

John 10:19-21

When he said these things, the people were again divided in their opinions about him.²⁰ Some said, “He’s demon possessed and out of his mind. Why listen to a man like that?”²¹ Others said, “This doesn’t sound like a man possessed by a demon! Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

Background

There are three instances in the Gospel of John where Jesus’ words cause division among the people (John 7:40-43, 9:16, and 10:19). The latest division arises from Jesus’ teaching about Himself as the true Shepherd who lays down His life and has power to take it up again. Some people viewed Him as insane, while others believed His miracles showed He was **more** than just a man. This same division continues today when people grapple with Jesus’ claims to deity.

Teaching Points

1. If Jesus was not more than a good man, He was a bad man or a madman.

Christians believe Jesus is God, but many unbelievers see Him only as a “good man.” Logically, however, we can show that Jesus **must** be more than just a man. If He wasn’t God, He would have to be either a bad man (a liar) or a madman (insane). The “Liar, Lunatic, or Lord” argument, popularized by Josh McDowell, illustrates this well. Here’s the logical layout:

- Virtually everyone agrees that Jesus was a real, historical figure, and evidence overwhelmingly supports that He claimed to be God. In addition to biblical sources, extra-biblical records like the Talmud acknowledge that He was known for doing extraordinary works.
- Jesus clearly claimed to be God. If He *wasn’t* God, then He was a liar. However, there’s no evidence of Jesus being a liar. He lived selflessly, with compassion, and without a hint of deception.
- If Jesus claimed to be God but had no idea what He was talking about, then He was mentally unstable or demonically possessed. But historical records show that Jesus was neither. It would be inconsistent for someone who was insane to demonstrate the wisdom, balance, and compassion Jesus consistently displayed. And many Jews who heard Him teach remarked, “*This doesn’t sound like a man possessed by a demon!*” (v21).

So, logically, no one can reasonably claim Jesus was merely a good man. He was either lying, insane, or truly God. The only consistent conclusion is that Jesus is God!

Application

1. Let's not lose our "logic advantage."

We've probably all heard unbelievers say Jesus was "just a good man." When witnessing, don't let them keep this illogical position. Use the logic in our teaching point to help skeptics see their position is flawed.