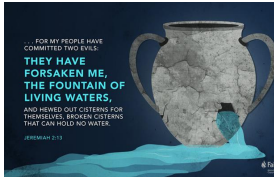


American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart November 2021

Erwin Lutzer Speaks To The American Church



Editor's Note: This month we have chosen to share an excerpt from Erwin Lutzer's book, The Church in Babylon, as we look upon our beloved country with broken-heartedness and compassion. If ever there was a time that America needs the church to come alongside her and be the church—the Body of Christ—today is that day.

We are grateful to God for giving Dr. Lutzer a pastor's heart and for moving him to write such powerful words that are meant to stir us all to action. Our heartfelt cry to the Lord is that we would truly *“display both the power of God to keep us and the love of God to authenticate us.”* May these words bless you as they have blessed us.

The nation had drifted so far from God that He told Jeremiah to stop praying for the nation (Jer. 7:16). Judah had crossed the point of no return. Whether the United States is at that point, we cannot be sure. But our slide toward moral and spiritual rebellion is accelerating with each passing day. What a wonderful opportunity for the church to display both the power of God to keep us and the love of God to authenticate us.

A Sexualized Culture

...Why were pagan idols so attractive to the people of Israel and Judah? Why did the people constantly flirt with other gods?

Study history and you will discover that idolatry justified and encouraged sexual permissiveness of every sort. Shrines were built on every high hill, and God said, “Under every green tree you bowed down like a whore” (Jer. 2:20). Prostitution, homosexuality, and every form of perversion was practiced, and

the people loved it. Orgies were common, and the false gods stood by in silent approval.

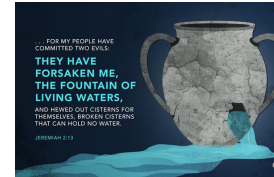
God was displeased. “Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:12-13). The water they thirsted for proved to be bitter, guilt-inducing, and destructively addictive. It promised freedom but brought bondage, broken relationships, and endless pain.

People were gagging on the guilt, shame, and brokenness that their idols brought. But they refused to turn away from what was destroying them. The nature of evil is to plunge ahead, deliberately closing one's eyes to the consequences. Or even worse, seeing the consequences but being so addicted to behavioral patterns that change

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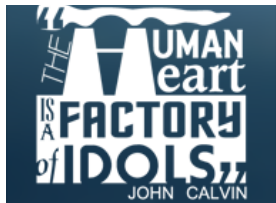
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Think America. Our nation is drinking from similar poisoned wells. Like salt water that promises to satisfy but only increases a deadly thirst, so our nation plunges into a sexual wasteland that drives people to emptiness and despair. All of this has to be mentally justified no matter what our consciences tell us. The bumper stickers used to say, “If it feels good, do it.” Now the bumper sticker should say, “If it feels good, *believe* it.”

The people had their own home remedies for their emptiness and guilt. “Though you wash yourself with lye and use much soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me, declares the Lord God” (Jer. 2:22). Using rationalizations as detergent, they were trying in vain to cleanse their consciences. But their self-made attempts to manage their emptiness only enflamed their desires. They

looked everywhere for a remedy. Everywhere except to God.

The people didn’t wait for sin to come to them, they went looking for it. “How can you say, ‘I am not unclean, I have not gone after the Baals’? Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done—a restless young camel running here and there, a wild donkey used to the wilderness, in her heat sniffing the wind! Who can restrain her lust?” (Jer. 2:23-24).

God said that the day was coming when the people would feel shame, but for now, they could not blush. “As a thief is shamed when caught, so the house of Israel shall be shamed: they, their kings” (Jer. 2:26). There was a time was when unmarried couples living together would try to hide that fact, but not anymore. They openly say that they are living together and have no sense of shame. “Times are a changing.”

It has been said, once we open the door to sin, it takes us further than we intended to go, keeps us longer than we intended

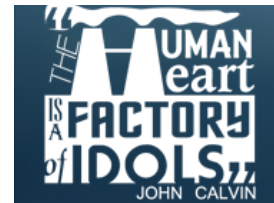
to stay, and costs us more than we intended to pay.

With their conscience deadened by unrestrained sexuality, the people of Judah ended up sacrificing their children to the god Molech. In the United States, we are sacrificing our unborn on the altar of sexual freedom, and now with one-third of America’s children born out of wedlock, they are thrown into a world of insecurity, anger, and too often, abuse. Sadly, this vicious cycle is often repeated in the next generation.

Every god demands increasing allegiance. Whether it’s money or fame or sex, our god of choice is not easily satisfied. John Calvin, the great theologian, said that the human mind is an idol factory. The human heart keeps generating one idol after another.

What a marvelous opportunity for God to show up through His church!

(Excerpt from the book [The Church in Babylon](#) © 2018 by Erwin W. Lutzer; used by permission from Moody Publishers)



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