**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Sad Case of Vanishing Values |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Judges 17:1-13, 18:1-4 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #1809 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
	1. We have had in America an erosion of the values that made this nation great.
	2. What happens when values vanish?
		1. Judges 17:1-6
			1. The name “Micah” means “Who is like the Lord?”
			2. There was no authority, except every man being his own authority doing whatever he wished.
				1. What is right for me is right, and what is right for you is right.
			3. This passage doesn’t say that every man did what was wrong in his own eyes, but that every man did what was right in his own eyes.
				1. That is precisely the condition in America today.
		2. America is sick, and unless we have a moral and spiritual revival, we are gone as a nation.
	3. We need to bring back the glory to America.
	4. What happened so long ago in Israel and recorded in the book of Judges gives inspiration and information for today.
		1. In that day as in this day, every man did that which was right in his own eyes.
	5. Today’s message will look at the results of, the reasons for and our response to vanishing values.
2. the results of vanishing values (Judges 17:1-13, 18:1-4)
	1. Families without foundation.
		1. Judges 17:1-6
			1. This passage tells of an event that took place within a family.
			2. Micah had stolen eleven hundred shekels from his mother.
			3. Micah’s mother did not know who the thief was and pronounced a curse upon the thief.
			4. When Micah found out about the curse, he became frightened and brought the money back.
				1. He brought it back out of fear, not conviction.
			5. Rather than scolding him, Micah’s mother blessed him.
			6. Micah’s mother said that she was going to give the money to the Lord, but she wanted to make some idols out of that money.
				1. She took the money to the foundry, and they made an idol.
			7. Micah took the idol and put it in his god collection.
				1. He had a shelf full of idols in his house, and he added this new idol to that collection.
			8. Micah decided that he needed a priest, so he appointed his own priest.
				1. All of this was absolute, unmitigated moral confusion.
				2. They thought they were serving God.
				3. They had an aura of godliness about the family.
			9. Here was a family with coveting, stealing, cursing, blessing, dishonoring parents and idolatry.
				1. They were morally and spiritually bankrupt.
				2. They were idolaters thinking that they were serving the Lord.
		2. The story of Micah and his family is what is happening in America today.
			1. It’s not that we don’t have religion; we are drowning in religion.
				1. We don’t have Bible truth or Bible morality.
		3. We are seeing a lack of discipline, lack of values and a lack of standards that go right down into the very best families in our churches.
			1. We have “fuzz buster” dads who are teaching their sons how to break the speed limit just by their example.
			2. There are moms and dads sneaking their thirteen-year-olds into movies, pretending their kids are only twelve years old in order to get a cheaper ticket price.
		4. We have a generation that has lost its values.
	2. Pastors without principles.
		1. Judges 17:7-13
			1. The Levites were the priestly people, the clerics of their day.
				1. They were the counterpart to today’s pastors and ministers.
			2. According to the law of God, the Levites were to assist the priest and teach the law.
			3. This young Levite was without a place and needed food and clothing.
			4. This was a man of God who, purely for money, was going to be the appointed priest of an idolater and wicked man.
				1. He was a hireling.

Judges 18:4

* + 1. John 10:12-13
		2. We have prophets in America who are hirelings.
			1. They have not been called of God.
		3. Of course, pastors ought to be paid.
			1. 1 Corinthians 9:14
			2. 1 Timothy 5:17
			3. But no man has the right to be a hireling.
		4. This Levite forsook (if he ever had it) God’s calling and authority.
			1. Being a hireling, he told the people what they wanted to hear.
				1. Judges 18:5-7

He told the people to go on in their wicked ways, that it was fine.

* + 1. There isn’t much wrong in America that could not be radically and quickly changed if we just had a generation of preachers who would stand in the pulpit and, without fear or favor, preach the Word of God with the anointing of the Holy Ghost upon them.
			1. Preachers need to stop trying to win popularity contests.
			2. Preachers need to stop being hirelings.
		2. A hireling is committed to the one who pays their salary.
			1. A called man of God is not responsible to the people but to God.
			2. A minister who is called by God is committed to Jesus Christ and not hired to be a Christian on the people’s behalf.
				1. We can’t hire anybody to serve God on our behalf.
			3. The hireling flees, but the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.
				1. John 10:11-13
		3. We have a generation today of man-called preachers rather than God-called preachers.
			1. Because of that, they will not preach the Word of God.
		4. Preachers are to preach the Word of God.
			1. They may be seen as troublemakers for doing so.
			2. Proverbs 27:5-6
				1. Dr. R. G. Lee stated that he had rather be called cruel for being kind than to be called kind for being cruel.
			3. Galatians 4:16
			4. Ecclesiastes 7:5
				1. People today are trudging to churches hearing the song of fools by men who are hirelings.
		5. The duty of a pastor is not to make the Gospel palatable so that it doesn’t offend people.
			1. The responsibility of the pastor is not to fill the auditorium but to fill the pulpit.
		6. We have pastors today without principles because our values are gone.
	1. Government without God.
		1. Judges 18:1-4
			1. The fathers of the tribe of Dan did not like what they had.
				1. God had given them an inheritance, but they did not possess their possessions because of their own sin, their own laziness, cowardice and unbelief.
			2. So, they became dissatisfied and covetous.
				1. Rather than having what God had given them, they wanted what belonged to someone else.
				2. They came against the people who lived in the town of Laish and plundered that city.
		2. We have a generation in America today who wants what belongs to somebody else.
			1. And they think they have a right to take it.
			2. This is because we have a loss of value.
		3. 2 Thessalonians 3:10
			1. This verse is not talking about those who cannot work.
				1. The Bible tells us over and over again that we are to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves.
			2. The Bible is against misappropriation of other people’s goods through covetousness and dissatisfaction.
		4. When you so lose your values that one half of the nation gets the idea that it doesn’t have to work because somebody else will work for them, and the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else gets what they work for, then everybody is out of work except the government.
		5. Greed, materialism and selfishness motivate our government and many businesses today.
			1. The gambling industry is based on getting what belongs to someone else in my possession.
			2. True business is win-win.
				1. A good business is when one individual is blessed and the other is blessed, and they mutually help one another.
			3. Gambling is based on win-lose.
				1. You cannot have winners without having losers, and it is antithetical to the law of God and the law of good business.
		6. In our nation today, we are trying to get what belongs to somebody else and failing to give when we ought to give.
		7. 2 Timothy 3:1-5
			1. In the last days, people will be lovers of their own selves, living for self and self alone.
				1. Me-ology rather than theology.
			2. They will be covetous, living for what they can get and grab, not for what they can give.
				1. The Bible teaches that we are to worship God, love people and use things.
				2. What we do today is worship things, use people and forget God.
			3. We have raised a generation today that does not respect authority inside or outside the home.
			4. “Unholy, without natural affection” means perverted love, without family love.
			5. “Trucebreakers” means that a man’s word means nothing.
				1. Whether it’s a treaty between nations, a political promise, a marriage contract or a business contract.
1. the reasons for vanishing values (judges 17:6)
	1. Judges 17:6
		1. God had blessed them incredibly, but they forgot God.
		2. America is the great nation that she is because she has been blessed by Almighty God.
	2. It begins with foolish speculations.
		1. Romans 1:18-21
			1. In this passage, the Apostle Paul goes back even before the day of the Judges and shows how a nation and how people lose their values.
			2. The word “hold” in verse 18 means “to smother, to repress,” to hold down the truth.
		2. Rather than turning to God, they turned to science.
			1. There is plenty of evidence that God exists, but they did not want God.
			2. They were willingly ignorant.
		3. When you reject the light, you’re left in darkness.
	3. The death of common sense
		1. Romans 1:22
		2. Our generation is a foolish generation.
			1. We think we’re intelligent, but we don’t even discern between truth and error.
			2. We cannot teach the Bible or morality in schools, but they give children instructions on birth control devices.
			3. Baby animals have more rights than the unborn infant in America.
			4. Courts today are more concerned about protecting the criminal’s rights than the victim’s rights.
	4. Religion becomes corrupted.
		1. Romans 1:23
		2. Man, by nature, will worship something.
			1. When he refuses the truth of God, he will get a god of his own making.
				1. He creates idols.
		3. The idols in America today include material idols of money, prestige, success, philosophy, health, pleasure, sports, entertainment and possessions.
		4. Anything we fear more, love more, serve more and value more than God is an idol.
			1. Whatever we put in first place in our lives is our god.
		5. America is saturated with false religions.
			1. Hinduism has come from the East to the West.
			2. Astrology, spiritism, occult religions, druidism, and devil worship are practiced throughout our nation.
			3. People are worshipping the creation rather than the Creator.
				1. Children in schools are taught to worship mother earth rather than Father God.
	5. Uncontrolled lusts
		1. Romans 1:24
			1. Greed, gluttony and sexual perversion.
		2. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn stated that your judgment is only as good as your information.
			1. If they are controlling your information, then they are controlling you.
			2. If you want a nation of hot heads, sex maniacs, alcoholics, psychos and maddening mobs, then keep laughing at things like dirty movies, filthy books and crude, cheap and profane language.
			3. In keeping silent about evil and burying it deep within so that it appears nowhere on the surface, we are implanting it; and it will rise up a thousand-fold in the future.
	6. Sexual perversion
		1. Romans 1:26
		2. Those practicing sexual perversion are becoming bold and even arrogant, saying that America must approve this lifestyle.
		3. Unless you believe the Word of God, you have no authority to stand against this because you have no set standard for right and wrong.
	7. A death of conscience
		1. This is the next step in the progression.
		2. Romans 1:28
			1. In Romans 1:24, God gave them over to impurity.
			2. In Romans 1:26, God gave them over to degrading passions.
			3. Now, God gives them over to a depraved, reprobate mind.
				1. The mind is morally useless.
				2. Every man does what is right in his own mind.
		3. Romans 1:31
			1. They are without natural affection.
				1. We have today mothers who abandon their children or sometimes kill their unborn children in the womb.
				2. Husbands abuse their wives.
				3. Children despise their parents.
				4. Fathers molest their own children.
			2. Romans 1:32
				1. People take pleasure in the vile headlines of tabloids and take pleasure in them who do the same.
				2. We have a generation of people who cannot blush.
2. our response to vanishing values
	1. We need to learn what the Bible has to say about family values.
		1. If parents do not build their home on the Word of God, then they will be building on shifting sand, and the storms will sweep it away.
	2. We need to get under the ministry of a God-called, God-appointed and God-anointed man of God where the Word of God is preached without fear or favor.
	3. We need to pray for America.
		1. We need to stand up, speak up, and understand that they will not like us when we do.
		2. Don’t be intimidated or bullied.
			1. We have a right to speak up and stand up.
			2. We have a right to put our ideas in the marketplace.
		3. It’s time to wake up in America.
3. CONCLUSION
	1. With God and because of God, there is hope.
	2. Have you given your heart to Jesus Christ?
		1. Are you saved?
	3. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
	4. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
		1. Romans 3:23
		2. Romans 10:9-10
		3. Romans 10:13
		4. Acts 16:31
		5. John 3:16