**Did God Lie To Us?**

**Luke 12:49-56**

Introduction: Story of Alonzo Stagg – pg. 4 of Humorous Illustrations.

* One of greatest college football coaches of all time
* Told this story on one of his midwestern agricultural college teams.

First young team, farm boys, green and immature in ways of football.

But like every year, Stagg had set up a scrimmage with one of the perennial football powers of the Midwest to give them valuable early experience.

Score was always lopsided – but this year even worse. By 3rd quarter – 119-0

Midway through 3rd quarter, a lean, lanky lineman for the Aggies rose suddenly from his position. He threw his head gear as far as he could and walked off the field. Someone shouted down from the stands – “Get back out there, game’s not over!”

The bruised, battered youngster kept walking and yelled back over his shoulder – “It’s over for me – We came to get ‘experience’ and I’ve got all I can stand”

That’s the way I feel – all beaten up – after reading and studying Luke 12 – Listen and follow along in the Bible.

Vs.8-10 - **8** *"And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God;****9****but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God.****10****And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.*

Vs. 20-21 - ***20****But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'****21****So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."*

Vs. 32-34 - **32** *"Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.****33****Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.****34****For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

Vs. 45-46 - **45** *But if that slave says to himself, "My master is delayed in coming,' and if he begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk,****46****the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and put him with the unfaithful.*

Vs. 48 - 51- *But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating. From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.* ***49****"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!****50****I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed!****51****Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!*

By verse 56 – *“You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?*” – I’m ready to throw up my hands –

Like the young lineman, It’s too hard! I feel all beaten up – Something is wrong here! That’s not what I’ve grown up hearing about Jesus and the Christian faith! Have you?

Didn’t you , like me, cut your Sunday School teeth on such images as in the text and hymn phrases:

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, ow can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at PEACE with each other.”

Luke 2:14 – Christmas Story – “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill toward all people.”

Romans 12:18 – “If it be possible, as much as possible, live PEACEABLY with all.  
Romans 14:19 – “Let us follow after the things which make for peace and things, we may edify each other.”

I Corinthians 14:33 – “God is not the author of confusion but of peace as in all churches of the saints”

II Corinthians 13:11 – “Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace”

1 Timothy 2:22 – That we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”

James 3:18 – first fruit of righteousness is sown in peace - - “

Hymns –

#536 – Precious Name, Oh How Sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heaven!

#277 – Tell Me The Stories of Jesus

* “Scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea”
* “Words full of kindness, deeds full of grace, All in love light of Jesus’ face.”

#469 – Jesus Is All The World To Me

* “No other one can cheer me so”
* “I go to him for blessing and He gives them o’er and o’er”
* “Beautiful life that has no end, eternal life, eternal joy”

# 600 – Wonderful Words of Life

* Offer pardon and peace to all

Now, that’s better! O how comforting!

That’s more like I remember! Don’t you? Jesus is a good guy, loving!

Our Temptation is to Ignore, sweep under the rugs, cut out of Bible these harsh texts! But here it plainly states – “not peace but division”!

That’s our text – how to handle it?

Why do you suppose Luke would record this harsh phases?

Investigative work here –

Try to imagine Luke’s church and what’s going on to make him share these phrases.

What could have been going on in Luke's day, that he would apply these words of Jesus?

Maybe the Christians were:

A. Too lenient/accommodating

World of mixed religion – ex.) Midas – Bull of Strength, drink blood

Attitude could have been: if your belief is sincere albeit different, that’s okay! Apply to us? Story on NPR – Soldiers militia and supporters – car bombings – very sincere and committed to using human shields, etc. Is this ok?

II. Or the Situation could have been Christians were lax in their outreach and mission

* + Poor and homeless left to own devices
  + Elderly fin for themselves
  + Child valued for economic cheap labor

III. Or The situation could have been following Christ and living like Christian was just seen as optional at best.

If the Christian faith in Luke’s day was too accommodating, to “anything goes as long as you’re sincere”, optional, then these words of Jesus would be quite appropriate.

Christian faith meant fiery baptism; needed people to take a stand . . . even if it meant splitting a family.

Christian faith is no ‘namby, pamby’ religion that says if it feels good it’s okay!

God loved us so much, Jesus died for us!

You can’t just blow that off! To serve Christ means commitment and sacrifice!

Christ must be our top focus – we can’t let anything else take that priority – even if it is family, work, anything.

B. Possibly, the situation for Luke was different from what I just said.

Perhaps Luke’s church was living under severe persecution.

Worship in secret – spies everywhere

If you were found to be a Christian, torture, even death

* + Sons and daughters might be followers but not parents – family divided
  + Wife follower but not husband
  + One family member selling out another!

Continual political pressure from Rome and local government to deny Christ. Purpose is to stamp out this new movement!

Now if this is the case – then these words from today’s scripture would have opposite effect.

They’d be words of comfort!

Yes, Jesus told us it would be like this

Jesus said it wouldn’t be easy

Let us hold on

God will be faithful

You’re doing God’s will – you can see by all the persecution.

So, in this scenario – this scripture becomes reassuring – Hang on there will be light at the end of the tunnel.

This division in our family - - -Jesus said it could happen to us.

*Did God lie to us? – No! Jesus came to bring fire/division and love and peace – depends on our situation.*

Where are we today, this morning?

Where do you fit into this text?

I. Are you too accommodation in life?

Do you try to live and let live even though others are denying Christ, making a joke out of the Faith?

EX:- A friend’s son – 30ish went to a costume Halloween party dressed as Jesus (had long, flowing beautiful hair) - but wore a bracelet WWJD. Are you not really following Christ, living the way you are called to live because it will keep peace in the family?

If accommodation describes you, then hear the text this morning as judgement.

Jesus might just come and bring division, difficulties – to get your attention and text your commitment!

God certainly didn't lie to us! Certainly not!

This text today reminds of God’s love and sacrifice for us!

Let it inspire us to NOT accommodate our faith to this world, but to live our lives so that Christ can transform this world into God’s kingdom!

Let it comfort us that just as Christ suffered, our faithfulness will bring suffering but, in that suffering, Christ will be present with us – to see us through.

If you love Christ and repent of your sins, then this table is open to you.