

# Luke 9:55

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

## Analysis

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**But he turned, and rebuked them** (ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς, epetimēsen autois)—the verb epitimaō is strong, the same word used for rebuking demons and silencing storms. Jesus treats their vindictive spirit as seriously as demonic opposition. **And said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of** (οὐκ οἴδατε οὗτον πνεύματός ἔστε, ouk oīdāte oītōn pneūmatōs ēste, ouk oīdate hoiou pneumatōs este)—they fundamentally misidentified the source of their impulse.

The disciples assumed their zeal for Jesus's honor came from righteous indignation, but Christ exposes it as fleshly vengeance dressed in religious garb. The 'spirit' driving their desire for judgment was not the Holy Spirit but human pride wounded by rejection. This rebuke echoes Jesus's earlier correction of Peter: 'Get thee behind me, Satan... thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men' (Matthew 16:23). Proximity to Jesus doesn't automatically sanctify our motives. Even apostles must distinguish between godly zeal and carnal vindictiveness.

## Historical Context

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Some manuscripts add 'For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them' (though likely not original, it captures the theological point). Jesus's mission is salvific, not destructive—He saves even those who reject Him. This principle would guide the apostles' later ministry: Paul blessed persecutors

(Romans 12:14), and Peter commanded Christians to bless enemies (1 Peter 3:9). The lesson learned in this Samaritan village shaped apostolic ethics.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How can you distinguish between godly zeal for Christ's honor and fleshly vindictiveness that merely uses religious language to justify wounded pride?
2. What does Jesus's rebuke of James and John teach about the danger of assuming that your proximity to truth or doctrinal correctness automatically validates your attitudes and actions?

## Interlinear Text

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|             |           |             |        |       |        |       |         |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| στραφεὶς    | δὲ        | ἐπετίμησεν  | αὐτοῖς | καὶ   | εἶπεν, | Οὐκ   | οἶδατε  |
| he turned   | But       | and rebuked | them   | and   | said   | not   | Ye know |
| G4762       | G1161     | G2008       | G846   | G2532 | G2036  | G3756 | G1492   |
| οἵου        | πνεύματός | ἐστε        | ὑμεῖς· |       |        |       |         |
| what manner | of spirit | are of      | ye     |       |        |       |         |
| G3634       | G4151     | G2075       | G5210  |       |        |       |         |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 3:19** (Parallel theme): As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

**Job 26:4** (Spirit): To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

**Job 2:10** (Parallel theme): But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

**1 Peter 3:9** (Parallel theme): Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

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