**Jeremiah 35:1-19**

***“Taking God Seriously”***

Introduction

1. How serious do you take the things of God?

2. Jeremiah 35:1-19 God uses an object lesson to make His point. The Rechabites had a 250

 year commitment and they were sticking to it!

How committed are you to Jesus Christ? How serious do you take the things of God?

**I. THE CONTRACT OF SERIOUSNESS 35:1-11**

 ***A. The Designation Of Commitment 1-3***

God wants them to see dedication, commitment and a promise made.

**1. God’s Initiation 1**

 **\***During the reign of Jehoiakim (606 B.C.) God speaks to Jeremiah.

 \*He has something specific in mind. God wants to show us what it looks like to

 be sold out!

 **2. God’s Illustration 2,3**

 **\***The Rechabites were nomads by choice and were forced to live in Jerusalem for

 safety.

 \*Bring the High School, University or Olympic athlete for the Team Coach

 Award. Put a face to the commitment.

 \*In v. 3 the whole Rechabite clan is presented.

 **3. God’s Instruction 2b**

 **\****Give them wine to drink…*It is not an illustration of drinking wine or abstinence.

 \*God knew the Rechabites level of commitment. He knew they wouldn’t drink

 because of a promise made 250 years before this day.

 ***B. The Degree Of Commitment 4,5***

Put a situation, a test before them.

**1. The Location 4a** A chamber in the house of the Lord

 **2. The Leadership 4b** This was taking place before the eyes of the religious

 leaders…the political leaders.

 **3. The Lead 5**

 **\***Bowls and cups of wine were set before them: *Drink wine!*

\*The commitment is challenged. How serious are you?

 \*My cousin in his senior year while averaging 20 points per game was dropped

 from the basketball team. Why? He drank a coke (which was against the

 coaches training rules).

 \*God knew what they would do!

 ***C. The Determination Of Commitment 6-11***

How far, to what extent will this commitment go? They knew the commandment

 given and promise they had made.

**1. Resolute 6** Make up your mind!

 \**We will drink no wine.* The reason: Jonadab (our ancestor) commanded us.

 \*Wine drinking was associated with Baal worship and many pagan religions.

 Stay away from wine and the Baal temptation won’t be there.

 \*For 250 years they had obeyed.

 **2. Resolve 7,8** They knew the details.

 \**No wine…no building houses (which meant they would be nomads)…no*

 *vineyards (the temptation of wine won’t be there)…no sowing seed (farmers put*

 *down roots and become part of a community.)*

 *\**v. 8 They did it! This isn’t God’s recommendation on how to live, but **how far**

 **a man will go to keep a commitment.**

 **\***To win the prize…the hours in the gym…the thousands of miles on the

 road…the diet…the hours…the time away from family…just to win a metal or

 ribbon.

  **3. Restrictions 9,10**

 **\***They not only had no wine, but they read the fine print and did it!

 \*They did what it took to stay dedicated to a promise…**it worked!**

 **\***v. 11 The only reason they were in Jerusalem was for protection. They were not

 there to become part of Jerusalem.

How committed are you to Jesus Christ? How serious do you take the things of God?

**II. THE CONTRAST OF SERIOUSNESS 35:12-19**

Jeremiah makes a comparison between man’s commitment to man and Judah’s commitment

 to God. In v. 12 God applies the principle:

 ***A. Regulated 13*** *Hearken* is the key word.

**1.** The Rechabites were regulated by the word of a man (Jonadab). Judah was

 regulated by the word of God.

**2.** *Will you not receive instruction to hearken to my words?* Which has more weight:

 a coach….an employer…an organization…a wife or husband…or the voice of God.

 Which should have more weight?

**3. Are you willing to adjust your life to do what God wants you to do?**

***B. Responsive 14***

**1.** The Rechabites obeyed a fallible, flesh and blood leader. For 250 years they obeyed

 absolutely! **They obeyed!**

 **2.** Judah’s leader was the eternal God. *I have spoken unto you, rising early and*

 *speaking; but ye hearkened not unto Me.*

**3. God is always speaking. Do you hear?** Do you hear God’s word, or

 circumstances, situations, and people? Are you willing to obey absolutely? Do you

 know what it looks like to obey?

***C. Reactionary 15***

Do you know what the voice of God sounds like?

1. Jonadab gave his command to the Rechabites only once. God repeatedly sent His messengers!
2. Repeatedly: *but you hearkened not to Me* When these men spoke, what did it sound like? It sounded like the voice of a man. It sounds like Pastor Murray or some other pastor who preaches God’s word. Give as God has prospered you. Use your gifts…become involved. Husbands, be the spiritual leader in your home. God wants your body. God wants absolute surrender.
3. **God responds to an act of faith, but God will not respond until you take a step**

**of faith! Take the step of faith!**

***D. Reliable 16***

 **1.** Rechabites obeyed for 250 years. The Lord’s people constantly disobeyed. *This*

 *people have not hearkened unto Me.*

 **2. What would happen at Pennsville or the cause of Christ if we were as serious**

 **as a Muslim? As serious as a Hindu? As serious as a Buddhist? As serious as**

 **a Jehovah Witness?**

***E. Rewarded 17-19***

**1.** There is a price to pay for not listening. v. 17 *I have spoken…they have not heart.*

 *I have called…they have not answered.*

**2.** There is a reward for listening. 18, 19 There is a Rechabite somewhere today,

 because they have obeyed and kept.

 **3. Absolute Surrender…Total Obedience. God will one day say: *“Well done thou***

 ***good and faithful servant.” Enter In!***

*How serious are you about the things of God?*

***TAKE THE STEP!!!***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWcsCt8zerk>