

**A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**  
**TTT. Our Need To Choose Spiritual Sides**  
**(Luke 12:49-59)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. The world is composed of people who are believers as well as those who are unbelievers, people who fellowship with God and those who do not. Since mankind is a social creature, the tendency for us as humans is to be tolerant of others who have different views that we might be compatible with them.
- B. Though we must try to live as peaceably with all men as we can (Romans 12:18), Christ in Luke 12:49-59 called for us to adhere to righteousness and God as opposed to evil, which action produces deep divisions!
- C. We thus view this passage for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

**II. Our Need To Choose Spiritual Sides, Luke 12:49-59.**

- A. In Luke 12:49-50, Jesus expressed His great intolerance for the sin that existed in the human race:
  - 1. On the one hand, Christ predicted the time when He would send His fire of judgment on the world, and He strongly wished that He could have already ignited that consuming fire, Luke 12:49.
  - 2. On the other hand, Christ had to be spiritually baptized with His substitutionary death for mankind's sin on the cross, and He was greatly distressed over His coming identification with man's sin, Luke 12:50.
- B. The Lord's intense revulsion at sin would cause Him to lead others who believed in Him to be similarly very opposed to sin to where it would divide people who sided with righteousness instead of sin, Luke 12:51-53:
  - 1. Where people might have supposed that Jesus had come to earth to give peace between sinners and the righteous, Christ stated that He had rather come to create divisions among them, Luke 12:51.
  - 2. For this reason, a family of five in a household would be divided three against two and the two against the three in a mutual and deep division between these two groups, Luke 12:52.
  - 3. Normal human relationships would be upset in this division, Luke 12:53: A father would be divided against the son whom he would otherwise want to nurture as his heir, and the son would be divided against his father whom he would otherwise revere. A mother would be divided against her daughter and her daughter against her mother, and a mother-in-law would be divided against her daughter-in-law and her daughter-in-law would be divided against her mother-in-law so that otherwise close family ties would be disrupted over the division between those who were righteous and those who were in sin!
- C. Because of these spiritual realities, Jesus gave a strong warning to His hearers to adjust to God's righteousness by putting their trust in Him lest they suffer severe divine judgment, Luke 12:54-59:
  - 1. Just as Christ had shown by His attesting miracles that He was the Messiah and Son of God, that these miracles were signs for the people of Israel to heed and to believe in Christ to escape God's judgment, so the people had signs that forecast the weather.
  - 2. If they saw a cloud rise out of the west over the Mediterranean Sea, the people knew that rain was coming, and rain would then certainly come, Luke 12:54.
  - 3. If they saw the south wind blow, the people would predict that it would be hot weather, and sure enough, the weather would become hot, Luke 12:55.
  - 4. Thus, the people were hypocritical to discern the weather through such signs of the sky and earth while ignoring the signs of Jesus' miracles and what they certified about Him, Luke 12:56. Failing to believe in Christ would thus bring God's certain, severe judgment as foretold in Deuteronomy 18:18-19; Luke 12:57.
  - 5. "In light of impending judgment that would fall on that nation, Christ urged them to seek reconciliation with the Judge." (J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 1991, p. 318) To that end, Jesus gave a parable about one's going before a judge against an adversary in court, Luke 12:58a. Christ noted that if His hearers were to go before a judge in a court case, they would be wise to reconcile with their adversary that the charges might be dropped. The alternative would be to face a judge who might pass severe judgment on them to their great loss. (Ibid.; Luke 12:58b-59)
  - 6. God's judgment was a similar experience: people would be wise to heed the signs of Christ's miracles that testified that He was the Messiah and God that they might believe in Him to avoid God's severe judgment!

***Lesson:*** *We must heed God's signals in our lives that we be upright or we will suffer very costly divine discipline.*

***Application:*** *May we heed Christ's call to choose to side with God and righteousness versus sin and sinful people regardless what it costs us in terms of human relationships, for the alternative of God's discipline is far too costly.*