

The Cause and Cure for Indifference

Deut. 8:2 *"Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee."*

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Jan 21st

2 Tim. 3:16,17 *"All scripture is given by ... God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction That the man of God may be perfect, (artos: complete) thoroughly furnished (Exartiz'o: fully equipped) unto all good works."* (agathos: useful/beneficial) The Purposes of Scripture is to Perfect (complete) and furnish (equip) us So that we're able to have a productive (beneficial) and fulfilling (purposeful) life! (Eph. 4:12) This means that ignorance of God's word will leaves us Incomplete, Ill-equipped and Ineffective! Last week we discussed the:

Causes of Ignorance: (Ignoring God's Truths)

Consequences of ignorance: (Deceit & Drift)

Correction for ignorance: (Receive/Respond to Truth!) (Ps 119:130; Jn 8:32; 17:17)

Ignorance can be slain by the "Sword of the Spirit" (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12), But ignorance isn't our only enemy when it comes to grasping God's truth. Another enemy we must overcome is Indifference!

Understanding Indifference (*"without interest, importance, concern"*)

1. Diagnosis: Hardening of the Heart!

A. Ignorance is related to the head (mind); but Indifference is a Heart issue!

"To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:8,15; 4:7)

1) Not just "I don't know", but I don't care!

2. Symptoms: Indifference (apathy) is evidenced in:

A. Relational separation/apathy Mt 19:8 *"Moses because of the hardness of your hearts (Sklēro: dry, tough, calloused) (kardia:thoughts, feelings) suffered (epitrepō: allowed) you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."*

1) The further we drift from someone, The less effect/pull they have on us!

B. Religious Apathy

1) The further we drift from God, the less effect He (His Spirit and Word) has on us.

Mk 3:4-5 *"Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts,"*

Ro 2:4-6 *"despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness (sklērot'ēs: stubborn, calloused) and impenitent (ametano'ētos: unrepentant) heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds"*

Mk 16:14 *"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*

15 *...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."*

3. Prognosis: Indifference (apathy)

A. It distances us from:

1) God: Rev. 2:4 *"You have Left your first love"*

a) The further we drift from God and His Word, the less we care about anything He values!

2) Each other:

a) The further we drift from each other, the less influence we have on each other.

B. It defiles/destroys our heart/conscience. *Titus 1:15* “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; (katharos’: clean, clear) 2 Cor 4:4) but even their mind (nous: understanding) and conscience (synei’dēsis: co-perception) is defiled.” (miaino: contaminated) (Heb. 12:15)

- 1) Nothing illustrates this like America’s own Holocaust!
Not 6 million, but over 60 million innocent deaths!

C. It denies God’s Heart/Priorities. *Titus 1:16* “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, (arne’omai: refuse) being abominable, (bdelyktos’: idolatrous) and disobedient, (apeithēs’: without faith) and unto every good work reprobate.” (Adokimos: worthless) Jms 1:22; 2:20,26)

D. It frustrates God’s Spirit. *Eph 4:29, 30* “let no corrupt (saprois: worthless) communication (logos: words, reasoning) proceed... But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace... And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, (Lype’ō: distress) whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”
1Th 5:19 “quench (extinguish) not the Spirit...”

4. Treatment/ Cure for Indifference/Apathy

A. Interest. *1 Jn 3:11,14* “this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one Another ... We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” (than’atos: ultimate separation)

B. Involvement. *1 Jn 3:16* “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: (Jn 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this...”) and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”
Gal. 6:10 “let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

C. Investment. *1 Jn 3:17,18* “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 ... let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”
Mt 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Conclusion:

In Ezekiel 8 Ezekiel saw God’s people through God’s eyes! God revealed how His people were worshipping idols (demons), even in God’s temple! 8:5-16 and shared his heart response. (17,18)
In Ch. 9 God calls for 6 “destroyers” to stand by to execute judgment, but first directs another man standing by the altar “with a writer’s inkhorn” to “mark” those who “sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done” vs 4 When this is done, he orders the 6 destroying angels to “slay utterly... but come not near any upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary” (Vs 6)

- 1) What distinguished those who would be exempted from God’s judgment from those who would not? They “sigh and cry (aka: care!) for abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”
- 2) What was the effect of the mark (Tav) (a sign of exemption from judgment)
- 3) What was the significance of this Mark? “t” was the mark or sign of God’s covenant!

Application: Peter references this and applies it to the church in 1 Pt 4:7,8,17
“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God:”

- 1) Do you have the “mark” of God on your heart, “exempting” you from God’s Judgment? Ro. 5:1; 8:1
- 2) Are you sensitive to God’s word/Spirit, making you “effective” in God’s Purposes/plans?
- 3) Are you indifferent towards Your own sin or that of our society? (Mt 5:13-16; Lk 14:34,35)
Toward God’s Commands (prescriptions)? (See Pr 1:23-33)