



The Battle of your Surroundings

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II Samuel 18:6 So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; 7 Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

- In this chapter of II Samuel, we find that the kingdom of Israel has been divided...
- Between King David and his son Absalom...
- A great battle was engaged because of this division.

That's the devil's game plan. He wants to cause division in the church/family... (the family is the building block of the Church)

- Unity

- Jesus said in Mark 3:25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.
- Church we have a mission to accomplish, but that mission will never be completed until we have complete unity...
- The bible tells us that 20,000 men were slain because of this division of the kingdom of Israel.
- But notice what the Bible says in verse 8, For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.
- More people died that day because of their surroundings than those that were killed by the sword of the enemy.
- As I read this scripture, God gripped my heart, and He began to say, this is the same with the world today...
- The reason that people are not coming to God is not because they are fighting against God, or even the fact that they don't want to know God.
- It's because they are too entangled in their surroundings...
- Everywhere you look there is something to entangle you.
- The temptation of money, lust, pride, the false sense of security that the devil is selling to people

You don't have to look hard to see that our surroundings are perilous...

- The world tells us that our surroundings dictate our response.
- But God tells us that our response dictates our surroundings.

- You may have been an alcoholic all your life, but when you respond to the spirit of God, God will change your surroundings...
- I looked up the meaning of the name Ephraim. (The place where this battle was fought.)
- I found out that it means - increasing
- Increasing. Every growing and enlarging itself.
- Then my mind went to the comparison that the Bible gives us between heaven and hell.
- The Bible speaks of Heaven as being 1500 miles square.
- It has boundaries.
- But it speaks of hell as, "having enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure:"
- That tells us that Heaven has boundaries, but hell doesn't.

- In order to go to hell you don't have to live by any guidelines...
- You can do nothing and go to hell.
- But in order to get into heaven there a few guidelines that we must obey.
- And those guidelines were given to us in Acts 2:38 Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- The devil is flooding our society with more and more things to get us caught up with this world.

Isaiah 59:19 *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.*

- I feel as if the devil has changed his methods in this generation.
- He's not blatantly trying to just pull us into hell anymore, he's just trying to make us forget about hell, and forget about God.
- He knows that if he can blind us by our surroundings that we will not realize our need for God.
- He's trying to flood our minds so that we will not be conscious to our need for God.
- It's like the old saying, "You can't see the forest for the trees."
- Well Satan wants us not to be able to see Hell because we're blinded by our surroundings.
- But we do have a consolation, for the Word of God says, we are in this world, but we're not of it...

Romans 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...*

- I may have to live in these surroundings, but this is just temporary.
- For one day, I'm going to move into my real home for eternity...
- Never to worry about my surroundings anymore.
- Satan can try open the flood gates and saturate my mind if he wants to, but I have a promise that when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.
- It's God's spirit that is going to bring us out of the surroundings of this life!
- I don't care what your surroundings are; God wants to bring you out of them tonight.
- Peter, on the day of Pentecost preached to people who were blinded by their surroundings/traditions, and his response to them was, save yourselves from this untoward generation.
- Save yourselves?
- It's not possible to save ourselves.
- Jesus is the only one who could pay the price for salvation.
- Peter wasn't saying that we are to pay the price for our own salvation.
- He was saying in order to be saved you've got to respond to what Jesus has done for you.
- God wants to bring someone out of their surroundings tonight, but you've got to save yourself, by responding to God.
- (Minister)