

Faith in the Home

Sermon Notes for the Kiddos (and everybody else)

Luke 12:49-59

Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on in one house there will be five divided, 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 her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law" (Luke 12:50-53).

What does Jesus mean by this? Aren't we reminded every Christmas from the book of Isaiah that Jesus is the "Prince of Peace?" This passage seems to be the opposite of everything we expect about Jesus. I have encountered a number of non-Christians who have alluded to this very text that Jesus was more of a violent revolutionary than He was a teacher who taught us to, "Love our Neighbor." However, Jesus is shedding light on a rather uncomfortable truth. The truth is, people seek out what gives them most satisfaction, glory, honor, money, power, pleasure, etc. Our human condition does not want to accept the need to be saved from one's self. This is why people are offended by Jesus, and also by His followers. Satan is skilled at projecting a false peace under the umbrella of his lies. Jesus shines the light of God and upsets our preset notions of what is good and bad. He came to bring war against Satan to set the captives free.

This means that we as Christians are truly the odd ones out in the world. We thirst for God's righteousness and Jesus quenches that thirst. We find that we are as broken as the world around us and that is why we rejoice at Jesus' salvation. Thank God that He sent His Son to fight for us. Yes, fight! Some fights are worth having. God's fight for your soul may have you at odds with people that you love, but His love for us is more fulfilling and life giving than any other relationship we could have. Continue to pray for those who you know that may not be saved.

Pray for yourself as their witness too. Remember, God did save us from the world, and now we are the outsiders here, the odd ones out. That is okay. Eternal life is worth it.

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So how do we teach these things with our kids?

1. The world does not like to teach that there is an objective good and evil. At some point our children will be faced with objective evil in our world. Christian author C.S. Lewis wrote: "Since it is so likely that children will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage." When we feel it is age appropriate, we can use stories to teach about good and evil. I personally recommend C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia.
2. As parents we want children to be able to stand up for themselves so that they don't have to feel bullied. This may seem like a paradox to Jesus who teaches us to "Turn the other cheek." However, this is not contrary to that idea at all. God raised up people to stand up against bullies throughout Scripture. Two highlights of that are David, who beat the giant Goliath, and the crown of them all is Jesus, who defeated Satan. It's okay to teach our children to stand up for the weak and oppressed.
3. At some point our kids are going to have to face the fact that they WILL be smeared by someone on account of their Christian faith. We can help them by letting them know that Jesus said this would happen. Think of the story, "The Ugly Duckling." To the world we are the ugly duckling. But through Jesus, God is growing us all into beautiful swans for His Kingdom.

Has this been helpful? Why/why not? Do you have any suggestions? Please contact Pastor Joel at luckemeyerj@gmail.com Thanks!