

In chapter 2 we saw all the things WE do when fleeing from God. Now, let's look at God's activity. **God will begin using these 4 progressively worsening methods to encourage us to repent.**

1) Vs 5-8

a. **The 1<sup>st</sup> step God uses is He chastises us.**

- i. How did they even get here? Hezekiah was bragging about his STUFF to Babylon. (about 100 years ago)
- ii. God's chastisement is usually just Him withholding His hand of mercy/grace and allowing us to receive what we've sown from sinful actions.
- iii. Hard times happen for a reason. Don't waste it, learn from it.
- iv. Read Eze 33:11, Isa 59:1-2
- v. Example:
  1. Achan – negative example
  2. David – Repented at the chastisement of Nathan
- vi. *My Story:*
  1. *Raised Christian, but didn't want it.*
  2. *Mrs. Pyne – "God loves you even when you act this way".*
  3. *Kicked out of school b/c I wouldn't listen.*

## 2) Vs 9-12

**a. The 2<sup>nd</sup> step God uses is He allows confusion and we begin to feel deceived by our confidants.**

i. They had false prophets claim peace, peace was coming, but it didn't.

1. They were hanging their hats on these false messages.

ii. When we're in sin, we'll go to just the right "Christian" that will help us feel comfortable in our sin.

1. Then when we're reprovved by our church, we act confused, as if it shouldn't be a problem!

iii. This will happen on a mass scale in the last days.

1. Read I Thess 2:11 – "strong delusion"

iv. Example:

1. Aaron the High Priest – "What's wrong Moses, the people wanted to worship their god, the calf."

v. *My Story: Wendy's wanted to fire me after 8 yrs.*

*Couldn't understand what they saw wrong with me.*

### 3) Vs 13-22

#### a. **The 3<sup>rd</sup> step God uses is He begins confiscating friends, possessions and thoughts.**

- i. Friends; even those you trusted in turn on you and there's no one to support.
- ii. Possessions; we no longer seem to get salvation or even distraction from our addictions.
- iii. Thoughts; becomes harder to rationale/ justify our behavior.
- iv. Example:
  1. Jacob running from Esau after stealing the blessing, not to mention the birthright.
  2. The more Jacob tried stealing things, the emptier he became, until he met God at Bethel.
- v. *My Story: B/c of my first marriage, I had to move to Maine, away from everything good I thought I had left & into a defenseless situation.*

#### 4) Vs 23-31

a. **The 4<sup>th</sup> step God uses is that He brings us to the complete end of all we trusted in.**

- i. The vulnerability that you've tried to prevent your whole life by filling life with false gods and false endeavors has caught hold of you and you're without help or friend.
- ii. Complete end of all we trusted in but not a complete end of.....YOU. Look at vs 27
- iii. Example:
  1. Samson – negative example
  2. Prodigal Son – positive example
- iv. My Story:
  1. Yes my story did make it this far.
    - a. At the mercy of the court for assault
    - b. At the mercy of the court to see my daughter
    - c. At the mercy of friends to let me live with them for a time.
  2. At this point it can STILL go one of two ways.
    - a. I humbled myself enough to pray the Lord help me.
    - b. He restored thru an 8 person Bible Study.

## 5) Chapter 5:1-9

### a. **Here's the good news; each person can choose to break this worsening progressive slide and return to the truth of God!**

- i. Searching for a righteous man.
  1. Unfortunately, the search for a righteous man in Jerusalem was even harder than in Sodom.
  2. Vs 2-3 – 3 kinds of people, them that is, them that ain't and them that think they is, but ain't. Self-deceived.
- ii. No matter you status; rich or poor. (Read II Chr 16:9)
- iii. You choose to return to God, when you recognize that it is His great kindness that has taken you thru these steps.
  1. Vs 7 – Whole time, God's been giving us what we need to truly live.
    - a. When we turn to other things, God in His kindness strips them away.
  2. Rms 2:4; it's the kindness of God, leads to repentance.
- iv. We are not condemned to repeat or pay for the sins of anyone else. (Eze 18:19) Choose LIFE, repent.

## 6) Vs 10-19 – **Reiteration for emphasis**

- a. vs 10 – This is step #4 of coming to a complete end and being totally vulnerable.
- b. vs 11-12 – This is step #2 of being confused and self-deceived.
- c. vs 13-14 – Pleading with family and friends to repent?
  - i. When speaking of spiritual subjects, do we say...
    - 1. “Well in my opinion...”
    - 2. “Well God tells me in His Word that...”
  - ii. The power and authority is in God’s Word.
- d. Vs 15-17 – This is step #3 of having your entire defense system confiscated.
- e. vs 18-19 – God is a gentleman; if you forsake Him, He won’t force Himself on you.

## 7) You and me

- a. If you have a sin issue in your life today, what step does God have you at?
- b. Be encouraged
  - i. All are tempted and have sinned.
  - ii. Be encouraged from the example people that were cited like David, Aaron, Jacob, the Prodigal Son.
- c. Take action
  - i. We don't come here just to hear but to do!
  - ii. When was the last time you went to a brother/sister and asked them to pray for you about a spiritual situation in your life?
  - iii. Give God true repentance that is characterized with the 4 attributes we went over last week.
    1. Emotional
    2. Full of activity
    3. Full of truthfulness
    4. It's persistent