

Neutrality

You have just finished raking all the leaves in your yard. You look over the finished task with a satisfied smile on your face. But the next morning you wake up to find the leaves from your neighbor's yard have blown over into yours. That satisfied smile is now replaced with a frustrated frown.

What is wrong with my neighbor? you are thinking. He probably delights that now all his leaves are over in my yard, so he doesn't have to clean them up.

But when you talk to your neighbor, he tells you the opposite. He hasn't thought about the leaves at all. He is not trying to make life harder for you, or easier for himself. However, in your heart you know that his neutrality concerning the leaves has, in reality, worked against you.

Jesus taught that there is no neutrality in the Christian life. In Luke 11:23, Jesus said, *"He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters."*

Jesus had just cast a demon out of a mute man, and the crowds attributed the miracle to the power of Satan. Jesus replied that any kingdom that was divided against itself would surely fall. This seems to state the obvious. But then He takes the statement to a deeper level when He infers that whoever *"is not with [Him]"* and *"does not gather with [Him]"*, is reckoned as siding with the enemy.

Jesus goes on to give the illustration of the evil spirit that came out of a man, and when he returned, he found the house all swept and clean. So, the demon brought 7 more demons and their presence makes the state of the man worse than at first.

Why? Because the man remained neutral. And there is no neutrality in our spiritual lives. Being neutral makes us feel safe. We don't want to be too committed to Jesus- that would open us up to attacks from the enemy and uncomfortable situations. However, according to Jesus, the only option to total commitment to Him, is being on the side of His enemy, Satan.

So how do we keep from being neutral? Being *"with"* Jesus is a wholehearted commitment to *"gathering"* souls for His kingdom. Jesus is bringing people into His Kingdom. Gathering with Him will affect the things we think about, the way we pray, and how we spend our money and time. Let's not work against Him!

Whose side are you on?

- Linda McCarthy