

The Danger of Complacency

Webster defines complacency as an attitude of 'unconcern or self-sufficiency'. In theological terms, one who is complacent shows little concern for things of God... or exhibits an attitude of self-sufficiency which shows no real need for God, or no relationship with God.

How in the world could a Christian fall into such a state ? It certainly wouldn't be intentional ! No, when it happens, it happens gradually, unintentionally.

With the rush of schedules, importance of social things (jobs, grades, savings, investments, popularity, multiplicity of activities, etc., etc.) a personal relationship with God in, with, and through his Word... just gradually gets crowded farther aside day by day. What was once important becomes of no importance. What was first, now becomes last.

For God, the relationship he desires to have with us is always of first importance. He has focused his will on that relationship from eternity. He sent his Son to suffer, die, be raised from the dead to reestablish that relationship with him. His Son now reigns at his right hand to effect that relationship until it is completely sealed for all eternity at his Second Advent.

For the eternal benefit of his people, God does not react complacently to those who treat a relationship with him complacently. We see God's concern reflected in the following passages: *At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish those who are complacent, who are like wine left on its dregs, who think, 'The LORD will do nothing, either good or bad.'* [Zeph 1:12] *Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, and to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria, you notable men of the foremost nation, to whom the people of Israel come!* [Amos 6:1]

God's strong reaction to a complacent attitude about a relationship with him is not limited to the Old Testament testimony. The book of Revelation also shows God's keen interest in maintaining a viable strong vibrant relationship between him and his people today. Thus the following warnings are written: *"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm-neither hot nor cold-I am about to spit you out of my mouth. [Rev 3:14-16] and "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. [Rev 2:1-4]* What is needed to correct such complacency ? ...

Confession, repentance, and a turning back to the place where God and his Word are first in our lives

True contentment is found in God's provision in his Word

Thinking contentment is found in busyness and in the quantity of things, we become complacent about the one thing in which is true contentment. Isn't it really the busyness and quantity of things which lead us to be troubled in the first place ? Is that not the very opposite of contentment ? Truly a reversal must take place in us, our priorities, and our evaluations. What does the text say ? *The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.* [Prov 19:23]

God truly does know what he is doing as he calls us back into relationship with him. Trusting in his love, his protection, his provision in Christ we are content. St. Paul states the same in saying, *I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* [Phil 4:12-13]

Don't be Complacent but be 'On Guard'

There are many things that can rob a Christian of the contentment which is in Christ. We have already said busyness , the quantity of things, multiple activities. But Jesus also lists other items which we must be 'on guard' against. Jesus lists the social pressure of society. *"Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues* [Mat 10:17] Jesus lists false doctrine (teaching) in Mat 16:6 where he says, *"Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. "* And St. Peter says in 2 Peter 3:17 *Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.*

True contentment is found in relationship with the Lord. True contentment is found in knowing God lives in us and we live in God by faith. As St. John says in *"If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us."* [1 John 4:15-16]

So how are we to now walk in the Lord ? This way, *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.* [1 Cor 16:13]