

“As It Was in the Days of Noah”

Luke 17:26-30

REVIEW

The imagination is that faculty of the mind whereby we form ideas, recollect the past, and project into the future. It has immense capabilities and therefore immense value. Like the rest of man, however, the imagination has been damaged and distorted by sin, so it may modify, embellish, select, block out, create anew, and be manipulated by the spirit world. What a crime to take so beautiful a thing created for God's purposes and use it for evil and devilish purposes. That which can be used to imagine the glories of heaven, the horrors of hell, and the wonders of the mind of God Himself abused and degenerated to contemplate vanity, self-indulgence, evil devices, and the promulgation of perversion!

Last time we noted that when the abuse of this faculty becomes full-blown, a civilization falls apart. See Gen. 6:5-7. It's time to pause on that thought today, for there is a connection between that age and ours. Our primary text today is Luke 17:26-30.

I. The Common Element in the Ages Described (:26a, :28a, :30a)

A. Is it wickedness?

1. Surely Noah's day was wicked – Gen. 6:5-6, 11-12.
2. As was Lot's day – Gen. 19:1-5, 9c-11, 15.
3. As is ours today – sexual promiscuity, illegitimate children, abortions, divorces, movies, music, domestic violence, murders, rapes, drug abuse, alcoholism, homosexuality, pornography, vice in high office, etc.
4. And we do have that description in II Pet. 2:4-14.
5. But no. Look at the text. It is not wickedness. At least the emphasis is elsewhere.

B. It is *WORLDLINESS!*

1. Wickedness is not described, but the innocent and ordinary occupations and enjoyments of life.
2. The issue here is indifference to the future, insensitivity, presumption, carnal enjoyment, false security, and unbelief (why judgment comes – JN 3:18, 36). Compare Luke 12:19, Ps. 73:2-16.
3. Summation: These are *scoffers!* See 2 Peter 3:3-4. Also Ecc. 8:11-13.
4. So there is a connection between insensitivity and lawless disregard for doing God's will. Compare Matt. 13:15, Zech. 7:11-12, II Tim. 4:3-4 (gross and stony hearts, ears turned away).
5. Which is where we are today . . .
 - a. Political leadership unfazed by Planned Parenthood revelations
 - b. *World Magazine*: “In YouTube videos, fashion magazine pages, social media campaigns, and newly launched websites, seemingly unfazed women are talking unapologetically about their abortions—and they are enlisting others to do the same. They seek to reframe abortion decisions from difficult, private, and guilt-laden to normal, painless, morally right, and socially good.”

- c. *OneNewsNow* – Quebec is telling doctors they will be made to practice euthanasia. In order to put doctor-assisted suicide into effect, Quebec must have the cooperation of doctors. Some are resisting, even refusing to refer patients to doctors who will use assisted suicide. But the government of Quebec, which is planning to impose euthanasia upon its people starting on December 10, has told the doctors, *You will do it. This is the law. If someone asks for it, you will carry it out.*”
- d. The changing attitude toward redefinition of marriage.
- e. Questions of whether our President or the Pope is Christian.
- f. Etc.

II. The Common Warning (:27b, :29a)

A. So, the people’s actions did not proceed from ignorance.

1. The people of Noah’s day had Noah, a preacher of righteousness, but they disregarded him.
2. The people of Lot’s day had Lot, but his words were “as mocking.”

B. So today.

1. The lost know it – Rom. 1:18-20
2. The saved know they shouldn't have the spirit of this God-denying, content-with-this-life, acting-like-everything's-fine world (I John 2:15-22).

III. The Common Destruction (:27c, :29c)

A. Here is the way it goes throughout the Scriptures.

1. Deut. 29:18-20 – “walk in imagination of heart” ... BOOM!
2. Ecc. 9:12 – “snared in an evil time....” BOOM!
3. Isa. 47:7-11 – “I shall be a lady forever....” BOOM!
4. Luke 12:45-46 – “My God delayeth....” BOOM!
5. Rev. 18:7-8 – “I sit a queen....” BOOM!
6. Amos 6:1-7 – “At ease in troubled day....” BOOM!
7. Isa. 22:12-14 – “Fast, weep? NO!” BOOM!

IV. The Common Counsel

- A. To the lost:** “Prepare to meet thy God!” (Amos 4:12) As long as you’re in the world, it is “a day of acceptance, a day of salvation.” (II Cor. 6:2)

B. To the saved: Again, see that in our text no gross sin is noted in Noah's or Lot's age.

1. Described are the innocent and ordinary occupations and enjoyments of life.
2. The issue is carnal enjoyment, false security, insensitivity, unresponsiveness, no earnestness, and presumption.
3. The issue here is **indifference to the call of God to be about doing the work of the kingdom.** (See Matt. 28:18-20.)
4. The issue is to say: "I am resolved no longer to linger, charmed by the world's delight; things that are higher, things that are nobler, these have allured my sight."
5. Put another way, the issue is to rectify the imagination. Use it the way God designed.

DISCUSSION

1. We are told that God will destroy the world by fire when He sees man's imagination being abused as it was when He destroyed the world by flood. Describe this abuse of the imagination, and give illustrations of it occurring today.
2. The Bible warns us not to be conformed to the world. Are the ways that the church is conforming to the world in its abuse of the imagination?
3. Are there ways in which you see that you have abused your imagination as well? Describe.
4. How will you improve your use of your imagination?