

LECTURE 21

THE FEARFUL COUNSELEE

We live in fearful times. The events of 9/11 have reminded us of how little real control we have over our lives and have produced a culture of fear. In this lecture Dr. Adams talks to us about the fearful counselees we will be dealing with more and more in these times. This lecture was recorded at an annual meeting of the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. There is an occasional sound problem during the first ten minutes of the lecture but it was identified and solved without detracting from the lecture.

I TROUBLED TIMES ARE TIMES OF OPPORTUNITY

2 Timothy 4:1-2

¹ In the presence of God and of Jesus Christ, Who is going to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His empire, I solemnly call on you to preach the Word, be at it in season and out of season.

II CONVICT, REPROVE, AND URGE WITH COMPLETE PATIENCE AND FULL TEACHING.

A We are to preach both—

1 In season (ευκαιροζ)

2 Out of season (ακαιροζ)

- B** Counseling is the same thing as preaching.
- 1 In both cases the Word of God is ministered to people.
 - 2 Counseling is just not as loud, and (usually) to fewer people.

III COUNSELING IS MORE IMPORTANT IN TROUBLED TIMES

- A** Counseling, generally, is not a prominent ministry in the overall scheme of church ministry.
- 1 It is one facet of a balanced church ministry.
 - 2 It becomes more important in troubled times because people need to be especially equipped to handle the times.
- B** What makes these times difficult? FEAR!
- 1 An apprehension of impending disaster
 - 2 These days includes
 - Anthrax
 - Terrorists
 - Snipers
 - Child abductions

IV THE CHIEF FEAR: DEATH

Hebrews 2:14-15

¹⁴ So then, since the children have had blood and flesh in common, He likewise shared these things with them, so that by His death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

¹⁵ and deliver those who, by fear of death, were subjected to slavery throughout their entire lifetime.

- A Many counselees are enslaved by the fear of death.
 - 1 Even though our society tries to keep people's minds off of death,
 - 2 Job calls death the "King of terrors" (Job 18:14).

1 Corinthians 15:54-56

⁵⁴ Now when this corruptible body puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that was written will come true: Death has been swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory; O death, where is your sting?

⁵⁶ Now the sting of death is sin, and what gives sin its power is the law.

- B Death is a fearful thing because of its sting (κεντρον).
 - 1 People innately know they are sinners.
 - 2 God's law condemns them.
 - 3 We have broken God's law and will stand before Him some day.

V HOW DO WE APPROACH PEOPLE WHO ARE FEARFUL?

- A Make sure they know Christ—Evangelize!
- B Stress what God has done for the believer.
 - 1 Christ conquered death.
 - 2 It is not appropriate to go on fearing the way the world does.
- C Be frank with your counselees about death.
 - 1 Few other people have been.
 - 2 The **facts of death** are as important to understand as the **facts of life**.
 - 3 People do not need to be enslaved to a fear of death.

VI BOTTOM LINE—WE DON'T FEAR THOSE WHO CAN ONLY KILL THE BODY.

Matthew 10:28

²⁸ Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but can't kill the soul; rather be afraid of the One Who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

A Instead of fearing, believers are to love.

1 John 4:18

¹⁸ There is no fear in love; rather, love that has accomplished its purpose throws fear out. This is clear because fear involves punishment, and so whoever fears hasn't had that purpose accomplished by love.

- 1 We do not love as we ought and therefore,
- 2 We fear as we should not.

B It is the fear of **God** that is the beginning of wisdom.

- 1 Love God, and others and,
- 2 The fear of man will be placated.