

# The Folly of the World's Philosophy

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God and laying up heavenly treasures, rather than trusting in earthly defenses and pursuing a life of pleasure and materialism.*

**Duration:** 40:16

**Scripture:** Isaiah 21:16, Isaiah 22:10, Jeremiah 2:13, Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:21, Romans 1:18-23

**Topics:** "Philosophy"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the lack of respect and disregard for God in society today, paralleling it to the people in Isaiah's time. He highlights the promotion of evolution and the prohibition of teaching creation in public schools as an example of this disrespect. The speaker also mentions that leading scientists are now recognizing the Darwinian theory of evolution as a hoax. The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking the Lord and trusting in Him rather than relying on earthly possessions and preparations for protection.

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## Transcript

Let's pray. Father, we ask that you would help us today to take an honest evaluation of our lives to determine, Lord, how rich we are toward you, toward the things of the Spirit, toward things that are eternal. Father, keep us from the snare of putting our confidence in our earthly goods, and may we be more concerned, Lord, with our heavenly treasures.

We ask this, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

We are continuing our journey through Isaiah. Tonight, Pastor Skip will lead us through Isaiah chapters 20 through 22. I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed his study last Sunday night.

I believe that you will too. Sunday afternoons, I go in and I study for the evening. I read the passages.

I read the various commentaries. Kay said, Honey, why do you do that? You've got someone else teaching on Sunday night now. I said, Well, he might get sick or he might not show up, and so I want to be ready in case he doesn't come.

So, really though, I enjoyed having studied the various commentaries and all. I enjoyed very much the commentary that Skip gave us last Sunday night, and I think you'll enjoy it too. I would recommend that you come out and you try going through the Bible with us on Sunday evenings as we make this

all-important journey into the Word of God and through the Word of God.

This morning, I'd like to draw your attention to the 22nd chapter of Isaiah, beginning with verse 10. Well, let's go back to 9. You have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many. And you've gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

And you have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have you broken down to fortify the wall. You have made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you have not looked unto the maker thereof, and neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, to mourning, and to baldness, and to the girding with sackcloth. And behold, there was joy and gladness, the slaying of oxen, the killing of sheep, the eating flesh, the drinking wine, and the declaration, Let us eat, drink, for tomorrow we shall die. Isaiah had been predicting the invasion by the terrorist nation of Assyria.

The Assyrians were extremely cruel people. They were terrorists. Oftentimes they would behead the men of the city that they had conquered, and they would pile these heads in a big pile at the gate of the city just to terrorize the people.

They often would cut out the tongues of the captives, or they would mutilate their body by cutting off an ear, or cutting off a nose, or by gouging out their eyes. Their whole purpose was to strike terror in the hearts of the people so that the people would submit unto them. They were true terrorists of their day.

Isaiah is saying, they're coming, and they're going to invade the land, and you better prepare for this invasion. And Isaiah's thought was, seek God and really call upon the Lord for help. It's interesting, if you go to Jerusalem today, Isaiah here speaks of how they tore down some of the houses to fortify the wall.

He spoke about the double wall. And if you go to Jerusalem today, there in the Jewish quarter, you can see a very interesting excavation where the archaeologists have actually dug down to this wall that Isaiah is speaking about. Even you can see the double wall there.

But even more interesting is that you can see the ground level, the floors of the houses that they tore down to fortify the wall. Even as Isaiah declares here in chapter 22, you can go to Jerusalem today and see the actual visible kind of proving the truth of the Word of God. The very thing that Isaiah talked about, you can look upon with your own eyes today.

They not only fortified the walls in preparation for this invasion by the Assyrians, but also it was at this time that Hezekiah the king had ordered the 1,700-foot tunnel to be dug through the solid rock from the spring of Gihon to bring the water within the city walls there at the pool of Siloam. And thus, he was preparing for the invasion, fortifying the walls, making sure that they would have a fresh water supply within the walls of Jerusalem when they were under the siege of the Syrian army. But God had a complaint against the people.

Though they had done all that they could physically to prepare them for this invasion, there was one thing that they didn't do, and that is that they weren't seeking the Lord who made the spring of Gihon in the first place. They were so typical of so many people today who take all kinds of precautions to protect their homes, to protect their families. You purchase insurance, you have alarm systems for your house, for your car, and you are trusting in all of your devices as preparations to sustain you in a time of emergency, and yet you really don't look to the or seek the Lord to keep you.

David said, unless the Lord keeps the city, the watchman wakes in vain. Again, David wrote, some people trust in horses and some in chariots, but we will trust in the name of Jehovah our God. In a few chapters, when we get to the 31st chapter of Isaiah, we'll find Isaiah saying, woe to those that go down to Egypt for help and trust in horses and in the number of chariots they possess.

Actually, that's exactly what they did. They went down to Egypt and they made an alliance with Egypt to stand with them against the Assyrians, but the Assyrians conquered Egypt and then came back to invade Jerusalem. But Isaiah is warning in advance that you'd better not trust in the number of chariots of the Egyptians or seek the help of the Egyptians or to trust in the cavalry units because they are strong.

But he said, they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, neither do they seek Jehovah for their defense. Serious mistake. They were trusting in their own defenses.

They were trusting in the fortified walls and in the fresh water supplies, but they weren't really looking to the Lord for help. If you sort of modernize the language, would you say that this perhaps could also apply to America today? Who trust in armored divisions and missile systems and really do not look to the Lord for their defense? We read that they really didn't respect God who was the creator. How true that is today in our land, the disrespect that we have for God, the endeavor to say, remove the thought of God out of our national life.

Men today are trying to explain our existence with senseless fables. They promote the teaching of evolution, but they seek to prohibit the teaching of creation within our public schools. They scorn that as a fairy tale and as unscientific.

However, today, many of the leading scientists in the world are declaring that very soon the Darwinian theory of evolution will be recognized as one of the greatest hoaxes ever perpetrated upon the public. That as we recognize the complexities of the DNA molecule, we realize that there are no simple cells, but they are all extremely complex, too complex to just happen by accident. But in each cell, there is, of course, that evidence of design.

Paul, in writing to the Romans, said that the wrath of God is going to be revealed from heaven against all of the ungodliness and the unrighteousness of men who hold the truth of God in unrighteousness. For when they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, and neither were they thankful. But they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

And professing themselves to be wise, they actually became fools, because they worshiped and served the creature more than the creator. I would like to suggest that that describes so accurately the evolutionary theory. Because they didn't want to retain God, they create some theory that eliminates the need for the existence of God.

But as Isaiah, or Jeremiah said, they've hewn out cisterns, but they're broken cisterns. They can't hold water. And of course, when you look at the theory, it just can't hold water.

Isaiah tells us that it was a day when the and a time of extreme grieving. That was the shaving of their head. The word baldness symbolized the grief, the extreme grief at the death of your father or of a loved one that's very close to you.

They do that to the present day in Israel. If a close relative dies to show their grief, they will shave their heads. If they have a beard, they'll shave their beards.

And they'll allow the hair to grow for 30 days without getting it cut or without doing anything, just hair growing for 30 days as a sign of the grief that they're experiencing over the loss of a loved one. And thus, God was calling for this kind of grieving in the hearts of the people. Then he was calling for sackcloth.

Now sackcloth was often worn during a time of repentance. When you're repenting, the people would often wear sackcloth. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus spoke about, as he was talking about the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida, and he was pronouncing the judgments of God that were going to come upon them.

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. So the sackcloth is a sign of repentance. This is what God was seeking.

They are threatened. Their very existence is being threatened. Their families are being threatened.

The terrorist nation of Assyria is on its way. And you would think that the people would turn to God, that there would be fasting, there would be prayer, there would be weeping and mourning, grief and repentance. Because the land was facing such dire circumstances, the real threats of terrorism, they would be facing an awesomely powerful nation that was conquering the world.

Their only hope for survival would be in the Lord and to put their trust in Him. But they had turned their backs on God. They'd enshrined other gods which were not true gods.

They had become a sex-craved, pleasure-mad society that was about to be destroyed. You'd think that their circumstances would drive them to their knees. This is what God was looking for.

Their grim situation should have caused them to turn to God with weeping and repentance. They should have been on their knees fasting and praying. It could soon be over for them as a nation.

God wanted them to turn to Him and to put their trust in Him. But they were trusting in the walls they had just fortified. They were trusting in the double wall that Isaiah spoke about.

And you can see that double wall there in Jerusalem today. I do believe that God often does allow difficulties and dire circumstances to come into our lives that are designed to turn us to Him. When we have a tendency to stray away from the Lord, God will allow oftentimes some hardship, some shocking thing to sort of wake us up and to draw us back to Himself.

I like to refer to them as wake-up calls. You see, God loves you too much just to allow you to destroy yourself. He will bring all kinds of obstacles into your path to stop you on the mad dash to destruction.

The whole purpose is to bring you to your knees in repentance before God. But if you refuse to repent, as the Lord said to the church of Thyatira, I gave her space to repent of her fornication, but she repented not. Therefore, I will cast her and all of those that commit fornication with her into the great tribulation, except they repent.

And I believe that we are close to that great tribulation. I believe that the time has come where we will very soon see the judgment of God upon this world as He describes in Revelation 6 through 18. I believe that the world will see it.

I don't think that we'll see it as Christians, but I'm afraid that many of you might. You see, God said, I gave them space to repent, but they repented not. And therefore, I will cast them into the great tribulation.

And I think that that's very close at hand. God said of those who refused to retain God in their minds, that He gave them over to the filth of the lust of their own hearts. He gave them over to vile affections as the women turned to lesbianism and the men to homosexuality.

These were the lowest rungs on the ladder of morality. They had gone to the bottom of depravity, which led to the wrath of God that Paul spoke about being poured out against the depraved society. For Paul concludes that not only did they do things that deserved death, but they took pleasure in those that do them.

And every time in the news broadcast when I see some gay parade and these men going down the street in their little tutus and the people on the sidewalk applauding them and all, I think, oh my, not only are they doing things that God condemns and are worthy of death, but there are those who take pleasure and applaud those that do them. And I think here we are threatened with terrorism and not really turning to God, but not regarding God. And here we are turning our backs on God and the things of God.

And surely, surely the judgment of God will come. God was looking for sorrow, for mourning, for repenting, but what did He find? Verse 13, Isaiah said, Behold, there was joy and gladness, the slaying of oxen, the killing of sheep, the eating of flesh and drinking. And they declared, Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we shall die.

This certainly is the philosophy of the world, the world in which we live today. Let's eat. Let's drink.

Let's be merry. Tomorrow we die. But let me ask you a question.

I want you to think about it seriously. If you knew that you were going to die tomorrow, that you had just 24 hours left to live, just how would you seek to spend that 24 hours? Would you call your friends and say, Come on over. Let's have a big party.

We'll have a barbecue. We'll have a lot of beer and booze. And, you know, we'll just have a great time partying and just go on a big drunk for your last 24 hours.

Basically, that's what the people were saying. Let's just eat and drink. Tomorrow is going to be disaster, but let's make the best of it in the meantime.

How tragic. If I knew that I had just 24 hours left, I would want to spend that 24 hours drawing as close to the Lord as I possibly could and witnessing to as many people as I've been wanting to witness to concerning Jesus Christ. We're facing serious national problems.

There are millions of people today all over the world that hate you as an American, and they have dedicated their lives to destroying you and destroying your way of life. And they are willing to give their lives to help destroy America. The suicide bombers.

And of course, right now we are being warned that they're planning some major attack within the United States this summer. And the great fear is the dirty bomb that could be exploded, that could take thousands of lives here in America. They say that there are 1 billion Muslims in the world, but the Muslims say, well, there's only 10% of them that are radical.

Well, that's comforting. Only 100 million people that are out to kill you rest comfortably. We're in dire circumstances.

We're in desperate circumstances. It's a time for fasting, a time for prayer, a time of repenting before God, crying out to God for his protection and for his mercy. We're in much the condition that Jerusalem was in here in the 22nd chapter of Isaiah.

And unfortunately, there are those as were in Isaiah's day that were just saying, well, let's eat, drink and be merry. We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. And as you look around in the world in which we live today, that's the general attitude of our society.

The people are not really seeking God, but they're seeking their own pleasures. They're seeking their own prosperity. And the vast majority are not really regarding God.

I don't think that God takes role on Sunday morning. I think he probably takes role Sunday night or during the week. You remember Gideon called the people to the battle, and there were a great number that responded, but God said, that's too many.

Can't use them all. It isn't the number of people, it's the commitment that really counts. And God is looking for people that are committed.

He's looking for people who would be on their knees, fasting, praying, seeking God, grieving over the sin of our community. If a graph was made that would depict how you spent this last week, the 168 hours that God gave you this past week, how would that graph look? Probably the tallest thing on the graph would be sleep. Because if you get eight hours a night for sleep, that means that one quarter, a little over than a quarter of the week was spent asleep.

Another large portion of the graph, almost as tall as the sleep would be work. If you worked on a 40 hour week basis, that would take up practically half of your week sleeping and working. Another portion of the graph would be taken up with eating.

And then probably a fairly good portion taken up with the worldly media, magazines, newspapers, TV. Then also you have to consider the hours that you spent driving to and from work. And if you live in the Inland Empire, that could be pretty high on the graph.

But if it had there the number of hours spent in prayer, would you be able to see that portion of the graph? How about the time spent in the word of God? How about quality time with the family? You fathers, the time that you spent with your children this week in quality time, assuring them of your love and asking them if everything is okay. Can dad do anything for you? And, and just spending that kind of statistics have come out that show how little time fathers spend with their children, which is a real tragedy. It's interesting how easily we can get our priorities all confused.

So much of our time just spent in trying to exist in this world. And so little time spent in things that have eternal value to them. So much time laying up earthly treasures, so little time in laying up heavenly treasures.

God said through Isaiah concerning Jerusalem, this iniquity will not be cleansed until you die. The chapter goes on to tell of one of the leaders in Jerusalem, one of the government leaders. He was spending his money building an ornate tomb, carving it out of solid rock.

And again, if you go to Jerusalem today, you can see so many of these ornate tombs that were carved out of solid rock. And he was building this great ornate tomb. It was known throughout all of Jerusalem, this project of building this tomb, spending his funds and so forth to build this ornate tomb.

And the Lord said, you will never be buried in it. You will be taken as a captive to the enemy's land and you'll never be buried in this tomb. What a picture of so much of what we do spend our time and our energies involved in, of things that are going to pass, things that we will not really totally possess or enjoy.

If you can enjoy being buried in a tomb. But all of our future plans could be radically changed by the coming events. And therefore, you dare not exclude God out of your planning.

As we read in Luke chapter 12, as Jesus gave the parable of this man, rich man. He had amassed many goods, so much so that he said, I don't have room. For all of my goods, what will I do? I know what I'll do.

I'll tear down my barns and build bigger. So I'll have room for all of my fruits. But God said to him, you fool.

You think that you've got it made, that you can just build bigger barns and you can just kick back, eat, drink and be merry. But he said, tonight, your life will be over. And who will spend then all of the funds that you've amassed? Kay and I are getting ready to scale down in life.

We're planning to invite all of our kids to come over and go through the house. And just say to them, take whatever stuff you want. It's amazing how much stuff can be accumulated through the years.

And when you've spent 56 years together, there's just an awful lot of stuff. So we're going to tell the kids, take what you want. And we'll call the goodwill and let them take the rest.

Of the stuff. Because we realize that we're getting to that place where we need to lighten the load. And to pare down and to just sort of simplify our life.

Make it light so that there's nothing holding us down when the Lord calls. No weight that would keep us earthbound, but that we'll be free to soar within. The Apostle James wrote, Go to now ye that say today or tomorrow, we will go into a certain city, we will stay there for a year and we will buy and sell and make a lot of money.

You don't know if you will even be here tomorrow, he said. For life is a vapor. It just appears for a moment and then it vanishes.

You ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and then we will do this or that. And trying to figure out life. Never leave God out of the equation.

If the Lord wills that we should live till tomorrow. And if the Lord wills, we will do this or that. But leave your life in his hands.

Let him direct you. Don't trust in your own defenses or in your own abilities. But trust in the Lord.

And when the difficulties rise, God's calling you to your knees. God's calling you to repentance. God is calling upon you to seek his face.

And if you do, you'll be safe. If you don't, you can easily be destroyed as your defenses fail. Let's pray.

Father, help us to realize the solemnity of the situation in which we are existing today. As we look at the world in which we live and as we are being warned by our government of possible major terrorist attacks here in the United States during the summer. Lord, as we realize that there are so many people that do want to destroy our way of life and to destroy us, we ask, Father, that we'll not be in a careless kind of a lifestyle.

Even as you warned us that we should take care, lest at any times our lives be overcharged with eating or drinking or just trying to get by. So that when that day comes, we will be totally unaware. But Lord, help us to be alert.

And help us, Lord, to be ready. That when you call for us, we'll be ready, Lord, to be with you by your side, to be in your eternal kingdom forever and ever. Lord, this day, may you find us as you would like to find us.

May you find us on our knees before you, seeking your face, repenting from our careless living and devoting ourselves, Lord, totally to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front to minister to you today. We're living in perilous times. One of the greatest problems that I can see is that though the times are desperate, the church isn't desperate before God in prayer.

Time that we get desperate before God. Could be that God has spoken to some of your hearts today and you realize that you haven't been trusting in the Lord as you should. You haven't been seeking his counsel or his help.

And maybe God has thrown a few little wake-up calls in your direction, but you've sort of brushed them off. And you're just struggling and continuing to struggle to do it yourself. But it's time to just surrender to the Lord.

And may God find you as he would want to find you, on your knees before him, seeking his help, seeking his strength. These men are here to help you to find God's help and God's strength for your life. And so we would encourage you as we are dismissed, make your way forward.

Seek God with all of your heart. As the Lord said, in the day that you seek him with your whole heart, in that day he will be found by you. May the Lord watch over and keep you in his love and in his grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

His face.

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