

Jesus, the Great Divider
Understanding the Present Time
12/03/2017 Sunday AM

Scripture: Luke 12:49-59

Introduction

- Last week we spoke about Stumbling: Are You the Victim or the Culprit?
- We saw that that we should be careful how we live because there are people that watch how we live.
- We should not do or say things that would cause others to be pushed farther away from God, even if we have the right to do or say things.
- Causing people to sin or to push them away from God is the direct opposite of what we are called to do.
- Our purpose is to help people come closer to God and to be united with Him.
- This morning we are going to discuss **Jesus, the Great Divider: Understanding the Present Time.**

Luke 12:49-59

⁴⁹"I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. ⁵²From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. ⁵³They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. ⁵⁵And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. ⁵⁶Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time? ⁵⁷"Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right? ⁵⁸As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled to him on the way, or he may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny. "

- **Vv. 49** – This verse will make you look at it a second time when you read it. This is Jesus speaking here.
- Many times throughout the Bible Jesus uses “I have come...” statements which are meant to give us a different vantage point as to why He came.
 - **John 10:10**, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
 - **Matthew 5:17**, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.
- Here we see Him plainly say He has come to bring fire to the earth, and that He wished it was already lit!
- That doesn't sound altogether very sweet, does it?
- **V.50** – He follows this up by saying that He has a baptism to undergo, what is this baptism?
- We know that He is not referring to His water baptism because Luke recorded that event in chapter 3.
- The Greeks used the word *baptisma* to mean “immersed or submerged” in something.
- It is where we get the word baptize, however the word itself have a wide range of applications.
- Here Jesus is speaking of being “immersed” in pain, suffering, and God wrath while on the cross.
- **v.51** – Jesus asked a good question in this verse, “Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?”
- Jesus was speaking to a large group of people here, and surely all of their answers would have been “yes”!
- After all, **Isaiah 9:6** calls Him the “Prince of Peace.”
- But His answer to the question about Him bringing peace was, “No, I tell you, but division.”
- This is why I have titled the sermon, **Jesus, the Great Divider**, He said it Himself, that He came to divide.
- **I'm sure you don't see this verse on a lot of coffee mugs or shard on Facebook pages, do you?**

- **Vv.52-53** – Show just how close to home this division will come, it will be within the home!
- The division that Jesus is bringing is the separation of those that are serving God and those that aren't.
- The Gospel message is certainly a message of love and embrace, however at the exact same time it is a message that divides.
- The Gospel is the line in the sand that divides.

- **Vv.54-59** – These are very hard-hitting verses.
- Jesus quickly lets them know that they pride themselves on being able to interpret the weather patterns of this world, however they have no idea how to interpret what was happening in their present time.
- He goes on to illustrate to them that they should seek reconciliation before Judgement day, because if they wait to make it to court, the outcome will not be in their favor.

- Just like the crowd that Jesus was teaching, we too have a hard time understanding the times we live in.
- I see folks every day try to “swim upstream” as they try to force this life to conform to what they want.
- The fact of the matter is that we are living in divisive times and that has been ordained for a long time.
- By divisive I am not talking about the types of things that you are hearing on the news.
- I am talking about the fact that we are living in times where it is extremely important that we teach the message of the Gospel and we stand firm on it. We must draw the dividing line.
- That means that we will have to at times, feel division and separation from people close to us.
- As Jesus taught in vv. 52-53, it may even be inside your own home.

- We do not want to be stumbling blocks for people, however, at the same time we do not want to mislead them either.
- As we operate as Ambassadors for Christ, we will not always be met with open arms and loving words.
- It is inevitable that we will face resistance at times and that we will feel division occurring.
- **We do not want to cause division, however we do want to ensure that the line is clearly drawn.**
- There are times where we must communicate that the world cannot have it both ways, you cannot serve God and yourself at the same time.
- Jesus did come to bring peace, but in order to make that peace available, the dividing line must be drawn to distinguish who gets the peace and who doesn't.
- Jesus is love, peace, and joy..., however He is also righteous, just, and holy...

- **Are the lines clearly drawn in your life, or do you keep them blurry?**
- **What do you see as your place in spreading the Gospel to all those around you?**

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

Study the different words for

“hell” in the Bible.

