

An eruption of emotions

 **Luke 12.49-56**

Jesus is experiencing stress and other strong emotions as he thinks about his death to come. He predicts that families will disagree and argue about him and his teaching. Jesus knows his purpose but there is much suffering attached to it. He challenges the crowds to recognise the fulfilment of scripture in their times.

Now read **Luke 12.49-56** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

Following Jesus brings changes in our choices and actions. The changes can lead to conflict within friends and family. How do you handle conflict and strong emotions? What can we learn from Jesus about how to handle these emotions and keep our direction of purpose?



What appeals to you about this image of a geyser in Nevada? Are you someone whose emotions erupt or simmer?

Write



As a household, you can register with a charity to write to a prisoner. Often prisoners are there because they reacted to strong emotions in a very wrong way. While in prison, they may have many regrets and experience loneliness. Receiving a letter can help in their journey to change and help individuals to feel of some value. Look up 'Prisoner Penfriends' to see how you can help (prisonerspenfriends.org/about).

ACT OR DRAW GAME

Jesus knew his purpose and followed it even when things got difficult and painful. Our purpose, as followers, is to love others – sharing the good news of forgiveness and Jesus being with us always. We can find ways of Christian living in a range of roles and activities. Have two teams and think of occupations or activities for the other team. One person either acts or draws it without speaking, and their team guess the occupation/activity. You might ask someone to suggest ways in which that activity could be bettered by love.

MAKE OUTDOORS

Go outside and find somewhere where you can safely gather materials to form a cross e.g., from sticks, shrub branches, long grass. Take some twine with you to fix together. Alternately, arrange stones in a cross. Thank Jesus for his gift of the cross, for forgiving you, and for the gift of new life. Notice new life around you, unfurling flowers and young animals or insects. Pray that Jesus will help you to have a new heart, to love him and love others more.

STRONG feelings?

It is helpful to be able to identify strong emotions and to pray for help with them. By knowing what you are feel in certain situations, you can also discuss with family or friends the ways in which you can cope with the emotion. Together you could think of ways to react to or learn from the situation. It might be easier to respond well, when doing something in a group with a shared purpose.



Print out this sheet of blank faces Blank Faces2 (dabblesandbabbles.com) or make your own: draw on some of the emotions you have felt this week. Talk about them together.

Evening Examen

Before sleeping, carry out an adapted Examen. Pray 'We/I enter God's presence to examine our/my day. Thank you for being with us/me all day.'

What happened today? What were the highs? Give thanks. What were the lows? When were we disappointed? Angry? Sad? Bring these to God.

What does Jesus want us to learn through those emotions? Jesus struggled with strong emotions too, but he kept close to God in prayer and remained focused on his purpose. Over time, you may learn more about your gifts and purpose. Which activities bring joy and peace?

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already lit! I have difficult things to do, and what stress I am under until they are done!' He continued, 'Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, people will argue about me! Fathers will disagree with sons, and sons with fathers; mothers will disagree with daughters, and daughters with mothers. Brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and cousins – all will disagree and argue about what I say and do.'

Jesus said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain." And so it happens. When you feel the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat." And so it happens. Yet, even though you know how to forecast the weather, you don't know how to understand what is happening in front of your eyes!'

Luke 12.49-56



Did you know?

- Jesus says he is under a lot of stress. He is on his way to the cross at this point in the story and is feeling vulnerable.
- Jesus is forewarning the disciples that a decision to follow him may mean disagreement with friends and family.
- Jesus asks the crowd why it is that they are more interested in determining the weather than God's work.

Luke 12.49-56 (NRSV)

'I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be 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.'

He also said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain"; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat"; and it happens. 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?'