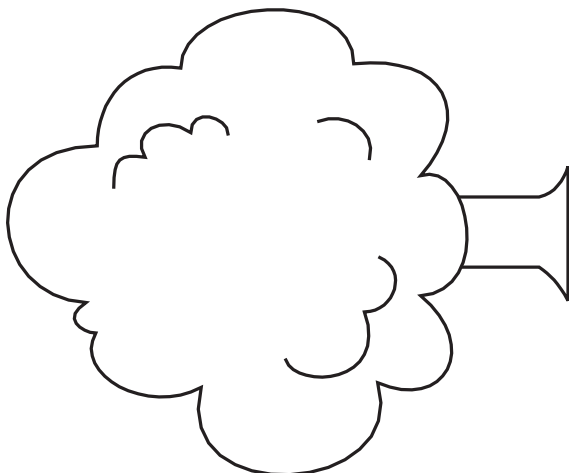
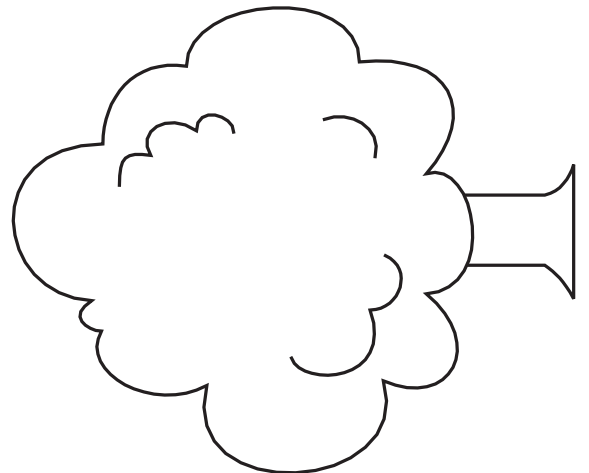
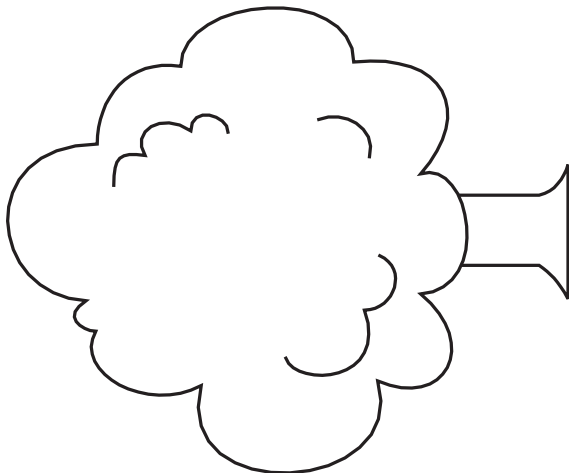
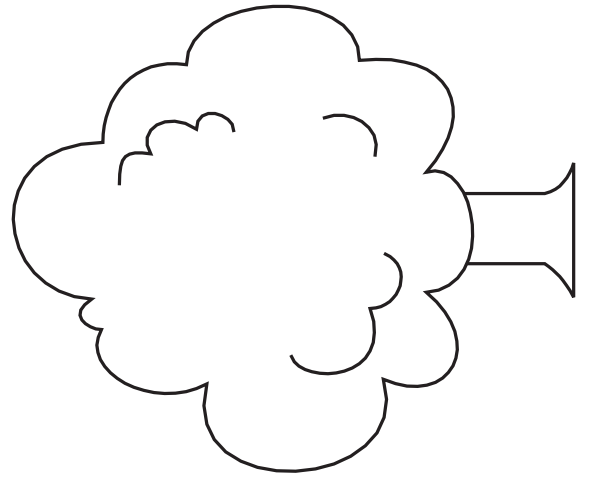
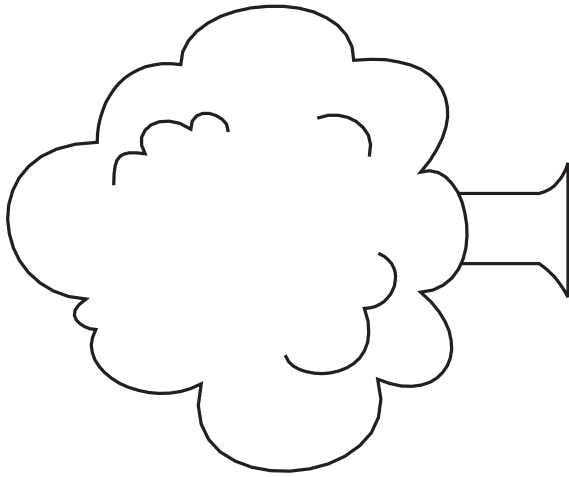
“You brood of vipers,
how can you being
evil, speak good things?
For out of the
abundance of the heart
the mouth speaks.”
—*Matthew 12:34*

Your Thoughts

“A good man out of the
good treasure of his
heart brings forth good
things; and an evil man
out of the evil treasure
brings forth evil things.”
—*Matthew 12:35*

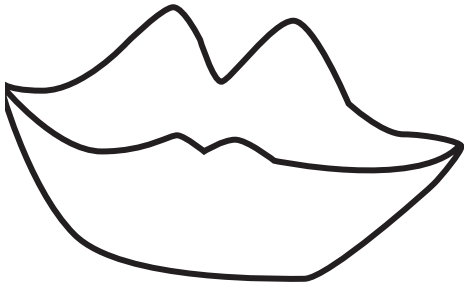
The Good and the Bad

Trees



The Good and the Bad

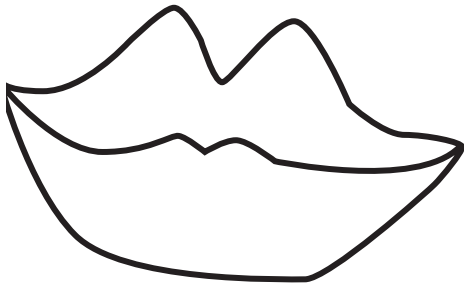
Mouths



Love God and Obey



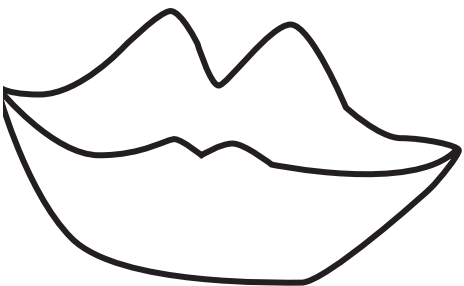
Rebel, Do It My Way



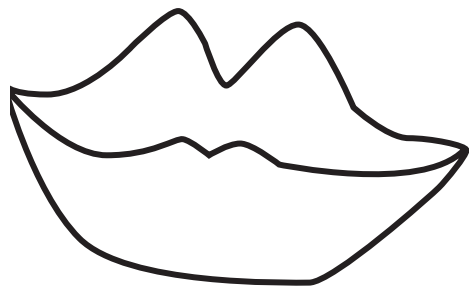
Love God and Obey



Rebel, Do It My Way



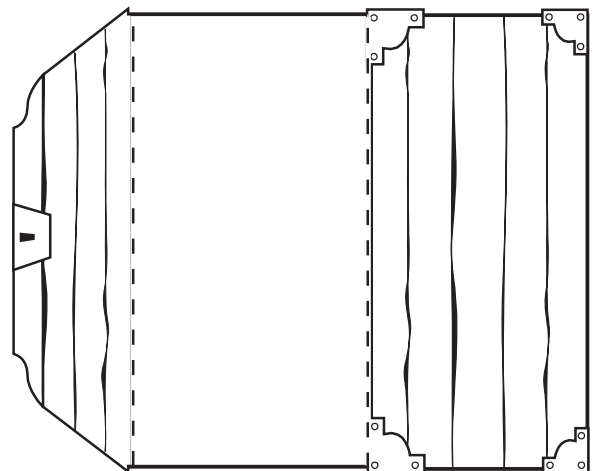
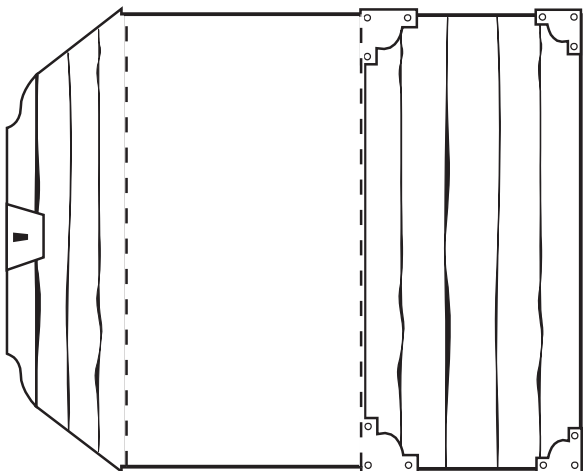
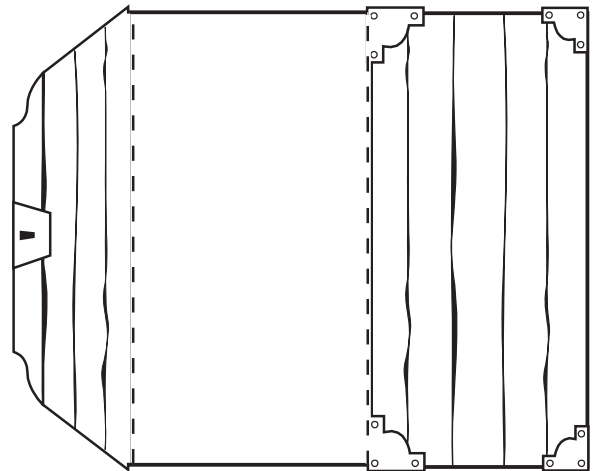
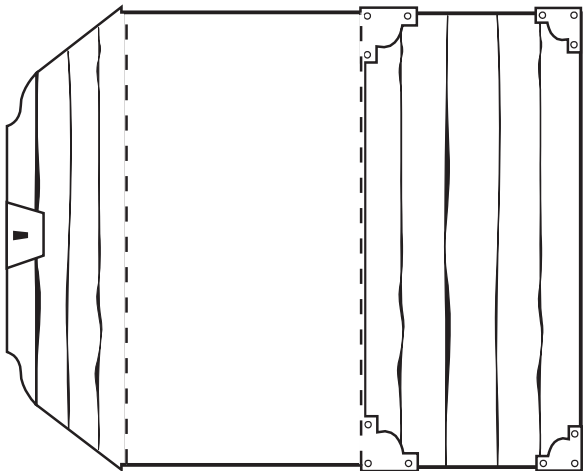
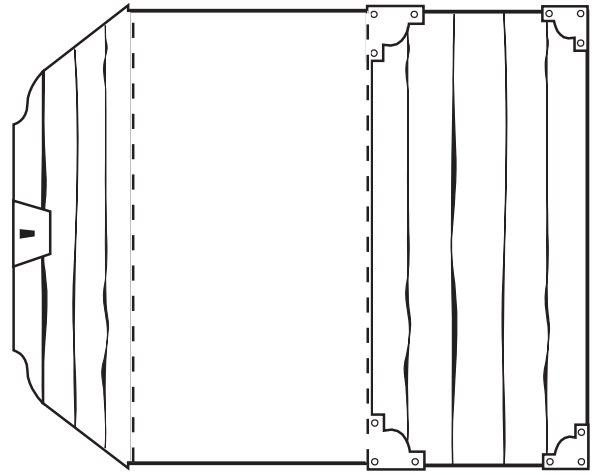
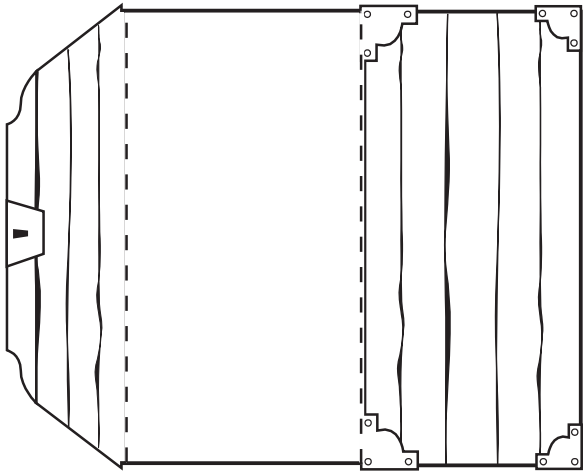
Love God and Obey




Rebel, Do It My Way

The Good and the Bad

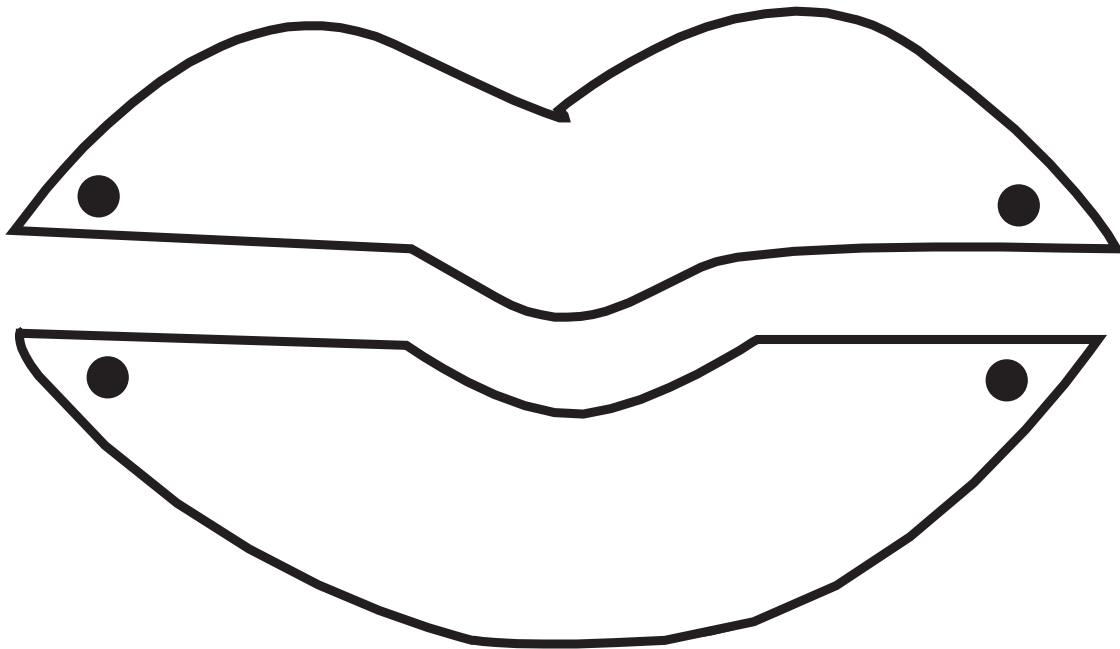
Treasure Chests



Heart Language



“For out of the
abundance of the heart
the mouth speaks.”
—Matthew 12:34



Jesus *rebukes* the Pharisees



Matthew 12:22-37

Name _____

1. Jesus healed a man who was demon-possessed, _____, and mute.
2. The Pharisees said that Jesus received His power from _____, the ruler of demons.
3. Read Matthew 12:29. In this verse Jesus talks about a strong man and the property in his house that someone has come to steal.

Who is the strong man? _____

What are his possessions? _____

Who has come to take his possessions? _____

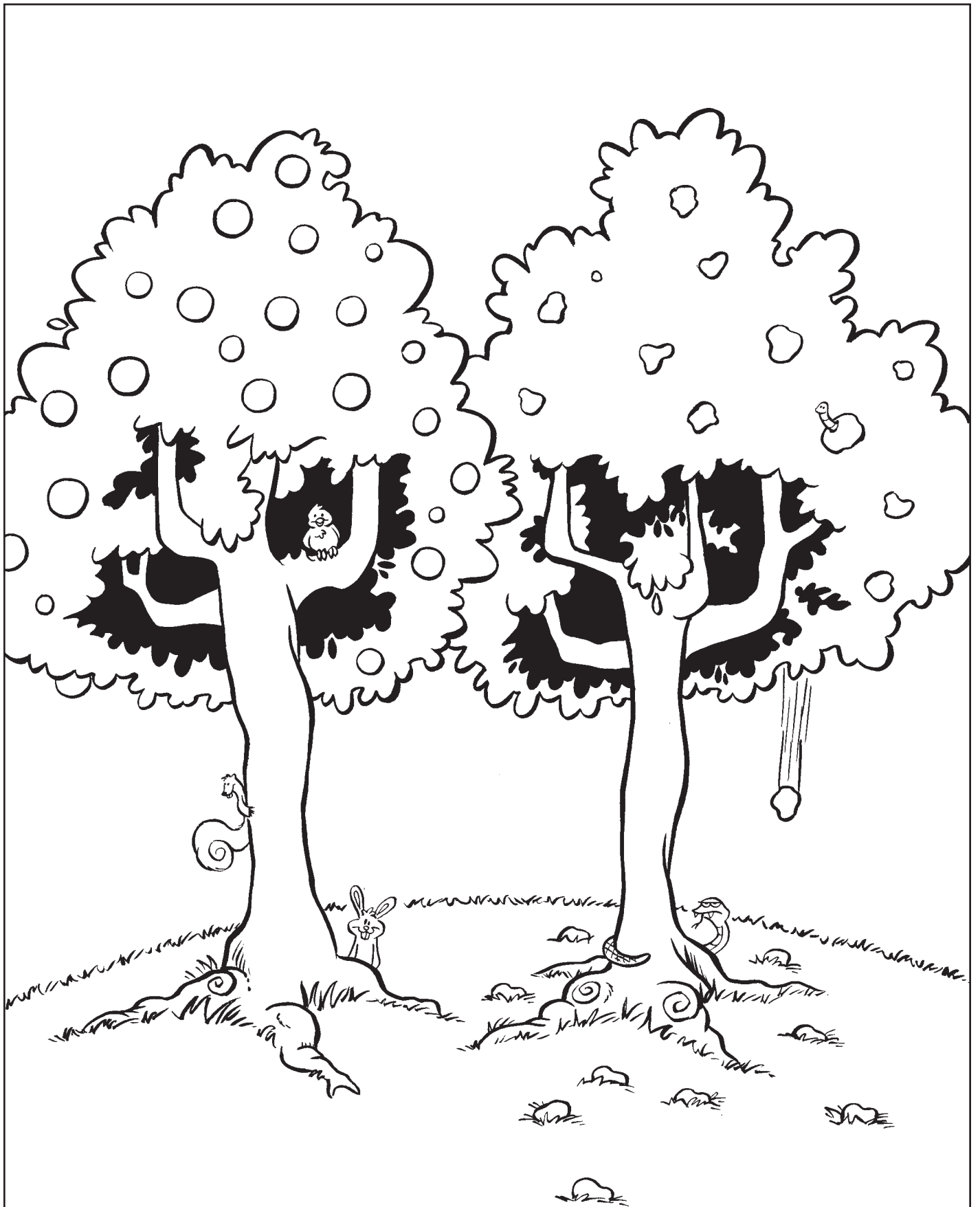
4. The sin that will never be forgiven is blasphemy against the _____.
5. How does Jesus say that you can know if a tree (a person's heart) is good or bad?

6. "Out of the abundance of the _____ the _____ speaks (Matt. 12:34)."



"Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw."

—Matthew 12:23



"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."

—Matthew 12:33

