

Do you see the danger?

www.cvillechurch.com

Introduction: Men often watch with curiosity as the cause of their destruction comes right at them.

- A. Some of the most incredible videos I have ever seen were taken of the recent tsunami.
 - 1. In almost all cases the warning signs were clearly seen.
 - 2. People were laughing up to the moment they were swept away to their deaths.
 - 3. The only exceptions were the Japanese and on little 10 year old girl and an entire beach that listened to her warning.
- B. As we approach the end of the year we will hear much about New Year's resolutions.
 - 1. Some resolutions are not necessary for us such as running back and forth across the interstate during rush hour traffic. We understand the danger.
 - 2. As I have passed my 50th year I am seeing more and more of my generation utterly destroy their faith and themselves because they did not see the dangers in their choices.
 - 3. Jesus often told His disciples about these things.

I. The danger of covetousness

- A. Jesus plainly told his disciples the danger of covetousness. **(Lk 12:15)**
 - 1. The occasion of this warning came over a disputed inheritance. **(Lk 12:13-14)**
 - 2. My barber and I had a discussion over this very thing. **(Lk 12:16-25)**
 - 3. Covetousness - a strong desire to acquire more and more material possessions or to possess more things than other people have, all irrespective of need - 'greed, avarice, covetousness.
- B. Why do we need this warning?
 - 1. Because we are rich with earthly possessions. **(Mt 19:21-25)**
 - 2. It is likely that some of you will be destroyed because of you abundance.
- C. How does an abundance of things destroy?
 - 1. It is not sinful to have abundance. Abraham was rich and so were other faithful men.
 - 2. Some of the most spiritual men I have known had many possessions.
 - 3. There are very powerful sociological forces that push us this way.
 - a. You tend to associate with those of you social standing.
 - b. There are tastes you acquire that others cannot share in.
 - c. These tastes can cause you to look down on those who have less.
(Wal-Mart shoppers, trailer parks, older cars.)
 - 4. It is *common* to see brethren who are influenced this way. **(James 2:1-4)**
- D. Some questions to consider:
 - 1. How has my material wealth changed in 1 year? 5 years? 10 years?
 - 2. How have my associates changed in 1 year? 5 years? 10 years?
 - 3. Have I been influenced to make purchases (clothes, homes, etc.) based on what others that I have associate with have?

4. Have I looked down on those who have less/more than I have?

II. The danger of despising your brother

A. Few understand the high price one pays for harboring bitterness. **(Eph 4:30-32)**

1. Some have lived a life of being hated and hating others. **(Titus 3:3-4)**

2. The consequences of these things go through generations.

B. Some churches are centers of teaching and promoting bitterness.

1. There is a temptation towards this in any church. **(Gal 5:15)**

2. Often this anger is subtle. Like the Pharisees we may change the outward but the inward is left alone.

3. Business meetings can be very instructive. You will know what is in the hearts of men by how they speak. **(Mk 7:17-22)**

4. We must confront every Christian that we see and hear speak in a way to tear down or despise his brother.

C. I may show my heart about my brother in how I react to his personal choices.

(1 Cor 8:9-13)

a. Again we often show our hearts in less than direct ways.

b. Is the Lord really first in my life?

III. The danger of “denominationalism.”

A. Jesus often spoke of the influence of men and their movements. **(Mt 7:15)**

1. Some have made the issue of false teachers so specific as to have no meaning.

2. Jesus made clear applications.

B. The most influential teaching comes in connections with men and their organizations. **(Mt 16:6; Mk 8:15)**

1. We must constantly fight to keep our loyalty to God.

2. It is amazing to see our present day institutions and how men will follow.

C. Jesus is our head, we are the members! **(Col 1:15-18)**

1. This body or church is a universal relationship with Jesus and all Christians.

2. There is only one way this relationship can exist. Jesus must have *preeminence*.

3. Preeminence - *the first reclining-place, the chief place*, at table (...the relative rank of the several places at table varied among Persians, Greeks, and Romans; and what arrangement was currently followed by the Jews in Christ's day can hardly, perhaps, be determined; ... Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 11:43...) – Thayer's Lexicon. To be in the first position, with the implication of high rank and prominence - 'to be the first, to have superior status.– Louw-Nida

4. Jesus used a word that the Jews understood as prioritizing men in a social arrangement. **(Mt 23:6; 20:21-23; Lk 14:8-11)**

D. We can easily out of a desire for association with certain men lose our loyalty to Jesus.

1. We must fight to remain steadfast. **(2 Pt 3:17-18)**

2. Over time our hearts can harden and we will be lost to the Lord. **(Heb 3:12-15)**

Conclusion: Do you see the danger?

A. If so then the arm of the Lord can save you!

B. Will you watch and laugh as disaster move directly toward you? **(1 Thess 5:1-4)**