

## Fire from Heaven – June 7, 2023

Jesus wasn't always accepted. He was rejected many times.

- **Mark 5:17** - "And the crowd began pleading with Jesus to go away and leave them alone."

- **Mark 11** – Triumphant entry, followed by Rejection & Crucifixion

**Luke 9:51-56** - NIV – "As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, 'Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?' 55 But Jesus turned and rebuked them. 56 Then he & His disciples went to another village."

**1** – People did not welcome Jesus b/c he was heading for Jerusalem.

- Not everyone will accept you b/c you have a destiny.
  - Greatness causes jealousy.      • Prejudice causes blindness.
  - Oscar Wilde said: "No good deed goes unpunished."
  - Jesus / disciples are examples – doing good can backfire.  
Persecuted after healing.
- **Mark 13:13** – "You will be hated by everyone because of My name, but the one who perseveres to the end will be saved."
  - Our ego wants everyone to love us, accept us. Not reality.
  - Jesus knows this **truth**. You can have peace when you know it.

**2** – James & John want to destroy the village ... Go to the **end of the story**:

- Jesus dies, resurrected, Church grows, Holy Spirit moves. Then Steven is martyred. Persecution breaks out, Disciples scatter. Philip, Samaria.
  - **Act 8:14-15** - *When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. After they went down there, they prayed for them so the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit because he had not yet come down on any of them"*
- Sometimes we **plant seeds** to Samaritans . . . Don't burn bridges. **Pray**.
  - John now sees the Samaritans needed a **different fire**. Holy Spirit.
    - The Holy Spirit convicts. Not us.

### 3 – We aren't in charge of Justice, revenge, retaliation.

- We shouldn't destroy/attack other faith practices. God sorts it out
  - Matt. 13 – Jesus tells the **Parable of the Weeds**
    - Wheat planted, sprouts, bore grain, but weeds! Servant asks... pull weeds? No, might uproot wheat in the process
    - **Matt. 13:30**- "Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn."
- Many killed in the name of religion.
- Not Jesus' response. And the Samaritans show us why.
  - **John 12:47** – "As for anyone who hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world." **God alone is judge.**
  - **Our actions should be positive, not negative.**

### 4 - Call down fire from heaven?

- King Ahaziah sends 50 men & Capt. to bring Elijah to him. 2 Kings 1.
- Elijah answered the captain, "If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!"
  - In New Testament, new response. **New life** we live.
    - God is interested in our **reactions** to life, not just actions.

### 5 – How to React? What to do when we're unwelcome... disrespected?

- **Luke 9:5** – "If people do not welcome you, *leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.*"
  - Maybe Jesus scolds J & J b/c he already taught them the response.
- **Paul & Barnabas** learned / lesson, Preaching in **Antioch**, a city in Pisidia:
  - **Acts 13:44** – "On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. **45** When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. . . ." . . . but Gentiles believed.
  - **49** "The word of the Lord was spread throughout the entire region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women and the chief men of the city, and raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them from their region. So they **shook off the dust** of their feet against them & went to Iconium."

- **You Can't** make people **love u**, just help people **love Jesus**.
- **Walk away...**

6 – Spirit of Love, not hate. [Add'l text]

- **New Century Ver.** - 55 But Jesus turned and scolded them. [And Jesus said, “You don't know what kind of spirit you belong to. 56 The Son of Man did not come to destroy the souls of people but to save them.”] Then they went to another town.”
  - **The Spirit of God is love. If we belong to God, that's our spirit.**
  - **Spirit of love responds in love.** Our reactions / responses matter.
    - Our desire to respond otherwise shows we **need for more of God**

7 – Grace flows down.

When our loved ones are disrespected, we tend to react like James & John.

This rejection was of Jesus, not them. He moved on. **Grace flows down.**

- Jesus walked away. He didn't respond; wasn't angry at the Samaritans.
  - Walk away. Shake the dust . . . don't respond.

Song of the week – “Walking Away” - Unspoken