**Jeremiah 9:12-24**

***“What Do You Spotlight?”***

Introduction:

1. What do you spotlight? House, cars, pensions, children, accomplishments these lead to pride.

 This is where we get our worth and value.

2. In Jeremiah’s day the spotlight was on the wrong things, and he concludes with what

 we should be putting in the spotlight (vss. 23,24)

3. In Jeremiah 9:12-24...be careful what you turn that spotlight upon:

What are you spotlighting?

**I. DISASTER EXASPERATES THE SPOTLIGHT 9:12-16**

Jeremiah speaks of the coming invasion by Babylon

*Wiseman (12) Wiseman (23)…*This is the backdrop for “boasting” (v. 23,24)

 ***A. The Result Of The Wrong Spotlight 12,15,16***

Babylon is going to invade Judah. Let’s see their spotlight:

**1. Property 12** Their property is *overrun…taken by another.* **It will happen to all of us!**

 **One day it will all belong to someone else!**

 **2. Possessions 12** *And perished and burned up…*We see this in fires in

 CA…tornadoes in Mid-west…hurricanes along the coast. They recently had

 mudslides in CA.

 **3. Provisions 15** *I will feed them with wormwood…which is water of gall* to drink.

 \*God at one time gave His people manna in the wilderness, but now the water is bitter.

 \*Life can become a bitter pill to swallow. Life can be made up of losses…lost

 job…house…income. I saw a onetime executive living among the homeless.

 **4. Protection 16** *I will scatter them among the nations…I will send a sword.*

\*Life was so easy, so familiar. Let’s say all of this is gone…where is your spotlight?

 ***B. The Reason For The Wrong Spotlight 13,14***

 *How do we develop the wrong focus?* How do we lose perspective and develop the wrong

 priorities.

**1. His Word Is Abandoned 13** *You have forsaken…*We lose the Word of God which

 is our guide, compass and roadmap.

 **2. His Way Is Abolished 13***You obeyed not…by disobedience!* It wasn’t that they

 didn’t have the instruction manual or directions. *You have not obeyed my word!*

 **3. His Wisdom Is Aborted 14** You have become the standard…*walked after their*

 *imagination.* It is our own stubbornness. Idols (that which is false worship) has

 taken the place of the true and living God. You now worship the wrong thing.

What are you spotlighting?

**II. DEATH ELIMINATES THE SPOTLIGHT 9:17-22**

Death has a way of putting life into perspective. In this invasion death reigns! Jeremiah calls

 Women who are professional mourners. *Tears flow for death is come (22)* Even children are

 snatched from the playground.

1. ***Popularity Is Dead!*** The most popular person in Judah is dead!

**1.** They lived for the spotlight.

**2.** If popularity is your spotlight…at death ask: what does popularity mean now?

 ***B. Power Is Dead!***

**1.** The most powerful are dead. The banker, lawyer, doctor, politician is dead.

**2.**Ronald Regan gave way to Alzheimer’s. Pope John Paul II is no longer.

**3.** If power is your boast…**at death it doesn’t mean much.**

 ***C. Prestige Is Dead!***

**1.** Look around Jerusalem of the Fortune 500 recipients.

 **2.** Look at those who have won the Noble Peace Prize. What about those who have

 won 3 Oscars? What about those who won 5 NBA rings?!

 **3.** They are all dead! At that moment, all the prestige doesn’t mean much, if anything!

 ***D. Plans Are Dead!***

**1.** This one was going to build a bigger house. There is nothing wrong with a bigger

 house.

 **2.** This one was going to take a cruise or invest or buy more property.

 **3. Death eliminates all plans, and this spotlight is gone!**

What are you spotlighting?

**III. DEITY ELEVATES** **THE SPOTLIGHT 9:23,24**

 ***A. Empty Boasting 23*** *Wise men* is the same as v. 12.Jeremiah summarizes what we

 spotlight the most. This is their source of pride.

1. **Intellect…this is I.Q.**

 \*It starts at an early age: *I got a sticker on my paper…what did you get?* You can’t

 help whether your I.Q. is high or low. You had little to do with it. That’s the way God

 wired you up!

 **2. Strength**

 **\***Mohammed Ali *”I am the greatest”* He got to the place he could barely walk or

 talk. Bill Kazmaier…Paul Anderson (one-time American strong man)…Alexeev

 Russian weight lifting champion.

 \*They were born stronger. They became stronger through training. Strength is

 relative.

 **3. Riches**

 **\***John D. Rockefeller one time owned 1.5% of GDP. Today it would take over $340

 billion. That is 4 times greater than Bill Gates. How much did he leave? *He left it all!*

 \**Riches may leave us when we live, we must leave them when we die. Thomas Fuller*

Death climbs through the window, then all boasting must come to an end. **The**

 **dead do not boast!**

 ***B. Enlightened Boasting 24***

Where do we shine the spotlight? Boast in the Lord! The Lord God of the OT is the

 Jesus of the New Testament! **It’s all about Him.** Humans must and will shine a

 spotlight…but where? When the spotlight shines on God, what do we see?

 3 characteristics are emphasized:

1. **Kindness** *lovingkindness…*the Hebrew word is so rich that it takes a half dozen English words to convey its meaning: covenant loyalty, steadfast love, unfailing devotion, merciful affection. Kindness is what God expressed through Jesus Christ. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Jn 3:16)* Boast of God’s gift and the obedience of Christ when He suffered and died for our sins.

 \*Jesus laid down His life for us!

 **2. Justice** Sin must be paid for, and it will! Righteousness will be rewarded and

 wickedness will be punished!

 \*God is a God of justice. His judgments are eternal. He will bring every deed to

 Judgment when the sin is open or in secret...God knows! He will not leave the guilty

 unpunished.

 \*Either you pay for your sin, which is eternal separation from God for all eternity

 or you accept Jesus Christ as God’s payment for your sin. You choose!

**3. Righteousness** *upright* is moral purity. He is upright in all of His ways and

perfect in all His actions.

 \*It is to spotlight the righteousness of Jesus Christ. God cannot overlook sin. **It**

 **took a perfect sacrifice. Jesus was more than a man. He was God!**

 *But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and*

 *righteousness, sanctification and redemption (I Cor. 1:30)*

 *He became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of*

 *God through faith in Jesus Christ.* (II Cor. 5:21)

He became what we were (sin) that we might become what He is (righteous).

**If you boast…let it be in Jesus Christ!!**