

SICK OF EVIL • Week 2: It Came From Within

Daily Briefing • Day 1 of 5 • Good Tools, Wrong Job

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:7

Sunday's message named money, education, politics, and science as false messiahs, good things asked to do a job only God can actually do. Today we slow down on why that failure is built into the tools themselves, not just the people misusing them. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me not put my faith, my hope, my trust, and my loyalty in things that make promises but can't deliver. So much in this world overpromises but underdelivers. I pray that I would see the difference between what is good and what is God, and between what good things can do and what only God can do. I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

A Ferrari is one of the finest machines ever built for the road. Give it the best fuel and the smoothest highway, and it will do exactly what it was designed to do. Ask that same Ferrari to fly you to the moon and no amount of horsepower fixes the problem. It was never built for that job. Sunday's message used this exact picture for money, education, and politics. They are good, sometimes excellent, at the job they were built for. None of them were ever built to fix a society wrecked by the fruit of a sinful human heart.

The prophet Jeremiah delivered a stark warning to a nation that had built its security around military alliances, wealth, and human strategy while its heart had quietly turned away from God. "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:5). Notice this is not a warning against having strength, alliances, or resources. It is a warning against making them your actual foundation.

Jeremiah pictures two kinds of lives. One is like "a shrub in the desert," cut off from water, unable to see good come even when it does arrive (Jeremiah 17:6). The other is "a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream," unaffected by heat or drought because its life source never runs dry (Jeremiah 17:7-8). The difference was never the amount of resources available to either one. It was where each one was actually rooted.

This week's message named three places people plant their roots instead of the stream. Politics: "Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation" (Psalm 146:3). Human strength and strategy: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7). Money: "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils" (1 Timothy 6:10), though the same passage tells the wealthy not to stop having money, but to "do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share" (1 Timothy 6:18). None of these things are evil. Scripture never says that. It says trusting them the way you were meant to trust only God is.

READ & MEDITATE

Jeremiah 17:5-8

"Thus says the LORD: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.'"

Isaiah 55:1-2

"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?"

Read Jeremiah 17:5-8 and notice the difference between the shrub and the tree is not how much water fell on either one. It is where each one put its roots. The question for the day is: "Where are you sending your roots for nourishment?" Then read Isaiah 55:1-2 and notice God's own invitation sitting right in the middle of all this warning. He does not just tell you what not to trust. He tells you where real satisfaction is actually found, free of charge.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment is far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

The Ferrari was never the problem. Asking it to fly was.

What is a genuinely good thing in your life right now that you have quietly been asking to do a job only God can actually do?

This might look like asking a career to give you identity, asking a relationship to give you security, or asking a bank account to give you peace. Where have you done this?

Jeremiah does not say the shrub in the desert has less strength or fewer resources than the tree. He says it is planted in the wrong place.

What does Jeremiah 17:5-8 suggest about what actually determines whether a life holds up under pressure? Is it the amount of resources someone has, or something else?

Fill in the blank from Jeremiah 17:8:

"...and is not anxious in the year of _____, for it does not cease to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17:8)

**These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.*

Why do you think the tree's confidence in this verse has nothing to do with the weather actually being easy? What does that tell you about where real security comes from?

Scripture never says money, strength, or political engagement are evil. It says trusting them to do what only God can do is.

Which of the three, political outcomes, your own strength and competence, or your financial security, do you find yourself leaning on most for peace of mind?

What would it actually look like this week to hold that thing as a tool again instead of a foundation?

Isaiah does not just diagnose the problem. He names exactly where real satisfaction is actually available, free of charge, to anyone who will come.

What have you been spending your money, time, or energy on that Isaiah would call “that which is not bread”?

This might look like purchases you keep making that never actually satisfy, an achievement you keep chasing that never feels like enough, or a habit you keep returning to that leaves you emptier than before. Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Jeremiah 17:7 from memory:
