

## *Do you see the danger?*

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**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. A few years ago a little 10 year old girl knew the signs and an entire beach of tourist listened to her warning.
- B. What kind of New Year's resolutions did you make? How are you doing?
  - 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 50<sup>th</sup> 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 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)**
  - 1. Again we often show our hearts in less than direct ways.
  - 2. Is the Lord really first in my life?

## ***III. The danger of human movements***

- 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. There is power in relationships. **(Gal 4:16-17)**
- B. The most influential teaching comes in connections with men and their relationships. **(Mt 16:6; Mk 8:15, Jn 5:40-44)**
  - 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 can 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)**