

APATHY: A MAJOR PROBLEM CONFRONTING CHRISTIANS # 1

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Apathy and indifference are kin actually, synonyms.
- B. In surveys made about major problems confronting nominal Christianity today, # 1 is "Apathy and Indifference."
- C. Surveys and polls, taken to show condition of religious world today, indicate a deep decline in church attendance.
- D. Since apathy and indifference are major problems, this seems to be the reason attendance in general is way down
- E. Apathy and indifference are not only major problems in religion in general, they are also "**A**" if not "**THE**" major problem among churches of Christ; therefore, a study of "APATHY"

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITION OF APATHY

- A. Webster: 1. "Lack of emotion; 2. Lack of interest; listless condition; indifference." (One "apathetic" toward salvation a "pathetic" sight to those that love his soul)
- B. Some synonyms are: Impassiveness, Indifference, Lethargy, Listlessness, and Unconcern.
- C. This subject speaks of the lack of interest which many Christians show toward spiritual things.
 - 1. To see problem of apathy, we only need to compare Sunday morning attendance with other services.
 - 2. Some attend Bible studies without preparation
- D. So, apathy is an attitude of indifference and unconcern toward spiritual things.

II. APATHY DESTROYS CONGREGATIONS.

- A. Note Solomon's wisdom Eccl 10:18; Prov 18:9.
 - 1. Don't have to tear down house to destroy it; just fail to repair things needing repair - house will collapse.
 - 2. Don't have to burn field to destroy crop; just fail to plow, weed, and fertilize - produce same effect.
 - 3. If we understand this in physical, we should also be able to see it is true of the spiritual.
- B. Neglecting service discourages weak and influences those not members to continue as they are.
- C. Lord warned about destroying church 1Cor 3:16,17

III. APATHY CAUSES SPIRITUAL NEEDS TO GO UNMET

- A. Gospel is God's power for salvation. Rom 1:16.
 - 1. One must be taught Mk 16:15,16; Jhn 8:32
 - 2. Means God uses to draw lost to Him Jhn. 6:44,45.
- B. Those that are weak among us need encouraging.
 - 1. Need special attention 1Thess 5:14; Gal 6:1; Jas 5:19,20.

- 2. When apathy sets in, work to restore and strengthen weak and wayward goes unmet.

- C. When apathy sets in, teaching/learning almost stops

IV. APATHY DESTROYS THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP

- A. Acceptable worship comes from heart Jhn 4:23,24
- B. God not pleased by outward ceremony Mic 6:6-8.
- C. Worship demands full concentration and attention.
 - 1. Listen to sermon & search scriptures Acts 17:11
 - 2. Singing, every Christian Eph 5:19; Col 3:16.
 - 3. Prayer, every Christian 1Cor 14:16.
 - 4. Lord's Supper, every Christian 1Cor 11:24-29.
 - 5. Giving, every Christian 2Cor 9:6,7
- D. But, apathy destroys concentration and attention: fall asleep, daydream, pass notes, clip finger nails, whisper, play with babies, etc - The fruits of apathy

V. APATHY PUTS GOD SECOND IN OUR LIVES

- A. Spiritual indifference occurs because something has taken priority over God in one's life.
- B. Seed of kingdom is choked out by cares of this world and deceitfulness of riches Matt 13:22.
- C. God will not take 2nd place in one's life Ex 20:3 Matt 6:33; Matt10:37,38; Lk 9:23.
 - 1. If God won't allow family members before Him (in reference to priority) He will not tolerate man putting some type of game or sport before Him.
 - 2. Neither will He tolerate being placed second to TV, Shopping, Visiting, Dining out, etc.
- D. Yes, apathy is sinful because it shows priorities have been misplaced.

VI. APATHY WILL CAUSE ONE TO BE LOST

- A. If apathy brings about all things talked about, certainly it will condemn our soul.
- B. Apathy is not new three of seven churches of Asia were plagued with it Rev 2:4,5; 3:1-3, 16,17.
 - 1. These show God's disapproval of apathy.
 - 2. We must conclude that an apathetic attitude toward Christ and service to Him will cause one to be lost

CONCLUSION:

- A. We have noted that apathy is a number one problem in religious circles and determined what it is
- B. We have concluded that it is sinful and will cause one to be lost
- C. So, what about us, are we apathetic in serving the Lord?

(Ideas from a sermon by Jim Sasser)