

The Problem with Passivity

Revelation 3:15-19 HCSB I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. (16) So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth. (17) Because you say, 'I'm rich; I have become wealthy, and need nothing,' and you don't know that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked, (18) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich, and white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see. (19) As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be committed and repent.

Apathy is an **absence** or **suppression** of passion, emotion or excitement. An apathetic person demonstrates a lack of interest in or concern for things that others find moving or exciting.

God does not want us to be apathetic.

- **Isaiah 32:9-10 HCSB** Stand up, you complacent women; listen to me. Pay attention to what I say, you overconfident daughters. (10) In a little more than a year you overconfident ones will shudder, for the vintage will fail and the harvest will not come.

Apathy is driven by **complacency**, a feeling that we are good enough. It leads to **not listening** or paying attention to God's wisdom.

Those living in Zion felt secure and at ease, not knowing the danger that lurked even in their midst! Apathy will **blind us** to danger. We may feel carefree but we are actually in mortal danger.

- **Amos 6:1-3 HCSB** Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and to those who feel secure on the hill of Samaria--the notable people in this first of the nations, those the house of Israel comes to. (2) Cross over to Calneh and see; go from there to great Hamath; then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms? Is their territory larger than yours? (3) You dismiss any thought of the evil day and bring in a reign of violence.
- **Zephaniah 2:15 HCSB** This is the self-assured city that lives in security, that thinks to herself: I am, and there is no one besides me. What a desolation she has become, a place for wild animals to lie down! Everyone who passes by her jeers and shakes his fist.

Thinking that we are good enough will cause us to not seek, follow or inquire of the Lord. It literally leads to **"godlessness."**

- **Zephaniah 1:6 HCSB** and those who turn back from following the LORD, who do not seek the LORD or inquire of Him.

Apathy leads us to **simply pass by** other's troubles and pains.

- **Lamentations 1:12 HCSB** Is this nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see! Is there any pain like mine, which was dealt out to me, which the LORD made me suffer on the day of His burning anger?
- **Luke 10:30-37 HCSB** Jesus took up *the question* and said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and fled, leaving him half dead. (31) A priest happened to be going down that road. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (32) In the same way, a Levite, when he arrived at the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. (33) But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, and when he saw *the man*, he had compassion. (34) He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (35) The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him. When I come back I'll reimburse you for whatever extra you spend.' (36) "Which of these three do you think

proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" (37) "The one who showed mercy to him," he said. Then Jesus told him, "Go and do the same."

God describes apathetic sinners as having hearts of stone. They are difficult if not impossible to **change**. Thus apathy is a very grave sin.

- Ezekiel 11:19 HCSB And I will give them one heart and put a new spirit within them; I will remove their heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh,
- Zechariah 7:11-12 HCSB But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder; they closed their ears so they could not hear. 12 They made their hearts like a rock so as not to obey the law or the words that the LORD of Hosts had sent by His Spirit through the earlier prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of Hosts.

Apathy leads to **hard hearts**, **obstinacy**, **futility** of thought, and **callousness** of the conscience.

- Ezekiel 2:4 HCSB The children are obstinate and hardhearted. I am sending you to them, and you must say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says.
- Mark 6:52 HCSB because they had not understood about the loaves. Instead, their hearts were hardened.
- Ephesians 4:17-19 HCSB Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their thoughts. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts. 19 They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.

An apathetic person will end up having **no regard** for what is right or wrong.

- Ephesians 4:19 HCSB They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.

Jesus told a parable about a wicked judge who had no concern for God or man.

- Luke 18:1-5 HCSB He then told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not become discouraged: 2 "There was a judge in one town who didn't fear God or respect man. 3 And a widow in that town kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' 4 "For a while he was unwilling, but later he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect man, 5 yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice, so she doesn't wear me out by her persistent coming.'"

In the end, he had to do what was right but he got no credit for it. He went down through history as a wicked man. God's Will WILL be done, if not by us then by someone else. Apathy will cause us to **lose opportunities** for mitzvot that God presents to us.

Apathy will spiritually **blind** and **deafen** a person.

- Ezekiel 12:1-2 HCSB The word of the LORD came to me: 2 "Son of man, you are living among a rebellious house. They have eyes to see but do not see, and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house.

Apathy may cause a person to miss the invitation to be in God's kingdom. It will lead us **straight to hell**.

- Matthew 22:1-5 HCSB Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables: 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent out his slaves to summon those invited to the banquet, but they didn't want to come. 4 Again, he sent out other slaves, and said, 'Tell those who are invited: Look, I've prepared my dinner; my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready.

Come to the wedding banquet. ' 5 "But they paid no attention and went away, one to his own farm, another to his business.