A Sign For All Time — Episode 4 Study Guide

"You Quit the Sin. Why Do You Still Feel Empty?" · Matthew 12:43–45

The big idea: Reformation without habitation ends in infestation. Quitting the sin sweeps the house — but a swept house left empty doesn't stay empty for long.

I. Reformation — Matthew 12:43

- When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through _____ places, seeking rest, and findeth none.
- The spirit is truly gone — reformation is real. But he's not finished with the house; he's between _____.

Ask yourself: That thing I quit — did I replace it with Somebody, or did I just make room?

II. Decoration — Matthew 12:44

- When he is come, he findeth it _____, swept, and _____.
- A realtor stages a house to sell — rented furniture, a candle so it doesn't smell empty, someone else's photos on the wall. It shows beautifully. Nobody lives there.

Ask yourself: Is my life staged for showing — or is it actually occupied?

III. Infestation — Matthew 12:45

- He taketh with himself seven other spirits more _____ than himself … and the last state of that man is _____ than the first.
- An empty house doesn't stay empty. The relapse hits harder than the habit ever did, because sweeping was never salvation.

Ask yourself: The question isn't just did I quit — who lives in me now?

IV. Habitation — Acts 2:38 & Romans 8:9

- Repent, and be baptized … for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy _____.
- "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is _____ of his." The difference between a swept life and a saved life is not effort — it's occupancy.

Ask yourself: Have I stopped at sweeping, or have I let the Owner move in?

The thesis: Reformation without habitation ends in infestation.

Scripture list: Matthew 12:43–45 · Acts 2:38 · Romans 8:9 · Matthew 12:38 · Luke 8:2

Talk it over

1. What's a habit, program, or resolution you've genuinely quit — and has the empty space it left ever really been filled?
2. The passage doesn't mock the man for cleaning up. Where do we sometimes act like willpower alone was the whole gospel?
3. "Empty, swept, and garnished" describes a staged house. What does a "staged" spiritual life look like day to day?
4. Read Romans 8:9 aloud. What does it mean that the difference is occupancy, not effort?
5. What would it look like this week to stop sweeping and actually let the Owner move in?

Two kinds of people

If you have already obeyed the Gospel: has the house gone quiet — the Resident treated like a guest? Don't sweep harder. Go home to Him today.

If you have not yet obeyed the Gospel: hear it (Romans 10:17), believe it (Mark 16:16), repent of your sin (Acts 17:30), confess His name (Romans 10:9–10), and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Memory verse (KJV)

"Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." — Romans 8:9

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And may the Good God of Heaven bless you — and bless you real well.