

FROM THUNDER TO LOVE

LUKE 9:51-55 | ERIC SIMPSON | NOVEMBER 15, 2020

God's vision for oneness is a unity in the midst of diversity.

Luke 9:51-55

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" ⁵⁵But Jesus turned and rebuked them

Mark 3:16-17

¹⁶These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); ¹⁷James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder)

Sons of Thunder

- **Quick to judge** – accentuate the faults in others, minimize what you see in yourself

Matthew 7:3-5

³"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

- **Easily offended** – difference of opinion is viewed as a threat to overcome
- **Close-minded** – not open to changing

Apostles of Love

1 John 3:7-8

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 3:20

Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.

- **Humbled by our limits** – only God is all-knowing
- **Curious about why others see it differently** – open and willing to listen to another position/viewpoint
- **See God in the face of our enemies** – it takes more courage to love your enemies than to attack them

Matthew 5:43-47

⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

"This is the shape of discipleship. It may not be anger and coveting that mark us out when Jesus first finds us. It may be cowardice or laziness or aloofness or lewdness, or any number of sundry ways our character misrepresents the kingdom. But as we walk with Jesus, learning his ways, empowered by his Spirit, we are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory. Sons of Thunder, and Daughters of Gossip, and Stepchildren of Avarice [greed], and Adoptees of Impurity, and all the rest, in Christ's hands become, in word and deed, new creations." – Mark Buchanan