

## WHEN THE ARK OF THE COVENANT BECAME JUST A BOX

**2 Samuel 6:1-7    1 Samuel 5**

**Introduction:** The story is told of a young woman touring Europe and visited the museum in Vienna. She saw a piano on a little platform, roped off to keep people away. The sign read, "The Piano of Beethoven." "Who in the world was Beethoven?" she asked herself "and why is this piano so important?" So she crawled under the ropes, climbed up on the platform, sat down on the piano seat and proceeded to play "chop-sticks" on the piano. Paderwreski, one of the world's greatest pianists had also visited that same museum, saw the same piano but felt unworthy to even touch it. He could only stand there and admire the man, Beethoven, who had composed and played so much wonderful music on it.

There is a danger of making sacred things common and ordinary and taken for granted.

### I. THINGS OF GOD ARE HOLY AND TO BE TREATED AS SUCH

1. God had the Ark of the Covenant constructed in exact accordance to His directions.
  - The Ark was to symbolize God's presence, a focal point, the Holy of Holy place.
  - It was used to make atonement for the sins of Israel and only certain people were allowed near it and then only once a year.
  - It was carried in battle when God instructed, thus signifying that God was with them.
  - It was forbidden that anybody except certain ones should even touch it.
  - 50,000 were slain on one occasion because some dared to look inside it.
2. Taken into battle without God's instructions, the Ark was captured by the Philistines.
  - Plagues befell them, their idols were thrown down around the Ark.
  - Great fear fell upon all and the Ark was finally returned to Israel.
  - The Ark stayed for some 20 years at Abinadab's house.
3. King David found out about the Ark and sent for it to be brought back to the city and temple.
  - While attempting to move the Ark it tilted and Uzzah reached up to steady it and was struck dead instantly.
  - David had not followed God's guidelines for handling the Ark, especially in transporting it.
  - The Ark had been ignored for many years and nobody remembered the warnings God had given concerning the Ark.
  - God had warned Moses at the burning bush to take his shoes off because he was standing on Holy Ground.
  - The Ark had lost it's holiness and importance in Israel's eyes, it was nothing more than an elaborate box.

### II. THINGS OF GOD HAVE BEEN CHEAPENED THROUGH THE YEARS BY THE CHURCH

1. Growing up "Christian" has dangers in that things of God often become common and familiar.
2. The concept of "God" has been cheapened. (*Psalm 50:1-23*)
  - There is the attitude that God is sort of "grandfatherly" or a good "buddy."

3. God's Word has been cheapened.
  - People sit in judgment whether the Bible is all or partially God's Word. Whether it is all inspired or just parts.
  - Jesus used God's Word to defeat Satan.
  - Today there are as many "interpretations" of God's Word as there are stars in the sky.
4. God's Salvation has been cheapened.
  - No repentance is needed, just walk the aisle, shake the preacher's hand, fill out a card.
  - Let's get that number of baptisms we set the goal for.
  - It doesn't take the blood of Christ and sincere repentance to bring salvation anymore.
5. Worship has been cheapened.
  - Most churches of today are incapable of reverent worship. Entertainment and short "sermons" are the thing.
  - Most churches today don't worship God. People who attend don't even remember the text nor the message by the next day.
6. The Church, itself, has been cheapened.
  - Anybody can get in and nobody gets out. Even if they die, some churches never take them off the church roll.
  - The Church started as a sheepfold but has become a zoo.
  - God's kind of Church costs! It costs devotion, loyalty, honesty, sincerity, obedience, etc.
7. Christianity has been cheapened.
  - It doesn't mean anything to be called a "Christian" today.
  - Nobody is really a "disciple" of Christ for Jesus said to count the cost before following Him.
8. God's music has been cheapened.
  - Music has gone from hymns of praise and worship to "hootenannies" and 7-11 choruses.
  - Sacred music has been dragged down to the basic humanistic animalism of noise, rhythm and repetition.
  - Music from the heart has all but disappeared.

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. God never intended to be a "buddy" to anyone or to have His Word to be questioned by man's ignorance or worship of Him to become nothing more than entertainment.
2. God never intended for His Salvation to become cheap and any old way will do or His Church to become a zoo or the Christian life to be an "add-on" thing, taking whatever part of it that one wants so long as it doesn't interfere with one's own plans.
3. God is holy and demands holiness action from those who dare approach Him or bear the name of "Christian."