

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

**Chapter 12- Luke 12:49-53**

243- Jesus Did Not Come to Grant Peace  
But Division- Part 1

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June 15, 2014

**Luke 12:49-53**

**49** "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!

**50** But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

**51** Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division;

**52** for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.

**53** 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."

To the Glory of God

The Roman "church" likes to point out that since the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century- there have developed about 2,700 different Protestant factions. Rome uses that information to suggest that the Protestant Reformation was a dismal failure which produced very rebellious children.

Of course, Rome very conveniently ignores the fact that there are no less than 600 different sects of their own- which- using their own logic- would suggest a lot of failure on their part as well.

The Truth is that since the Days of the Apostles there has been division within the Christian Church- and that some of the most godly

and Biblical people have been divided from other godly and Biblical people over very serious issues.

For example- I would love to be able to sit at the feet of some of the Puritans and listen to them and learn from them. I am in awe of these men- whose writings stir my soul and draw me closer to Jesus. And, yet, if I were literally with some of these men- I would engage them very forcefully to renounce their position on infant baptism to adopt Believer's Baptism.

It is true that most all division exists on the earth because one or both parties refuse to acknowledge their sin and repent. People take positions on issues and that position puts them at odds with those who take a different position. And rather than do the hard part of education and persuasion and communication- the parties usually just walk away from each other. And that is the normal way of the world about things like politics and even family squabbles.

But I would suggest that while that is true with those kinds of things- it is *not* true about God and the things of God as much as people might believe. For example- over the last 43 years- I have come to the place where I genuinely believe that almost all theological issues can be resolved rather easily- if people are willing to take God at His Word and refuse to doubt the Holy Scriptures.

You see, I really don't think that most people are wanting to be unbiblical- it is just that they have never had to defend what they believe by Scripture alone. By holding to the concept of "Sola Scriptura" we would see the inconsistencies and inherent contradictions in some of our most closely held and cherished beliefs. We must understand that we do not have the right to believe or to teach anything contrary to Scripture. And while many people think they can simply "opt out" of this requirement by saying, "I'm not a theologian," the requirement stands uncontested.

So there is a Body of Biblical Truth that can be both taught and learned and passed on to future generations about which there can be no debate, no disagreement, no division, and no compromise. And you either believe and teach these Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, or else you are an unbeliever and are teaching false doctrine. Among those Essential Truths are:

- ✓ The Holy Scriptures are inspired, inerrant, infallible, relevant, and sufficient
- ✓ The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ
- ✓ The Sinless Life of Jesus
- ✓ The full Deity and full Humanity of Jesus
- ✓ The substitutionary Death of Jesus on the Cross
- ✓ The literal and bodily Resurrection of Jesus
- ✓ The literal and bodily Ascension of Jesus
- ✓ Justification is by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone

Those who reject or deny Essential Truth are simply not saved; they are not born again, they are not on their way to Heaven, they are not our brothers and sisters in Christ, because by denying one or more of these Essential Truths- you no longer have Biblical Christianity but have, in fact, manufactured your own religion.

And to divide over Essential Truth is right- it is correct and we are supposed to do that. So that kind of division is not bad at all- it is proper.

And while that is true about Essential Truth- it is also true that there are a few other theological divisions that exist that are also good- in the sense that they force both parties to sharpen their understanding of God's Word and hone their ability to defend their positions while at the same time refusing to allow differences on minor issues to divide them on all the other major issues. So I see Division in the Church in a three tiered scale. For example:

- ✓ The first tier is Essential Truth- those things that a person must believe and teach in order to be saved and a Christian. These are non-negotiable and permanent.
- ✓ The second tier is those issues that are not essential and which genuine believers may disagree on- but which would cause great confusion within a particular local Church. Things like the purpose of baptism and the role of women and eschatology.
- ✓ The third tier contain those issues on which the Leadership of a particular local Church should be in agreement about- such as how to apply certain Scriptures to our daily lives.

For example- I'm sad that we're all not on the same page eschatologically. I wish people like RC Sproul and John MacArthur were on the same page about "Last Things". I wish people like Doug Wilson and I were on the same page- but we're not- and that's sad.

But it doesn't cause me too many tears on that level- precisely because we all *agree* on so many other infinitely more important issues that the few issues on which we *disagree*- pale by comparison. And the good news is that these men and I can talk about what we do not agree on without separating from each other and hopefully toward the end of our lives- we will be in more agreement than less.

And this is true because truly born again believers understand that as far as the second and third tier issues go- we are all filled with preconceived ideas and biases and prejudices and slants that are inherent in our fallen flesh, and so we are still growing in our knowledge of the things of God and we are still struggling to understand just how to apply inspired and infallible Truth to our daily lives. And our disagreements actually serve to help us come to a more honest and Biblical understanding of what God has said.

However- when I see somebody that I love go into a hurtful or destructive view of God, or when they twist the Scriptures to promote a hurtful or destructive position- then I can be really grieved, and that hurts more than anything else. There are some theological positions that are so destructive and so dishonoring to God that we should be deeply grieved and angered by them and do everything we can to reject them and denounce them and persuade as many people as we can to walk away from them. And I would cite the so-called "Prosperity Doctrine" and the popular teaching about physical healing that many people embrace today. These doctrines are destructive, they are hurtful, and I abominate them and reject them and try as hard as I can to persuade as many people as I have influence over to also reject them too.

On the other hand, there are all kinds of divisions. So for example- if two of my Elders hated each other—I mean, if they were saying ugly things about each other and doing wicked things against each other- that would probably take me down deeper *emotionally* than most of those theological issues.

I love our Elder fellowship. Brother Andy and Brother Vern are dear men to me and I have no problem at all submitting myself or my

family into their hands- I am safe with these men- because I know that they genuinely love God and they genuinely love me.

And we were meeting just last week and I came home and told Rhonda, "*I absolutely love these men.*" It is a joy to be with these men and to pray with them and to labor alongside these men to make The Covenant of Peace Church what God desires it to be. I am brought closer to God by these men, and I can and I have been corrected and encouraged by both of them.

So in this meeting last week- there were three sinners saved by Grace- who have been called to lead this Church- sitting around a table with one heart, one mind- praying and pulling together for the Glory of God and the Good of the Church! No striving, no debate, no argument- and yet we were talking about serious issues. It was truly a delight of my life.

But it has taken a long time to get it where it is now and all along the way- there *was* strife and there *was* division with unruly and factious and rebellious and probably unsaved men- who would *not* work with others for God's Glory or for the Good of the sheep of this Church. And I would say that part of the reason why we have such harmony *now* is because we didn't always have it, and that division served as a tool in God's Hands to bring us closer together and hopefully more useful to God the Holy Spirit.

Now I want you to turn with me to examine a short Passage of only two verses that talk about this very issue in **1 Corinthians 11**- so please go there with me- **1 Corinthians 11**- two verses- 18&19: 1 Corinthians 11:18&19

**18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it.**

**19 For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.**

Now here the Apostle Paul writes and tells us in verse 19 that factions or divisions must be. And that sounds so strange and so contrary to everything that Jesus talked about, and so we ask the question:

Why would it ever be God's Will for there to be factions in the Church?

And the answer is found at the last part of verse 19:

**... so that those who are approved may become evident among you.**

Now to understand this- I want to remind you that God's Sovereignty is understood in basically two different ways:

- A. Active Sovereignty
- B. Passive Sovereignty

So in other words- God Sovereignly *causes* certain things to happen- which is called "Active Sovereignty", and then God *allows* other things to happen- which is called "Passive Sovereignty". And so God is in complete charge of all things- all the time- that is what it means for God to be Sovereign- God is absolutely sovereign over everything- all the time. So there is nothing that happens that does not happen by God's Decree. There is not a single molecule roaming out there on its own. God determines when, how, and where everything that happens- happens. And so the sweet Promise of **Romans 8:28** is true and all things work together for "Good" to those who are called and who love God precisely because God is in complete charge of all things.

And this bothers many people. And they struggle with understanding just how this works- because you have to keep four different issues together:

1. God is Absolutely Sovereign Over Everything- All the Time
2. Man is Totally Responsible to God for What He Does
3. Man is Not a Robot
4. God Cannot Do Evil or Force Anyone to Do Evil

And the answer to all four of these issues is the understanding of Active and Passive Sovereignty. You see, in His Omnipotence- God sometimes *allows* what we would call "Bad" or "Evil" things from a human standpoint. But God does not directly *cause* or *force* these Bad and Evil things to happen- because God cannot ever, in any way, be complicit in sin or evil, and Man has to always be responsible for what he does. And if God *forced* somebody to sin or if God just pushed His Weight around and *caused* somebody to sin- then God would be to

*blame* for their sin, and the person would be a robot and not be responsible, and so God could not judge him.

So we have to understand that human beings are already fallen and sinful, and so God periodically *allows* the inherent wickedness of fallen man to advance- but only to the degree that by allowing that wickedness to advance- it furthers God's Good and Holy Will.

Another way of saying this is that God has the Power and the Authority to Sovereignly stop somebody from doing things that are evil and God does this all the time. People are in the car- heading over to somebody's house to do them harm and on the way- they think they have had a change of heart or a change of mind or something happens to interfere with their plans.

But what actually happened is that God sovereignly intervened in this situation to restrain them or stop them so that the evil that they planned to do didn't happen.

But periodically God *allows* sinful people to do what they already want to do anyway and He does not *stop* them- He chooses not to restrain them and allows them to go ahead and manifest their wickedness. But God only does that to the degree that by allowing it- that wickedness furthers God's Will in the earth.

So we understand that God directly and actively *causes* Good and Holy and Lovely things while passively *allowing* or *permitting* sinful human beings to carry out their own inherent voluntary sinful intentions. But God allows this- only to the degree that by allowing these people to manifest the internal evil that is in them and not stopping it- God's Perfect Will is carried out.

So keep in mind that God *could*, and many times He *does*, stop sinful people from performing their wickedness. Sinful people are not sovereign- God is. Satan is not sovereign- God is. So many times- the evil that people plan to do is minimized or thwarted all together. But there are times that by passively *allowing* evil to seemingly flourish for a season- God's infinitely more glorious Plan is carried out.

For example- in the **Book of Job**- God didn't *make* the Sebeans kill Job's slaves and rob Job of his donkeys. God didn't *overpower* the will of the Sebeans and *force* them to sin- no, the Sebeans were wicked and evil men who wanted to rob Job and kill his men for a very long time- they wanted to kill Job, too- but God had sovereignly set a hedge about

Job- and that hedge *prevented* these wicked sinners from carrying out their evil upon Job.

But since it was God's Will to allow Job to be tempted- God temporarily *lifted* the hedge that was around him and God *allowed* the Sebeans to do what they already wanted to do anyway. But even at that- God sovereignly *restrained* them or *prevented* them for doing *everything* that they wanted to do, and even though they were *allowed* to steal Job's donkeys and kill his slaves- they were not able to kill Job.

So the Sebeans were willfully sinning, and so they were completely responsible for the demonstration of this wickedness in killing and robbing, and, therefore, they could and they were rightly judged by God for doing that. So God didn't *make* these people sin- even though it was God's Will to try Job- but by passively *allowing* that manifestation of evil- to that degree- Job could go through his time of testing.

So what Paul is saying here in **1 Corinthians** is that periodically God *allows* strife and division to come into the Church. God doesn't *cause* the strife or the division- He doesn't *force* people to commit this terrible sin- because that would make God complicit in their evil. No, factious men are *entirely* responsible for causing division and can and will be judged by God for doing so.

But God *allows* sinful people to periodically manifest some of the wickedness that is already in their heart to do. And we need to stop and ponder this mystery for a minute and we need to ask the question:

If God is Good and Jesus is the Prince of Peace- why would God ever bring Division and not grant Peace? Why would it ever be God's Perfect Will to allow Division to exist?

And the reason that God allows some division in the Church- Paul says here in **1 Corinthians 11**- is to manifest the greater "Good" of making evident or making visible or making clear- those men who are *approved* by God among us. So the greater Good of making evident genuinely godly leaders is worth the risk of temporarily allowing division

And this is the same way with false teaching. God periodically *allows* false teaching to come into the Church- He doesn't *cause* the false teaching and God doesn't *force* people to teach wrongly- and God



could have stopped it and obviously He chose not to. But God periodically *allows* what is wrong and false to take root in some hearts so that when we see the error of it- and are delivered from it- we will see and value and appreciate the Truth even more.

God allows false converts to sit on the pews of His Church. God could have stopped them and God could have exposed them- but He chose not to. And God allows these people to sit there and hear the Gospel year after year without bowing, without breaking, and without bending. And He does so for the infinitely greater Good of manifesting true and genuine believers that shine in the Glory of the Father right in the face of such hypocrisy and willful deception.

So there are some *kinds* of division that is small and petty, and those kinds of division do not move me at all. But there are other kinds of division that are very deep and very serious and very heart-wrenching that trouble me deeply and profoundly, and they cause me to lose sleep and cause me to not eat properly and they cause me great distress and these things put me on my face before God- begging Him to move and to have Mercy and bring resolution. And God allows both the petty and the profound, and God stops both the petty and the profound. Some of the profound divisions that God allows and that are Good and that are His Will are:

- ✓ Dividing between sheep and goats
- ✓ Dividing between fish on the right side and fish on the left
- ✓ Dividing between the Holy and the Profane
- ✓ Dividing between that which pleases God and that which pleases Him not
- ✓ Dividing between the children of God and children of the devil
- ✓ Dividing between salt that seasons and salt that has lost its season
- ✓ Dividing between hay, wood and stubble and gold, silver and precious stones
- ✓ Dividing between darkness and light
- ✓ Dividing between truth and error

So while some division is wrong and evil and sinful- all division is not wrong and all divisions are not of the devil and all divisions are not unproductive for God's Kingdom and for the success of the Gospel.

Now Jesus makes one of the most profound statements here in verse 51 that He made anywhere in the Bible when He said:  
**Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division;**

... and this is what the Jewish rabbis called a “*mashal*”- it is what we would call a “paradoxical statement”. The phrase,

**"Do you suppose"**

... is a verb that could just as well be translated

"Do you presume,"

or

"Does it seem right to say,"

or

“Is it reasonable for you to think.”

That's the implication of this verb. It's sensible for you to assume that in my capacity as the Messiah- that I am bringing Peace. Right?

Well, this is one of those “duh” moments. *Of course* that is reasonable to assume. *Of course* that is what any Jew in the first Century would have thought about the Messiah- that after all these years and after all these fallen souls have made such a mess of everything that God created- that when Messiah finally comes- He will fix everything and He will solve every problem and He will make right every wrong thing; He will make every bad thing to become a good thing and He will finally and permanently bring the peace that we have all sought after for so long to come- the peace that we have sung about; the peace that we named Jerusalem after, the peace that God's Law promised, the peace that all the Prophets promised- the Messiah will come and He will bring that Peace- finally to the earth. So, *of course*, we think like that, Jesus.

And Jesus' response- in the original Greek that Dr. Luke wrote in begins with the word "ohi"- which is Greek for "No!" It is an emphatic statement.

**"I tell you no, but rather division"**

... and that is a pretty devastating statement that completely shatters all their preconceived ideas about Who Jesus is and what Jesus will do and what His primary Message is.

This Statement by Jesus flew in the face of everything that they had been taught about the Messiah their whole lives, and it was diametrically opposite from everything that they personally expected from the Messiah when He finally came.

And this still startles people in our day who do not know the Bible and who have been wrongly taught about Jesus. These people assume that since Jesus is called "The Prince of Peace" that all the wars and all the divisions and all the striving and all the struggles must all be sin, and we are all just missing God and not being and not doing what Jesus told us to do or else we wouldn't have all this division.

Modern American Culture has a completely unbiblical and romantic notion about Jesus as being a "Man of Love" Who would never make anybody feel bad, and Who would not require anything from anybody and never argue with anyone. They see Jesus as a kind and gentle Man Who accepted everybody just as they were and never made any judgments about them- a Man Who came to bring Peace to the earth and that His primary Message was basically "Peace through Love". And it's reinforced at the Christmas season because people are reminded that a Child is born, and a Son is given, and He's going to be called the Prince of Peace, and all the angels announced to the shepherds that He would bring peace on earth.

And even the Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century had this expectation that when the Messiah came- peace would come with Him. I mean after all- **Psalms 72:7** said that in the Days of the Messiah-

**... may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more.**

... and even Zachariah- the father of John Baptist- who under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit proclaimed in **Luke 1:78&79** that upon the coming of Messiah,

**78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,**

**79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace."**

These Jews remembered **Isaiah 55** which said the Messiah would come to bring peace, and **Isaiah 66** which said He would come to bring peace, and they knew that in **Ezekiel 34**- the promise of the new covenant was a promise of peace, and they knew that **Ezekiel 37:24-28** was another promise that with the coming of the new covenant would come peace. Jesus Himself said to a harlot in **Luke 7:50**,

**"Go in peace"**

So, is it not reasonable then for these Jews to expect then that when the Messiah came- He would bring peace? Sure it is- except there are different *kinds* of peace. You see, there are at least five different kinds of "Peace" that human beings experience on this earth:

1. The Peace of a Slave
2. The Peace of a Conqueror
3. Financial Security
4. The Absence of War
5. Nationalistic Peace

Now there is no doubt that slaves live a terrible life. But while their lives are miserable- they have some measure of peace- in the sense that they are no longer struggling against their oppressors. And they no longer struggle because they gave up, they capitulated, they surrendered, and now they live underneath a *form* of peace- the brutal unjust "peace" of a slave.

And those who conquer also have peace because their gun was bigger or their forces prevailed over another and they no longer struggle either, and they enjoy a measure of peace- but only because they rule

over those with whom they struggled. But as soon as their military might decreases- their peace will vanish with it.

Those who are financially blessed also enjoy a measure of peace- in the sense that they no longer live in fear that if the light bill goes up they will have to live in sweltering heat in the summer and freezing cold in the winter, and they do not have to choose between buying medicine and buying food. However, a downturn in the market or hyper-inflation could cause them to lose everything they have and this peace will vanish away very quickly.

Many people today think of peace only in the sense of there being an absence of war or an absence of struggle or strife, and these people enjoy their peace- but only until the next war or the next struggle arrives and then this peace also vanishes away.

And then there is a "Nationalistic Peace" which is what these Jews understood peace to be. And this Nationalistic Peace began back in the days of Solomon when King David said in **1Chronicles 22:5-10**:

**5 David said, 'My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD shall be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all lands. *Therefore* now I will make preparation for it.'** So David made ample preparations before his death.

**6 Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel.**

**7 David said to Solomon, 'My son, I had intended to build a house to the name of the LORD my God.**

**8 'But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to My name, because you have shed *so* much blood on the earth before Me.**

**9 'Behold, a son will be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.**

**10 'He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.'**

So the Jews understood "Peace" as God giving the nation of Israel:

**"Rest from all [their] enemies and on every side"**

... so they looked at "Peace" as being at rest from all the pagan Gentile nations and kingdoms and empires of the world- who periodically made war against Israel and ruled over them. Among those who did were:

- ✓ The Egyptians
- ✓ The Babylonians
- ✓ The Assyrians
- ✓ The Persians
- ✓ The Greeks

... and at the very moment that Jesus was speaking these words- the entire nation of Israel was brutally and inhumanely being subjugated and controlled by the Roman Empire- which mocked their god, defiled their altars, and forced the Jews to worship their pagan gods.

But God was crystal clear that if His people would not serve Him- they would bow their knees as slaves to somebody else. And so it was God Who raised up these various Empires to crush His Own people and to force them to a place of repentance- which was the greater Good.

And then once they repented- God would deliver them by a mighty hand and judge the Empire or nation who attacked them, and God would give His people peace all around. And then the Jews would take that nationalistic peace and get prideful and they would forget God and they would allow sin to enter back in and then God would repeat the cycle over and over again.

So during the days of Jesus- the Jews hated the Romans. And the Jews prayed and sought for the removal and annihilation of the Romans by the promised Warrior/Messiah- Who they thought was going to command a mighty army of Jewish warriors- who would utterly vanquish the Romans and free Israel. And after His grand Victory- this Messiah would enter the city of Jerusalem in triumph- riding on a white stallion- and would walk into the Temple and sit down on the throne of King David and would then rule the entire world with a rod of iron. This was their understanding of Salvation. The Jews of Jesus' day didn't understand Salvation as God rescuing them from their sins and His Wrath- they looked at Salvation as being saved or delivered from the pagan nations that subjugated them at that particular moment.

So while human beings all throughout time have experienced and enjoyed one or more of these five *kinds* of peace- none of these five

different kinds of peace is the Peace that the Old Testament Prophets foretold or that Jesus was determined to give. So there is a *sixth* kind of Peace that all of the Bible declares- and it is:

## **Peace with God**

You see as sinners- we are at odds with God. We are separated from God; we are at war with God. So the enemy of America is not Al-Qada, it is not Islamic Terrorists, it isn't inflation or Russia, or liberals, or The President. It really isn't even the devil. No, the enemy of America is God.

We have shaken our fist in God's Face as we slaughter 55 million living human beings who all had a fingerprint and a heartbeat, as we promote pornography, as we promote sexual perversity, and as have the audacity to try to live good and peaceful and successful and productive lives without God and without submitting to God's Authority and without obeying God's Word.

How ridiculous it is for people to assume that they can live in a world that God made and to breathe air that God provides and to eat food that God has given and to enjoy the beauty and blessings that God allows and to then think that they can do their own thing and live as they choose and actually enjoy peace? How silly is that?

I tell you that as a nation- we have become prideful and arrogant in a mad dash to build up self-esteem and to make this earth our best life and to find self-fulfillment in anything except the Bible and in anyone except Jesus.

And so God is against us and God resists us and God has lifted the hedge of protection that was around us and is allowing us to be invaded and overrun and taken over- because if we refuse to bow to God- we will bow to somebody else.

The entire world is crying out for peace- but what they are crying for is one of the five kinds of peace that we saw and actually very few people are actually crying for and seeking after the only peace that matters- Peace with God.

Even the United Nations cries for peace as they have the audacity to use **Isaiah 2:4** as their Charter that says:

**they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.**

... while categorically denying the Lordship of Jesus Christ or bowing to His Sovereignty. Silly politicians and humanitarians cry for an end to injustice and there are great movements which seek to right historic and tragic wrongs and to bring peace and harmony to a weary world- all while categorically rejecting Jesus and What He said.

We must understand, dear friends, that there will never be world peace and there will never be a complete absence of war or an end to injustice or any of the other five kinds of peace until there is an end to sin because it is sin in the heart of Man that causes all wars, and it is sin that causes all injustice, and it is sin that causes sickness, and it is sin that causes divorce and abortion and murder and poverty and crime and endless suffering.

And until sin is dealt with and until sin is confessed and until sin is forgiven and until Righteousness is imputed- there will be sin. And as long as there is sin- these problems will exist and they will flourish.

And there is only one answer to sin and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus gives forgiveness of all sin and with that forgiveness comes imputed Righteousness and with that imputed righteousness comes the only peace that matters- Peace with God.

And those who are at peace with God are no longer at war with God and they are no longer separated from God and they are no longer alienated from the life that is only in God.

But understand that the Peace that Jesus gives is unlike any of the other five kinds of peace that the lost unsaved world seeks after. And yet the Peace that only Jesus gives transcends all the other kinds so much so- that you can still be at peace with God even if you are in war and you can still be at peace with God even if you are not financially secure and even if you do not have nationalistic peace and even if you do not have any of the other kinds of peace.

So when you are talking about true and lasting Peace with God- sin is the issue because the Bible says in **Isaiah 59:2**

**But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear.**



But you cannot *educate* yourself out of sin- because sin is not a problem of ignorance. The most sophisticated and technologically and medically and financially prosperous and advanced cultures on earth are also the most barbaric and evil and sinful.

You cannot *legislate* yourself out of sin- because sin is not a legislative problem. You cannot *advance* yourself out of sin through technology, you cannot *cure* sin with medical advances, you cannot *buy* sin off with money, you cannot *exercise* yourself out of sin, you cannot *sing* your way out of sin, you cannot *think* your way out of sin, you cannot *praise* your way out of sin, and you cannot *preach* your way out of sin.

No, you must be graced by God to *confess* your sin and you must be granted with the ability to *hate* your sin and you must be blessed to see the inherent sinfulness of sin to the point where you have no options and you have no answers and you are a broken, desperate soul- who can do nothing else but beat your chest in humility and cry out for undeserved Mercy and unearned Grace.

And Jesus Christ gives peace- but there's a condition. It is Peace on His terms. So there will never be world peace or Jewish peace, and there will never be a kingdom at all on this earth until Jesus reigns in the individuals' hearts. There will be no national peace until there's peace with God and nobody can give that Peace except Jesus.

So a rejection of Jesus or a denial of Jesus or a minimization of Jesus to where Jesus is your homeboy or your co-pilot or the "Man Upstairs" or some kind of Savior who makes no demands on your life- yet He is not Lord and Master and Sovereign- if those things exist- then there can be no true and lasting Peace.

With Jesus it is all or nothing. There is none of the 99 & 44/100% pure. You are either a bought and paid for bond-slave of the Lord Jesus Christ or you are left to yourself. Jesus is either your Lord or else He is not your Savior. Jesus is either the sweetest Name you know and the Lilly of your valley and the Bright and Morning Star and the Beautiful Rose of Sharon and the Fairest of ten thousand to your soul or else you are yet in your sins and you will never have peace with God.

Now by the time Dr. Luke wrote this section- Jesus is toward the end of His earthly Ministry- into the third and final year of His ministry. And Jesus is now heading very rapidly toward the Cross.

The unbelief and rejection of Israel is now a fixed reality. The religious leaders have completely rejected Him, and they have now moved way past simple rejection and are already plotting how to kill Him. And very soon now- these very same people who are all around Jesus here- listening to what He is saying in this Passage- they will join in screaming for His blood- for they have already been convinced for the most part that Jesus does what He does by the power of Satan because that is what they have been told by their leaders, and so they are forfeiting their monumental opportunity for any peace with God and this is a turning point as to why He suddenly stops and says in verse 51.

**Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no; but rather division.**

The peace that was promised to the Jews through the OT Prophets if they would repent and turn to the Messiah has now been taken away from them because they have utterly and completely rejected the Prince of Peace. They have, therefore, forfeited any chance to enter the kingdom of God.

True and lasting Peace with God could only come through individuals putting faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah, Savior, and Lord. And the only way to do that is to confess that they were lost- which in order to do that- they had to reject everything they were doing. But if there was no Peace between the sinner and God- there would be no peace among the people. And there would be no kingdom of peace. There will never be a kingdom of peace until salvation comes to the heart- so in place of this precious peace- there is great division.

So I ask today- is there division between you and God? Are you at odds with the Owner and Creator of the Universe? Do you really think that you are going to be able to live a good life separated from God? Do you really think it will work out well with you? And you must know that the only way to have peace with God is to be saved and Jesus be your Lord. So I pray that you will be saved today. I pray that you will be moved by God the Holy Spirit to judge your own life and see if you are in division with God or if you have been reconciled to God by Jesus Christ.

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.