

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon October 13, 2019
Luke 12: 49 – 53 “Division and Kingdom Peace”

35 "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." 41 Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. 47 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! 51 Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. 52 For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. 53 Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." 54 Then He also said to the multitudes, "Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. 55 And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. 56 Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time? 57 "Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? 58 When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite."

I. Introduction

- a. So, the Lord Jesus Christ is here teaching His disciples more about the coming Kingdom of God. Previously, He has warned them away from two great threats that will tempt them to reject the Kingdom and one great threat to receiving the Kingdom:
 - i. Threats to reject the Kingdom:
 1. Loving life more than His Kingdom: They will be persecuted and martyred. Fear God, not men. Fear the one Who can throw your soul into hell, not men who can only kill the body. (Lk 12:5)
 2. Covetousness: They will be tempted to worry about food, clothing and shelter and thus eagerly seek after money instead of God's

Kingdom. Trust God. He will feed His people who receive His Kingdom and it is His good pleasure to give His people His Kingdom. (Lk 12:32)

- b. Threat to receiving the Kingdom:
 - i. Laziness and foolishness: Even if they fear and trust God, not giving way and rejecting the Kingdom, they can still fail to receive the Kingdom because of laziness and foolishness. They are to be wise to the signs and watchful to act to receive the Kingdom when it comes to them. (Lk 12:34-48)
 - c. Today, the Lord Jesus Christ teaches His disciples about the nature and timing of the Kingdom of God in the earth. The Kingdom of God brings division to the earth. The people of God will be saved unto sanctification and holiness. The rebels who reject God will be judged unto condemnation and eternal suffering. This winnowing will begin after Jesus is crucified, and Jesus is eager to kindle this Kingdom fire on the earth. This Kingdom fire will even bring division within families. Jesus Christ declares Himself King even over the family, with greater authority in the family than any single member of the family. All individuals are called to obey Christ the King, no matter what any earthly power may say.
 - d. Today's message: Luke 12: 49 – 53 "Division and Kingdom Peace"
 - i. Jesus Came to Send Fire on the Earth
 - ii. First, Jesus has a Baptism to be Baptized with
 - iii. Jesus Came to Bring Division on Earth, Not to Give Peace
 - iv. The Kingdom of God Causes Division Even within the Family
 - v. Questions to Know, Love and Obey God
- II. Jesus Came to Send Fire on the Earth
- a. 49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!
 - b. Luke has already introduced this concept of fire on the earth in previous chapters:
 - i. Luke 3:15-17 "Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, 16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."
 - 1. Here, fire is associated with the eternal judgment of God. The baptism described involves division. Those who belong to God by His Holy Spirit's regeneration are the wheat He will grow, protect and gather into eternal life. Those outside of Christ, instead of being baptized with the Holy Spirit unto life, are baptized with fire unto eternal death.
 - ii. Luke 9:52-56 "And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was

set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" 55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village."

1. Here, fire is again associated with the judgment of God. The disciples do not understand the time in which they live. They prematurely call for the fire of God to come upon the earth. Jesus corrects them by pointing to His earthly ministry's purpose: to save men's lives, not destroy them. Before His crucifixion, Jesus Christ's purpose was to bring men to salvation. His disciples misunderstood this timing, not perceiving that His crown of power and judgment would come to Him only after He had received upon Himself the fire of God's wrath.
2. 2 Kings 1:9 – 15 "Then he sent to Elijah a captain with his company of fifty men. The captain went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "Man of God, the king says, 'Come down!' " 10 Elijah answered the captain, "If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!" Then fire fell from heaven and consumed the captain and his men. 11 At this the king sent to Elijah another captain with his fifty men. The captain said to him, "Man of God, this is what the king says, 'Come down at once!' " 12 "If I am a man of God," Elijah replied, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!" Then the fire of God fell from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. 13 So the king sent a third captain with his fifty men. This third captain went up and fell on his knees before Elijah. "Man of God," he begged, "please have respect for my life and the lives of these fifty men, your servants! 14 See, fire has fallen from heaven and consumed the first two captains and all their men. But now have respect for my life!" 15 The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So Elijah got up and went down with him to the king."
 - a. The disciples were confused and believed the Samaritans should be treated the same as these captains and their men were treated during the time of Elijah.
 - b. Understanding the fire of God requires understanding the times. The disciples needed to learn about this timing.
- c. Luke will speak of fire again about fire and judgment in Luke 17:
 - i. This is a particularly informative section of Luke, helping us to see that Jesus connects His coming in AD 70 with a "fire and brimstone" judgment.

- ii. Luke 17:24-32 “For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife.”
 - iii. So, Jesus tells His disciples later in Luke that His coming in AD70 will be comparable to the fiery destruction of Sodom, teaching them that the concept of fiery judgment includes not only the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the end of time, but also the temporal judgment Jesus Christ will bring upon Jerusalem and the apostate Jewish nation in AD70.
- d. So, by examining Luke’s usage of fire, we see Christ our Lord was looking to the future when His judgments upon the wicked would occur, both in this earth’s history and in the final day.
- e. Yet, in addition, on the day of Pentecost, we also see fire connected with the work of the Holy Spirit in God’s people.
 - i. Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - ii. This event occurs after the death, resurrection, ascension and enthronement of Jesus Christ and shows forth the work of Jesus Christ as King of His people. He sends forth the Holy Spirit from the throne of God to accomplish His Kingdom’s plan in His people.
- f. “how I wish it were already kindled!”
 - i. Hence, we can see Christ our Redeemer, as He walked this earth before His crucifixion, He was strongly desiring to “kindle” this fire upon the earth.
 - ii. This fire of the Holy Spirit is a winnowing fire that separates God’s People from those outside the Kingdom of God.
 - iii. At Pentecost, the ruling King of the cosmos kindled His fire upon the earth. Since that time, this dividing fire has been destroying the ranks of

the kingdom of darkness and expanding those within the Kingdom of God. In addition, those within the Kingdom of God are continuing to experience the sanctifying fire of the Holy Spirit within us and through us.

1. In Hebrews we are instructed about this Kingdom of God we are receiving, and all of this process of growth and sanctification is set within one blazing truth: God is a consuming fire.
 2. Heb 12: 22-29 "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire."
 3. God's Word and God's Spirit bring the refining work of God in our lives.
- g. Baker "Πῦρ (*pyr*, fire) can have various meanings, since Luke uses it as a figure for judgment (3:9, 17; 9:54; 17:29) and for the Holy Spirit's coming (3:16). Fire is also associated with God's word or his message through the prophets (Jer. 5:14; 23:29; Sir. 48:1; Schneider 1977a: 293). A similar usage tied to judgment and the Spirit's evaluative work is present here. Jesus came to judge and divide people, a division tied to one's decision about him and his message."¹
 - h. So, this fire in view could be thought of as Kingdom Fire. All who come near to God in Christ are purified by God Who is a consuming fire. All who ever come near to God outside of Christ are destroyed by God Who is a consuming fire.
 - i. And, Jesus was strongly desiring to begin (kindle) this fire upon the earth even during His earthly ministry. He looked ahead to His throne, yet saw His own fiery experience coming first. He would earn control of Kingdom Fire by receiving the full fire of God's Judgment upon Himself.
- III. First, Jesus has a Baptism to be Baptized with
- a. 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!

¹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1192). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- b. Here, Jesus teaches His disciples about the timing of the Kingdom fire to come. It will not come until after He receives His baptism.
- c. How are we to understand this baptism of Jesus?
 - i. “to be baptized with” – Someone else would baptize Jesus. The Father pours out His fiery wrath upon His Son on the cross.
 - ii. Distressed –
 - 1. Baker “Συνέχω (*synechō*) refers to emotional distress and expresses Jesus’ desire to do more than he is able to do before his death”²
 - 2. In addition, Christ’s contemplation of this coming fiery baptism is also a source of distress for Him. We see this fully experienced by Jesus in Gethsemane.
 - iii. “It is accomplished”
 - 1. Baker “the term for “finished,” τελεσθῆ (*telesthē*), has a link in church tradition with Jesus’ death, since when Jesus dies he declares that “it is finished” (τετέλεσται, *tetelestai*; John 19:30). In both texts, Jesus’ death is seen as a major demarcation in Jesus’ career. After his death, Jesus will be able to do many more things, some of which Luke enumerates in Acts.”³
 - iv. So, the words here teach His disciples that Jesus had a growing distress as He approached the cross, both because of His suffering on the cross, and because of His longing to begin His reign of power after the ascension.
 - 1. Hebrews 12:1-3 “1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - v. God’s wrath as fire is described in Psalm 21:8,9. Jesus experienced this on the cross as He took our sin upon Himself and made Himself the enemy of God to make His people the friends of God:
 - 1. “Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. 9 You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; The Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them.”
- d. Jesus our Redeemer and King teaches His disciples that He must first endure the infinite and eternal torment of God’s perfect justice before He can begin His reign upon the earth. He must swallow down God’s Fire of wrath before He can pour forth His Kingdom Fire.
- e. Baptism and judgment and exaltation:

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1193). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1193). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- i. 1 Peter 3:18-22 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.”
 - ii. The flood teaches us about baptism. When God speaks of baptism, He always includes judgment and exaltation. Baptism teaches us about the judgment of God upon His enemies and the salvation of God for His people. All who are in the covenant of Grace are baptized into God’s salvation by His grace and brought ever upward in bliss. All who are outside the covenant of Grace are baptized into God’s judgment and sent ever downward in torment.
- IV. Jesus Came to Bring Division on Earth, Not to Give Peace
 - a. 51 Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.
 - b. Here, the Lord Jesus Christ describes what life will be like on earth during the time of the Kingdom Fire after His crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and enthronement. This ongoing division work of Jesus is the mark of His Kingdom Fire. This is the great dividing point of history.
 - i. How often do you get sidetracked and allow other points of difference to distract you from this one great point of division? Do you focus upon the Kingdom of God and ever call men to repent and obey Christ the King?
 - c. There can be no peace between the people of God and the people of the devil. Thus, the people of God must not in any way set aside the commands of God and make compromise with the rebellion of hell.
 - d. Calvin “What Christ has now demanded from his disciples any one of them would reckon it an easy matter to give, if the whole world, with one consent, embraced the doctrine of the Gospel. But as a considerable part of the world not only opposes but fights keenly against it, we cannot *confess* Christ without encountering the resistance and hatred of many. Christ therefore warns his followers to prepare for battle, for they must necessarily fight for the testimony of truth.”⁴
 - e. We can deduce that the frequency and intensity of this division will be proportional to the current status of the Kingdom of God in any given culture. As the Kingdom of God grows and matures, and as the kingdom of the devil is

⁴ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 468). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

defeated and diminished, the frequency and intensity of this division will decrease. When the Kingdom of God first comes to a land absent God's People, this division will be most frequent and intense. Once Christ has conquered a land by His Spirit and Word, this division will be much less frequent and intense.

- f. Isaiah 9:6,7 "6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."
 - i. How can peace be increasing? Because as time goes on more and more of His enemies are defeated, and more and more people belong to His government, so the earth's great dividing point becomes less and less frequent and intense.
 - ii. Calvin "As Satan, who holds a kingly power over the reprobate, is furious against the name of Christ, as soon as the doctrine of the Gospel is proclaimed to them, their impiety, which formerly lay asleep, acquires fresh vigour. Thus Christ, who, properly speaking, is the author of *peace*, becomes the occasion of disturbances in consequence of the wickedness of men."⁵
- V. The Kingdom of God Causes Division Even within the Family
- a. 53 "Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."
 - b. The Lord Jesus Christ points forward to a day when His claims as King over every soul will bring division even into the midst of the tenderest of bonds: the human family. This familial disruption by the Gospel shows how corrupt is the human heart and how fallen is such a culture where this kind of division must occur in order to be faithful to Christ our Lord.
 - i. Calvin "When Micah complains (7:6) that *a man's enemies are the men of his own house*, he deplores it as a state of extreme and ruinous corruption. Christ declares that the same thing will happen when his doctrine shall be published, which otherwise could not have been believed. At the same time, he does not mean that this will uniformly take place, as certain fretful persons foolishly imagine that it will be impossible for them to be good disciples without forsaking parents, children, and wives. On the contrary, every lawful bond of union is confirmed by unity of faith: only Christ warns his followers, that when it does happen, they must not be alarmed."⁶

⁵ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 469). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁶ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 470). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- c. Note the reciprocal “against” described by Jesus in this text. Those inside the Kingdom of God will be against those outside the Kingdom of God. And, those outside the Kingdom of God will be against those inside the Kingdom of God.
 - i. This is always true. Light and dark cannot coexist.
 - ii. This “against” will rightly separate believers from unbelievers. But, it goes farther than this. This “against” will also separate worldly believers from sanctified believers.
 - 1. 2 Cor 6: 11-18 “O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. 12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. 13 Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open. 14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."
- d. Our relationship with God as Father in Christ leads us in paths of righteousness, and we will walk that path regardless of resistance from unbelievers or deceived believers. We will obey our King.
- e. The Kingdom Fire makes Jesus Christ Lord of every soul, and each individual must give account before God, alone before the throne of judgment. No person will every be able to excuse their own unfaithfulness by pointing to the lawlessness of their authorities (family, church, state, employer, etc).
 - i. Each jurisdiction is ruled by Christ the King, and Christ’s delegated sub-rulers must rule only according to His Word, and only within their given jurisdictions. Individuals within each jurisdiction are called to obey their rulers IN THE LORD.
 - ii. “submitting to one another in the fear of God” Eph 5:21
 - iii. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” Eph 5:22
 - iv. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right” Eph 6:1
 - v. “Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”
 - vi. “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” Heb 13:17

vii. Romans 13: 1-4 “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”

VI. Questions to Know, Love and Obey God