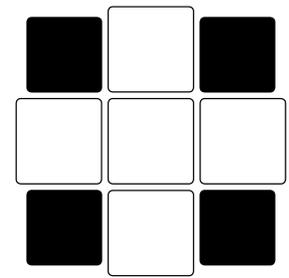


Jesus the Divider

Scripture: **Luke 12:49–53**

Series: **The Gospel of Luke**

Sunday, October 28, 2018



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Overview

We normally think of Jesus as the Prince of Peace, and for good reason. However, as we see in today's passage, Jesus says that He came to "cast fire on the earth" and that He came not to bring peace on earth, "but rather division." This seems to run counter to our typical thoughts about Christ's ministry. Yet as we dive into the passage and unpack it a bit, what we find is that Jesus is not calling for division in opposition to unity or without regard for unity. Rather, He calls His followers to **strive for unity but separate for purity**. Once we understand the distinction, we will clearly see how critical it is that we seek unity in our allegiance to Jesus and to the mission of His gospel. Moreover, just as He suffered on the cross on our behalf (Luke 12:50), Jesus' disciples will also suffer for the faith. As followers of Jesus, our discipleship will lead to division, which may include division within our families. Nonetheless, our priority should be obedience to Jesus and to the purity of His gospel.

Corroborating Texts

Mark 10:38-39; Luke 7:50; John 17:22-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 4:1-7;
John 17:15-19; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 1:10-11;
2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Titus 3:10-11; Romans 16:17-18.

Discussion Questions

1. Regarding the two metaphors Jesus uses in verses 49 and 50, what does He mean by "fire" and "baptism?" Of note, some commentators believe "fire" refers to divine judgment, while others believe it refers to spreading the gospel (setting the world on "fire" with the gospel).
2. What are some reasons Jesus calls us to strive for unity? [we share in one universal church and one Spirit; we share in the same hope in Jesus; the beauty of our unity is in our diversity]
3. What are five ways that we should strive for unity? [prioritize the gospel over our particular tribe; be humble; learn from others; celebrate others; pray for others (including other churches)]
4. What are some reasons Jesus calls us to separate for purity? [separate ourselves from the world; separate from heretics, since heresy leads us away from the gospel; separate from other Christians who continue in deep sin; separate from those who cause division and obstacles]
5. What are five ways that we should strive for purity? [prioritize the truth; be concerned for God's glory; pursue unity in the church for the sake of the gospel; correct others with grace; come out from among those believers who cause division or who stray from the purity of the gospel]