

APATHY: A MAJOR PROBLEM CONFRONTING CHRISTIANS # 2

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Previously looked at "apathy as a problem in religion." (what it is, what's wrong with it and things it will do)
- B. Look now at some "MANIFESTATIONS OF APATHY" to see if we are guilty of being APATHETIC
- D. Paul tells us to, examine ourselves 2Cor 13:5
 - 1. A constant need to keep from being separated from God because of sin. Isa 59:1,2
 - 2. Must be very careful that we do not become apathetic toward God and His Word

DISCUSSION:

I. APATHY IS A VERY SUBTLE DISEASE

- A. Many sins open and blatant - no question of guilt
 - 1. Fornication, Adultery, Theft, Murder, etc.
 - 2. At any given moment of time, one can definitely state whether or not he has been guilty of such
- B. Some sins pertain to general disposition of heart
 - 1. Gradually pull one down and away from God
 - a. Though we readily admit these are sins, we don't spot them quite so easily as those mentioned
 - b. Covetousness is sin Col 3:5; yet, do you know of one confessing to being covetous?
 - c. Conceit and arrogance are so subtle that some actually become proud of their humility!
 - d. Has any confessed conceit or arrogance?
 - 2. Sins that affect us so subtly as these we must also be extremely careful to avoid
 - 3. Apathy certainly falls into this category
 - a. First, in heart - later manifested in outward acts
 - b. Subtlety of apathy lies in its gradually overtaking
 - c. Don't just wake up apathetic toward Lord; rather, drift gradually away
- C. As we study apathy, have attitude of apostles: "Lord, is it I?" Matt 26:22
 - 1. How do I know whether or not I am becoming apathetic toward Christ?
 - 2. How does apathy manifest itself to us?
 - 3. Let's try to find out how it happens

II. APATHY SHOWS A LOSS OF ZEAL

- A. Early Christians zealous Rom 12:11; Acts 2:42-47
- B. Zeal lasted long after Pentecost, Acts 4:34-37
- C. Persecution could not stop their zeal Acts 8:1-4
- D. Might call this zeal "one's first love" Rev 2:4,5

III. APATHY SHOWS A LOSS OF SPIRITUAL INTERESTS

- A. Changes one's desire to learn the word of God
 - 1. Won't have attitude of Cornelius. Acts 10:33
 - 2. Won't desire preaching as in Acts 13:42-44
 - 3. Won't be like the newborn babe 1Pet 2:1,2
 - 4. Won't give heed to reading, 1Tim 4:13
- B. Don't have interest in prayer Acts 2:42; 6:4; 12:5
- C. Don't desire to talk about spiritual things Matt 12:34. Acts 8:4; Jer 20:9

IV. APATHETIC CONSUMED WITH SECULAR INTEREST

- A. Christian can't live in world without some interest in the secular, but these must be tempered 1Cor 5:9-11
- B. World entangles 2Tim 2:4 and chokes word Lk 8:14
- C. Secular things: sports, recreation, etc become more important

V. APATHY RESULTS IN HARDNESS OF HEART TOWARD THE LORD AND HIS WORD

- A. The basic meaning of apathy is "without emotion"
- B. Message of the Lord cannot penetrate the heart
- C. As the message ceases to penetrate, the heart becomes grossed (calloused), the ears become dull of hearing, and the eyes are closed Matt 13:15
 - 1. When this happens, full apostasy sets in.
 - 2. Excuses are found for not attending worship, etc.
 - 3. One ceases to work for the Lord

CONCLUSION:

- A. Make sure our spiritual lives do not become APATHETIC.
- B. We need to be interested in spiritual - things that have to do with our salvation and not become INDIFFERENT.
- C. Yes, APATHY and INDIFFERENCE are major problems confronting Christians.
- D. Do you REALLY care about your spiritual life? If you do it will show.

(Ideas from a sermon by Jim Sasser)