

SPIRITUAL APATHY AND ITS FRUIT

Sermon By Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. APATHY is the state of mind that is without feeling or emotion, there is the want of feeling, a lack of interest, a listless condition, indifference, dullness, lukewarmness, sluggishness, unconcern, lethargy
2. Christians and churches all over this country are filled with APATHY.
3. Amos in the long ago pronounced a "WOE" upon those *"that are at ease in Zion"* -- Amos 6:1
 - (1) In this verse, he is talking to both Judah and Israel -- *"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came"*.
 - (2) Israel's worship was formal and God said, *"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts"* -- Amos 5: 21 - 22
 - (3) It was a time of materialism, luxury and ease -- Amos 6: 3 - 6
4. John said the church at Ephesus had *"left thy first love"* -- Rev. 2:4
 - (1) Apathy had set in this congregation, and apathy would destroy it if they did not repent.

I. CONDITIONS THAT RESULT FROM APATHY

1. CARNAL MINDEDNESS -- Minding the things of the flesh and giving our time and attention to the things of this life.
 - (1) The Corinthians were carnal -- I Cor. 3: 1 - 3; Rom. 8:8
 - (2) We are to be spiritually minded, setting our minds on things above -- Col. 3:1
 - (3) The spiritually minded are active in all their duties to promote the cause of Christ.
 1. They attend the services -- Heb. 10:25
 2. They work for unity -- Eph. 4: 1 - 3
 3. They are liberal in their giving -- II Cor. 9: 6 - 7
 4. They are zealous -- II Cor. 9:2
2. Apathy kills spiritual activity
 - (1) I Tim. 4:8
 - (2) It kills personal Bible study -- II Tim. 2:15; Heb. 5: 11 - 14
 - (3) It kills prayer -- I Thess. 5:17; Luke 18:1
 - (4) It kills visiting the sick -- Matt. 25:36
 - (5) It kills personal work -- Acts 8:4; II Tim. 2:2
 - (6) It kills faithful attendance.
3. Apathy kills generous giving -- Rom. 12:8 *"He who gives, with liberality" (NKJV)*
 - (1) People will not be generous and self-denying for that they are indifferent toward.
 - (2) Christians are to be liberal givers -- II Cor. 9: 6 - 7; Luke 6:38; Luke 16:11
4. Apathy weakens the preaching of the gospel.

- (1) An apathetic group of people who sit and listen to the gospel and are not MOVED to make any changes in their lives, or to render any service unto God, will DIE.
 - (2) Apathetic congregations are dying across this nation.
 - (3) This apathy affects men doing the preaching -- they become discouraged.
 - (4) This apathy discourages sinners from obeying the gospel.
5. Apathy discourages the work of the church.
- (1) The elders are discouraged because of little or no encouragement.
 - (2) Deacons are discouraged.
 - (3) Teachers are discouraged because of lack of involvement and care on the part of the class.

II. THE CAUSES OF APATHY

1. Many think religion is only for ENJOYMENT AND PRIVILEGE.
 - (1) True religion is not only for enjoyment and privilege, it also carries with it DUTY, LABOR and ACTIVITY -- Phil. 2:12; I Cor. 15:58
 - (2) Christians are servants of the Savior -- Rom. 1:1; 6:22
 - (3) Laborers in His vineyard -- Matt. 20: 1 - 16; I Cor. 3:9; I Cor. 15:58; Matt. 9:37 - 38
2. Evil company with people of the world.
 - (1) I Cor. 15:33
 - (2) Lot had his soul vexed from day to day with the unlawful deeds of men of the world-- II Pet. 2 :7 - 9
 - (3) Matt. 24:12
3. Forgetfulness of our responsibility
 - (1) Peter knew this was a danger -- II Pet. 1: 12 -13
 - (2) Everyone must give an account of himself -- II Cor. 5:10
 - (3) We are stewards and must render an account of our stewardship -- Luke 16: 9 - 12
 - (4) We are accountable for our opportunities -- Gal. 6:10

III. THE EVIL OF THE APATHETIC STATE OF MIND

1. Apathy is evil in itself; it is displeasing to God -- Rev. 3: 14 - 16; Matt. 25: 26 - 30
2. It is evil in its influence.
 - (1) On the person who is at ease:
 1. It renders his soul barren -- Rom. 7:4 "*that we should bring forth fruit unto God*"
 2. It robs it of peace -- Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:7
3. It is evil in its influence on the brethren.
 - (1) It will infect others.
4. It is evil in its influence on the local church.
 - (1) It renders its influence almost powerless.

5. Its influence is bad on the world.

(1) Men see that this is not the way Christians are to act.

(2) It hinders this conversion of souls.

CONCLUSION

1. Friend, are you apathetic toward your duty to God?
2. If so, won't you make some changes today?

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