

Title: “More Pressing Issues” (Chapter 7)

Study Passages:

1. Isaiah 1:21-23, 2:7, 5:11, 5:22; Micah 6:16
2. Isaiah 1:29; Isaiah 1:31, 2:9, 11-15; 3:8-23; 5:15-21; 40:19; 46:6-7
 Deuteronomy 8:10-18; 2 Chronicles 26:16;
 I John 2:15-16; I Corinthians 1:26-29; I Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 2:8;
 James 1:17
3. Isaiah 28:7; Micah 2:11; Micah 3:5, 11

Introduction:



PREPARATION: None

Would You Rather Game: Ask students to go to opposite sides of the room depending on which option you give them. Ask would you rather...

Left

- Go to the mountains
- Drive an SUV
- See a love story (movie)
- Drink a coke
- Be famous
- Be blessed

Right

- the beach
- sporty black convertible
- action-adventure
- diet-coke
- be wealthy
- be cursed

* Leaders may choose other options to fit the needs of the individual group.



Transition: The last is meant to raise some eyebrows. Few would admittedly say they would rather be cursed, but that is what the people of Judah were saying by neglecting the commands that the Lord had given them. They demonstrated misplaced affection by neglecting such commands, showing that other things were more important to them than God’s commands. Today’s lesson is going to be about the results of misplaced affection as seen in the life of Judah.



Who’s the Leader: Direct one volunteer to go out in the hall, and close the door. Arrange all other members into a circle. Determine one leader from the circle and ask he or she to begin making small motions (i.e. clapping, snapping, tapping the floor, patting nose, patting stomach, etc.). The designated leader will begin with one motion of choice and all members of the circle will copy his or her motion. Then, the leader will transition to a different motion and members will copy that motion. The play continues with the leader transitioning to different motions at different times throughout the play and members will look to copy whatever motion the leader is making. Before bringing in the volunteer from the hall, have the leader begin a motion



and have members copy that motion. Bring the volunteer in from the hall and direct them to the center of the circle. Direct them to try to determine who the leader is. As the volunteer looks, the leader should transition from motion to motion as members copy each motion. The volunteer will try to guess three people who he or she believes to be the leader. Once three guesses have been made, the leader is then revealed. A new volunteer is chosen to go out into the hall. A new leader is chosen, and play resumes.

 **Transition:** Say: It was hard to determine who the leader of the game was because the leader looked like the players. The bible study focus today will look at how leadership affects people. The people of Judah experienced a clerical void- an absence of strong religious leadership- that made it easier for them to misplace their affections towards God. The leadership looked like the people just as the game demonstrated the leadership blending in with the people.

Teaching Activity

Preparation: 3X5 index cards

1. The people of Judah neglected God's commands because of the root problem of misplaced affection; instead of pursuing God, they pursued materialistic and sensual pleasures.

Biblical Truth: *The people of Judah pursued materialistic and sensual pleasures that led to misplaced affection toward God and subsequent civil sins.*

Life Application: *Pursuit of materialistic and sensual pleasures will lead Christians today to misplaced affection and subsequent civil sins.*

Life Change Outcome: *Identify one area of misplaced affection stemming from the pursuit of materialistic or sensual pleasures and state one change you can make to place your affection back towards God.*

-  Direct adults to read Isaiah 1:21-23; 2:7.
-  **Ask:** How are the people of Judah described?
-  Read Isaiah 5:11, 5:22
-  **Ask:** What warning is given for those who indulge in drinking?
-  Read Micah 6:16
-  **Ask:** What are the consequences for idol worship? What had God told them to do in Exodus 20 in relationship to idols?
-  Draw 2 columns on the board. At the top of the left column, write "Pursuits of Pleasures." At the top of the right column, write, "Guarding Ourselves"
-  **Ask:** How do people today choose materialistic and sensual pleasures over God?
-  Direct a volunteer to record answers on the board in the left column.
-  **Ask:** How can we as Christians guard ourselves from indulging in and pursuing such pleasures?
-  Direct a volunteer to record answers for how to guard oneself from each materialistic/sensual pleasure in the corresponding space on the right column



(i.e. Left Column: Pursuit of Money / Right Column: Accountability to give money to charitable organizations and tithing)

- ✚ Direct members to look at the generated lists on the board and choose one area of misplaced affection in their own lives. Direct them to record that area of misplaced affection on a 3X5 index card and write how to take one step towards changing that area being the focus of affection.
- ✚ Lead members to close in prayer asking God to make Himself the object of affection in the lives of all who are in the study.

Teaching Activities:

Preparation:

- ✚ 3X5 Index cards
- ✚ Prepare a card with one of the following scripture references to each group.
 - Group 1: Isaiah 2:11-15; Isaiah 3:8-23; Isaiah 5:15-24
 - Group 2: Isaiah 40:19; Isaiah 46:6-7; Deuteronomy 8:10-18
- ✚ Read commentaries on scripture passages to determine context of each verse.

2. The people of Judah neglected God's commands because of the root problem of misplaced affection; instead of pursuing God, they were preoccupied with pride over their own accomplishments along with the practice of idolatry.

Biblical Truth: *The people of Judah were preoccupied with pride and idolatry that led to misplaced affection toward God and subsequent civil sins.*

Life Application: *Preoccupation with personal pride and idolatry will lead Christians today to misplaced affection and subsequent civil sins.*

Life Change Outcome: *Identify one area of misplaced affection stemming from preoccupation with either pride or idolatry and state one change you can make to place your affection back towards God.*

- ✚ **Ask:** What is pride?
- ✚ **Ask:** What is idolatry?
- ✚ **Ask:** Do we see these things in our culture today?
- ✚ **Say:** Both of these sins plagued the people of Judah, and they were both things against which God taught. Let's look at how the people of Judah struggled with the issues of pride and idolatry and the consequences for placing these things in higher significance than God, himself.
- ✚ Divide members into 2 groups. Give a card with one of the following scripture references to each group.
 - Group 1: Isaiah 2:11-15; Isaiah 3:8-23; Isaiah 5:15-24
 - Group 2: Isaiah 40:19; Isaiah 46:6-7; Deuteronomy 8:10-18
- ✚ Direct members to read each passage, determine the context using study notes, and determine how pride and idolatry played a part in the lives of the people of Judah.
- ✚ Direct volunteers to read the following passages aloud:
 - I John 2:15-16; I Corinthians 1:26-29; I Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 2:8; James 1:17



- ✚ **Ask:** What warnings do John, Paul, and James give against displaying pride and idolatry?
- ✚ **Ask:** Why are people not suppose to boast? For what do we have to boast?
- ✚ **Ask:** How do we pride and idolatry in our individual lives today?
- ✚ Direct a volunteer to record examples on the board.
- ✚ **Ask:** From looking at these examples, how do we guard ourselves against pride and idolatry?
 - *Help members see the importance of being in scripture as part of the renewing of the mid process, having accountability to call out prideful, idolatrous actions, and the importance of asking God to continually search our hearts to see if there be any wicked ways.*
- ✚ Direct adults to answer the following questions on a 3X5 index card:
 - What is a situation within this past week where you showed pride?
 - What is something that you hold as an idol in your life?
- ✚ Direct adults to state one change dealing with either pride or idolatry in their lives that can be made to place affection back towards God.
- ✚ Close in prayer

Teaching Activities:

Preparation:

- ✚ 3X5 index cards
- ✚ Look up information on national political candidates using the website www.ivotevalues.com. Research where candidates stand on morality issues.

3. The people of Judah experienced a clerical void that did not rebuke the people in their misplaced affections, but instead, joined with the people in misplacing their own affections towards God.

Biblical Truth: *The people of Judah experienced a clerical void that did not rebuke them in their misplaced affections and subsequent civil sins.*

Life Application: *Lack of strong biblical leadership and accountability will serve to support misplaced affection and subsequent civil sins among Christians today.*

Life Change Outcome: *Identify one way in which you can seek accountability for a specific area that is causing you to not place your full affection towards God.*

Teaching Activities:

- ✚ Direct volunteers to read the following verses:
 - Isaiah 28:7; Micah 2:11; Micah 3:5, 11
- ✚ Ask the following questions.
 - With what issues concerning leadership was Judah dealing?
 - What will happen to the people as a result of the lack of leadership?
 - How can poor leadership result in calamity towards God's people?
- ✚ **Ask:** What kind of leadership do we have today in relationship to God's standards?



- ✚ **Ask:** What standards of morality does God set for his people? Direct adults to look up NT passages dealing with moral law. (i.e. James 1:21, Matthew 5-7, etc.)
 - **Discuss answers** (i.e. Do not murder/abortion; No homosexuality; Covenant of Marriage; Do not lie; Do not commit adultery; etc.)
- ✚ Say: It is very important that we seek leadership that holds to God's moral law. He expects that of leadership and for his people to elect leadership that supports his moral law.
- ✚ Write on the board: www.ivotevalues.com Explain that this is a website sponsored by Focus on the Family that highlights the different moral issues related to political agendas and where various national political candidates stand on the different issues. If you have access to a computer, direct a class member to pull up the website and look at the different moral issues and which candidates support the different issues of morality. If not, show stats from the website by looking up info prior to class.
- ✚ **Ask:** What are ways that we as Christians can make changes in leadership that is weak? (*Keep up with the issues and VOTE!*)
- ✚ **Ask:** What is one way that we can individually make one change in the upcoming weeks to work towards supporting and changing leadership?
- ✚ End in closing prayer asking God to change hearts back to Him and for misplaced affection to be refocused in the hearts of our nation.

