

**KINDLING THE FIRE**  
**Luke 12: 49- 53; text v. 49**  
**January 9, 2022**

**I. The Fire of Our Love and Commitment to God**

**A. We must have the fire of deep love and commitment to God and to doing what he is calling us to do**

**1. Hebrews 1 refers to how dedicated the angels are to worshipping God's Son Jesus.**

**Hebrews 1:7 (NIV)** In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire."

**2. And we should think of that verse as we remember the wind and the fire on Pentecost, when God anointed the disciples with his Spirit.**

**3. Acts 2 reports that the Holy Spirit came as a wind and put tongues of fire on the disciples' heads, empowering them to be and do what God was calling them to be and do**

**B. Our Lord Jesus demonstrated what fiery, Spirit-empowered zeal means**

**Luke 12:50 (NIV)** But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!

**1. During his baptism, when the Spirit came upon him like a dove, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit anointed him to do the work he was sent to do. [Matthew 3: 13- 16; Luke 3:22]**

**2. In Bible times, priests and kings were anointed (baptized or christened) with oil to do the work God called them to do.**

**3. Jesus knew what that work entailed.**

**a. He foresaw the Garden where sweat would pour from him like great drops of blood as he pleaded with this Father to let this cup pass from him.**

**b. He foresaw the jeering crowds and the tortures he would experience at the hands of the Jewish leaders and the Romans soldiers.**

**c. He foresaw cross on which his parched lips would cry, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"**

**d. He foresaw his own death and burial."**

**C. And Jesus, who looked forward to these things, also called those who believed in him to a life that included suffering.**

**Luke 9:23-24 (NIV)** Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

**1. Our scripture is part of Luke's account of Jesus' teaching concerning the end times.**

**a. Often when we hear those words, end times, we think of the years just before Jesus returns.**

**b. But when Jesus was speaking of the end times here, he was speaking of the entire period between the time he would leave this earth to go back to heaven and the time when he will return to judge the world.**

**2. In the verses just prior to these, verses 42- 48, he compared his disciples to servants whose master was away, and who entrusted them with caring-out their tasks while he is gone.**

**3. And he said that when the master returns, he will reward his faithful servants and punish the unfaithful ones.**

**4. During this entire period, Jesus expects his servants to be on fire for him and for what is calling them to do.**

**Questions:**

- 1) From my reading of scripture, where do I see evidence of angels, who are on fire for God and who are eager to accomplish what he sent them to do? (For one example, see Daniel 10: 12-14)**
- 2) How do I show that I've been anointed with by Holy Spirit and with his power?**
- 3) How committed was God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ to doing what God sent him to do? (see Philippians 2: 5- 8)**
- 4) Have I taken up my cross to follow Jesus? In what way have I demonstrated that in my life? What does being on fire for Jesus mean to me?**

**II. The Fire of Purification and Judgment**

**Luke 12:49 (NIV)** "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

**A. The fire Jesus mentioned in our scripture refers to something else.**

**1. His words recall those of the Old Testament prophet Malachi, who wrote about the coming of the Lord.**

**Malachi 3:1-3 (NIV)** "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.

**2. The refiner's fire purified the gold separating it from the rest of the ore.**

**3. Fulfilling that prophecy, the Lord Jesus came to purify his people and separate them from all that is sinful and evil.**

**B. By mentioning fire in our scripture, Jesus was reminding everyone of what John the Baptist said about him.**

**Luke 3:16-17 (NIV)** John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

**1. The fire that purifies is also a fire that destroys.**

**2. Jesus came to burn up all that is evil, so that the world and specifically his people might again be as they were at the beginning of time when God saw all he had made and it was very good.**

**C. When Jesus said that he wished that the fire was already kindled he was saying that he couldn't wait to clean up the world and make it good.**

**1. Because he loves his God his Father, he is deeply pained to see the evil that is here on earth and that he longs to make things right.**

2. Because he loves you and me, he wants to destroy the evil in our lives and make us the people God intended us to be.

**D. What about us?**

1. If we truly love God and are on fire for him, we cannot be comfortable with the world as it is.

2 Peter 3:13 (NIV) But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

2. If we really love ourselves, we cannot be comfortable with living and working for things that will be destroyed by God.

2 Peter 3:10 (NIV) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

3. Someday the purifying fire will come.

4. Will everything we live for be burned up, or are we truly longing and living for the things that will last?

**Questions:**

- 1) In what ways has the fire Jesus brought already begun to purify this world? When will his work to purify this world be complete? How is Jesus through the Holy Spirit purifying me?
- 2) What must be destroyed in this world in order for it to be what God intended it to be? How has the Lord begun to destroy these things? When will he complete his task?
- 3) How is Jesus' desire to destroy sin in the world and in our lives evidence of his love for this world and for us? What did Jesus do to destroy the power of sin when he was here on earth the first time? How is that evidence of his love for us?
- 4) How do I show that I am distressed and grieved by the world as it is? How do I show I am distressed and grieved with myself as I am?
- 5) Will the things to which I dedicated my effort be destroyed when Jesus returns or will they have value for all eternity? Why do I say that?

**III. Families Divided by the Purifying Fire**

Luke 12:51-53 (NIV) Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They 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."

**A. In some countries, family members threaten Christians with suffering, rejection, persecution, and death.**

**B. Here families experience this division differently.**

1. Navajo Christians have been isolated from their families, who cannot understand why Christian family members will not join them in traditional ceremonies.
2. Many Christian parents have children who never darken the door of a church any more.
3. Many who grew up in Christian families now live for destructive earthly pleasures like illicit sex, drinking, drug addiction.
4. For several generations now, peer pressure, friendships, and deceptive false teachers have influenced teens and young adults to abandon their faith.
5. Christian families are separated by adultery and divorce.

Micah 7:5-6 (NIV) Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words. For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies are the members of his own household.

**C. One important reason that God may allow these painful divisions is to strengthen our hope and faith in him.**

Micah 7:7 (NIV) But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.

1. When, in our pain, we put our hope in our Savior, his Son Jesus Christ, we find strength that doesn't come from within, but from him.
2. And then we find all that we need.

"You can never learn that Christ is all you need, until Christ is all you have." Corrie Ten Boom

3. The Lord uses fires to renew our lives and turn us into the people he created and saved us to be, people who trust in him alone

**Questions:**

- 1) Do I pray regularly for my brothers and sisters in Christ who are separated and sometime even threatened by their own family members because of their faith in Jesus? Why or why not?
- 2) What is causing people in our country to abandon their faith? What can I do to fight this, so I will not be one of them? What has God given me to assure me that I won't be one of them?
- 3) How have I or my brothers and sisters in Christ here experienced divisions in their families because of my or their faith in Jesus? Why is losing dear family members to unbelief much more painful than losing them to death?
- 4) Has my suffering, including my losses of friends and family members strengthened my faith and hope in God? If so, how? If not, why not? As I struggle to keep my faith, what assurances does God give me? How can I realize the strength he promises?

Our Lord taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." None of us desires the fires that come into our lives. But, as we endure them, we know that by his grace we will more and more act like the new creation he saved us to be. When all the self-centeredness, pride, and sin are removed God will remake us in his image. Friend, the real question is not so much whether there is fire in your religion as whether or not God's fire is in your life.