

Luke 12:49-59

Introduction: The coming of Jesus brought pressure to people and forced them to make choices. Among those pressures are divisions within families caused by the choice of some to follow Jesus. We need to recognize that divisions are possible. Commitment to God may mean separation from loved ones. (Bock)

Following Christ may cause division in your home—12:49-53

- 1) Jesus submits to the Father's timing—12:49-50
 - a) Eagerness to see the Father's will for Israel accomplished—12:49 ⁴⁹ *"I came to cast **fire** (emphatic in position) on the Land, (cf. Jon 5:27) and how I wish that it were already kindled. (cf. 3:16-17)*
 - i) This seems to refer to the purging of Israel during the Tribulation prior to His kingdom being initiated.
 - ii) In other words, Jesus wishes He could do it right then and there, but He cannot do so. (Magill)
 - b) Submission to the Father's purpose and timing—12:50 ⁵⁰ *But I have a **baptism** (emphatic in position) to be baptized with, and how distressed I am until it is completed (cf. John 19:30, "It is finished").*
 - i) He keeps things in proper sequence. The cross must come first. He must experience the Father's judgment and rejection for our sins.
 - ii) His humanity is revealed by His distress.
- 2) Jesus reveals one purpose of His ministry—12:51-53
 - a) People have made the wrong assumption about His ministry—12:51 ⁵¹ *Do you^{pl} suppose that I came to give peace in the Land? I tell you^{pl}, no, but rather division (i.e. taking sides, hostility).*
 - i) "Christ came to make peace with God for men, and to give the Gospel of peace, and spiritual and eternal peace to men; but not external peace, especially that, which is not consistent with the preservation of truth:" (Gill)
 - b) General division in a home—12:52 ⁵² *For from now on five in one household will be divided, three against two, and two against three.*
 - c) Examples of specific divisions in a home—12:53 (cf. Micah 7:6)
 - i) ⁵³ *Father will be divided against son and son against father,*
 - ii) *mother against daughter and daughter against mother,*
 - iii) *mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*
 - d) Reconciliation to God can mean separation from people. (Bock)

Do not fail to understand the significance of Christ's presence—12:54-59

- 1) They fail to discern eternal matters—12:54-56
 - a) Two examples of mundane concern with the weather forecast—12:54-55
 - i) The effects of cloud formations—12:54 ⁵⁴ ... *"Whenever you^{pl} see a cloud rising from the west (the Mediterranean), immediately you^{pl} say, 'A rainstorm is coming,' and so it does.*

- ii) The effects of wind—12:55 ⁵⁵ *And when you^{pl} see the south wind blow, you^{pl} say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and there is.*
- b) Jesus’ pointed application—12:56 ⁵⁶ *Hypocrites! You^{pl} know how to evaluate the face of the earth and the sky, but how can you^{pl} not evaluate the present time?”* (i.e. the nearness of the kingdom and the King)
 - i) You are successful at things that ultimately don’t matter.
 - c) God is at work through Jesus the Christ and they fail to recognize this.
- 2) They fail to discern the eternal seriousness of their situation—12:57-59
 - a) A serious question—12:57 ⁵⁷ *“And why do you^{pl} not even judge for yourselves what is right?”*
 - i) They should consider the nature of the time and respond appropriately to one’s spiritual indebtedness. (Bock)
 - b) An illustration—12:58-59
 - i) Your response to Jesus has consequences—12:58 ⁵⁸ *For when you go with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with (get rid of) him on the way, so that he will not drag you before the judge, (i.e. Jesus; cf. 12:49) and the judge hand you over to the officer / bailiff, and the officer / bailiff throw you into prison.*
 - (1) It is better to confess one’s guilt and rectify the situation than to pay for it fully. (Bock)
 - ii) Christ’s judgment is certain—12:59 ⁵⁹ *I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the very last cent (a copper lepton, the smallest Jewish coin equal to 1/28 of a denarius, or @ 15 minutes pay out of an 8 hour day).”*
 - iii) The one who ignores God’s call to repent will be dragged away into debtor’s prison. (Bock)
 - c) We all owe a debt to God. One must settle accounts with Him. Unless the slate is wiped clean, the debtor will pay every cent of debt to God. (Bock)

Take-home truth: Settle your spiritual debt with God before it is too late. Christ has made the payment. You must receive it by faith, embracing the truth that it applies to you, the sinner.