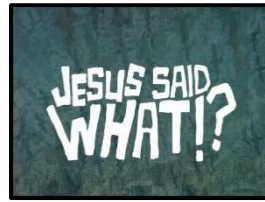


WISHING FOR REVIVAL

(By Pastor Steve 1/19/2020)

Did you know that Jesus actually “wished” for something? That may seem odd, but look at His words in **Luke 12:49**.



**"I have come to bring fire on the earth,
and how I WISH it were already kindled!"**

The biggest surprise here may not be that our Lord “wished” for something, but rather what it was that He “wished” for. What is this fire He “wished” to be ignited? Best to examine the context.

⁴⁹ "I have come to bring fire on 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 completed! ⁵¹ Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. ⁵² From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, 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."

Now, this doesn't appear to be very comforting. It seems like He's “wishing” for conflict. If so, He got His wish. Just look around. Divorce is common place and families are being torn apart. Our country is bitterly divided – politically, ideologically, and spiritually. And our world? Wars and rumors of wars abound. Is this what Jesus “wished” for? No.

Having said that, His “wish” is related to His knowledge that the division that already existed on the earth was about to intensify. As He brought hope to the world for healing, He knew that those who rejected His plan for peace would also reject those who sincerely followed Him. In the process, rather than promoting peace, they would contribute to the chaos.

The truth is that before restoration begins, there is usually need for some demolition of the ruins. Likewise, healing rarely is completed without discomfort and pain. How much more so when it comes to the restoring of people to God and healing for the nations?

Jesus would need to suffer the pain of the cross and experience the horrible “*feeling of being separated*” from His Father. Yet, our Lord's expressed “wish” was to “bring it on.” His attitude was: “*the sooner we get on with it, the sooner it'll be over.*”

I wonder if Jesus may also have had in mind another “fire” to be kindled. I'm talking about one that needs to be lit within the hearts of believers. Earlier in the same chapter, Jesus said:

⁶ "Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷ Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you're worth more than many sparrows. ⁸ I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. ⁹ But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God."

Say what? It'd be better to be rejected by people for our faith in Him now, than rejected by Him later. And if our passion for Jesus isn't burning within us, our “wish” to be accepted by our peers will often override our “wish” to be in heaven with Him.

My “wish” for the church today is for “revival” as the Holy Spirit sets our hearts ablaze. Yet, if He does, our priorities will so radically change that unbelievers may turn against us. Perhaps disbelieving friends and family will also disown us.

What then? Jesus also tells us in this very chapter ²² “**don't worry**” and ³¹ “**seek God's kingdom.**” That's His “wish.” May it be our “wish,” as well - no matter the cost.