

## **BROKEN CISTERNS** **(Jeremiah 2:11-13)**

### **I. Materialism.**

- A. Our world is consumed with things.
  - 1. The latest technology has to be ours.
  - 2. The biggest tv set has to be in our homes.
  - 3. If it buzzes, notifies, beeps or vibrates we have to have it.
- B. I came across a new word in studying for this sermon:
  - 1. It is affluenza.
  - 2. It is a combination of affluence and influenza.
  - 3. It is defined as “a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more.”
  - 4. Here are the symptoms:
    - a. The bloated, sluggish and unfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses.
    - b. An epidemic of stress, overwork, waste and indebtedness caused by the dogged pursuit of the American Dream.
    - c. An unsustainable addiction to economic growth.
  - 5. Now, I don't know if I agree with everything the ones who came up with this term believe, but I do know that there is a great number of people who only want more.
- C. This is not something new.
  - 1. The Jews to whom Jeremiah prophesied suffered from a great deal of materialism.
  - 2. Jesus warned against it long ago (Luke 12:15).
- D. When we focus only on the getting of wealth and the things of this life, we are pouring our water into a broken cistern.
- E. All that we have is going to burn up one day (2 Peter 3:10).
- F. We won't take anything with us and will lose the most valuable thing we possess, our souls (Matthew 16:26).

### **II. Human wisdom.**

- A. How many times have we said or heard something like this: “This is my life and I'll live it like a I want to.”?
  - 1. I remember saying something like that when I was 9 years old.
  - 2. My parents were moving me from a private school to public schools.
  - 3. In my infinite 9 yr old wisdom, I said, this is my life why don't you let me run it, or something like that.
- B. Sadly, many in today's world never grow out of that mentality.
- C. They don't make room for God and they certainly won't turn their lives over to Him.
- D. We fall into an age old trap filling up this cistern.
- E. The truth is we can't make it in this life on our own.
  - 1. Proverbs 16:25.

- 2. Jeremiah 10:23.
- F. Paul talked about the foolishness of human wisdom.
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 1:18-21.
  - 2. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5.
- G. Human wisdom leads to death while godly wisdom leads to life.

### III. **Denominationalism.**

- A. The number of religious bodies in the world staggers the mind.
- B. The number of people associated with these bodies should bring sadness to the minds of true Christians.
  - 1. Billions of people are relying on water from the cistern of denominationalism.
  - 2. Sadly, at the judgment, they will find that the water is not there and death will result.
- C. There is only one body, or church (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22-23).
  - 1. It is to this body that the Lord adds those who are saved (Acts 2:47).
  - 2. Any other body is not the church for which Jesus shed His blood (Acts 20:28).
- D. Trusting in denominationalism is truly putting water into a broken cistern.
  - 1. It cannot save.
  - 2. It will only lead to eternal disappointment.

### IV. **Being all things to all men.**

- A. Some may want to stop me right here and say that Paul said he became all things to all men in order to save some.
  - 1. He certainly did say this (1 Corinthians 9:22).
  - 2. Paul, as an individual, could do this because he was trained in both Jewish and Greek cultures.
  - 3. However, even he could go too far with it as it seems he did in Jerusalem (Acts 21:19f).
- B. In our day, many congregations seek to be all things to all people by means for which there is no biblical authority.
  - 1. You and I are to reach people with the gospel of Jesus.
  - 2. We are to do this through preaching the gospel.
- C. I am quite aware that there are means by which we can get people to hear the gospel that are more than simply preaching to them when we first meet them.
  - 1. However, when we seek to find out what people want and then try to meet their wants, we end up going down a slippery slope.
  - 2. If you bring them in with some type of entertainment, you have to keep them entertained.
- D. We must not go too far in trying to get peoples attention.
- E. Whatever we do, it must be done with scriptural authority.