

Apathetic about Apathy

Revelation 3:14-22

I knew today's sermon needed to be done and the slot was coming up but I didn't care whether I got it done or not.

Then I got to thinking, If I didn't get it done what would I talk about once I got up here, and I wondered what you would think, if I didn't have something? So I forced my self to write this sermon on Apathy

I am reminded of the great biblical example of apathy, the church at Laodicea in the passage which was read this morning The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology defines Laodicean as meaning 'lukewarm, neither cold nor hot', like the church of Laodicea (Revelation 3: 15, 16)

Overcoming apathy is one of the biggest hurdles we face in America. That is, if we cherish the idea of freedom. If you don't like the idea of living under an oppressive government structure, then helping others to see what's really going on is vital.

Unfortunately, a large bulk of Americans have been lulled to sleep. *We live in times of great apathy.* If you investigate history and look at how so-called "democracy" ends up, the age of apathy isn't too far ahead of tyranny's return.

There is a statement going around that apparently no one knows the originator of for sure, nor its accuracy, but it is never the less worth listening to and considering:

"A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves money from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over lousy fiscal policy, always followed by a dictatorship.

The average of the world's great civilizations before they decline has been 200 years. These nations have progressed in this sequence: From bondage to spiritual faith; from faith to great courage; from courage to liberty; from liberty to abundance; from abundance to selfishness; from selfishness to Complacency; from complacency to apathy; from apathy to dependency; from dependency back again to bondage."

Robert M Hutchins does note however, "The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment."

Justice William O. Douglas wrote, "As nightfall does not come all at once, neither does oppression. In both instances, there is a twilight when everything remains seemingly unchanged. And it is in such twilight that we all must be most aware of change in the air - however slight - lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness."

To avoid its results in our nation, as well as our church, I want to look at the subject and I want to begin with

I . The definition of Apathy

Apathy: is defined as the trait of lacking enthusiasm for or interest in things generally Apathy is a compound word: "a" meaning "**without**" and "pathy" meaning "**feeling**." It means literally, "without feeling." It has no passion and no opinion.

Its bywords are: "I don't care" "I don't want to be bothered." "I don't know and I don't want to know." Other words that would aptly define it are Indifference, Lack of interest, Lack of concern

How would the IRS respond if we only sent in 60% of our tax bill because we didn't care if we sent it all in or not? What if we bypassed the flashing lights at the RR crossing and stopped on the track because we didn't care if they were going or where we stopped. It would be a killer.

That is what apathy is, it is a killer. It kills emotionally, it can kill physically, it kills spiritually, it kills in families, it kills in the workplace, it kills in communities, it kills in churches. It simply KILLS!!

I once read about a mailman who was doing his morning rounds, and as he was going from building to building a sniper from the top floor of one of the buildings shot him in the shoulder. He crawled into a building lobby, and to his absolute amazement he was ordered out of the building for the reason that he was dripping blood on the carpet!

Dr. Laurence M. Gould, President Emeritus of Carlton College, once said in a speech, "I do not believe the greatest threat to our future is from bombs and missiles. I don't think our civilization will end that way. I think it will die when we no longer care."

Arnold Toynbee, the British Historian, has pointed out that 19 out of 21 civilizations have died from within - not by conquest from without.

He says, there were no bands playing, there were no flags waving, there were no shouts of victory when those civilizations decayed - it simply happened slowly, it happened from within when there was quiet, when there was darkness, when no-one was aware.

Someone has said that the epitaph of our society today should be this: 'This civilization died because it just didn't want to be bothered, it didn't care'.

I read where there was once a pregnant woman Oklahoma city was walking along the sidewalk when suddenly she felt contractions starting. She lay down on the sidewalk and she gave birth. An old lady walked by and stopped to help her, a taxi driver stopped at the side of the road and rolled his window down, looked out, then rolled it back up again and went away. That old lady, still seeking to help her, ran into a nearby hotel and asked could she borrow a towel to keep the woman warm - but she was refused.

I also read about a case in Dayton, Ohio where there was a woman who accidentally drove her car right into the Miami River. A dozen people stood looking over the railing, and watched as the car sank to the bottom. They watched as she got out of her car, and stood on the roof and waved her hands and shouted that she couldn't swim! But she drowned.

I don't know about you, but I feel that apathy has come into the church. We have slowly but surely absorbed this deadly spirit of apathy. Thus far apathy looks and acts pretty sick wouldn't you say?

I would like to move along and look a

II. Examples in today's society I see apathy in several areas. First,

A. **Politics** Why vote? Why listen to what is being said on the news by our leaders and potential leaders. Actually there is not as much being said by them as there is about them.

Then there is apathy in the

B. **Social areas** Why help? Why get involved?

Remember the incident in New England where a man was hit by the car and they even had a scooter turn around and circle around the guy and then go on.

Then there is apathy in the

C. Physical

We don't get our regular check ups. We don't seemed concerned about or health. People don't go to the dentist. I think this area is where apathy has interbred with fear.

And there is apathy in

D. Work

I don't care if I do anything because no one else is doing anything either. Do you find that the virus of apathy has invaded the workplace?

Another area where I see apathy having a major influence is in the area of

E. Appearance and dress

Many people don't care how they look in public. There is great apathy and unconcern of how they look to themselves or to others. Mainly, the more shabby they look the better.

Being a big person myself, I see many big people look so sloppy and there is no need for it. Even if you are big, you can still take a bath, you can still comb your hair and dress somewhat orderly. Ask anyone if I do and they will tell you yes!

This is seen in another area that I work a lot in. The funeral profession. I have never seen such apathetic attitudes and pathetic dress. Even funeral directors who see the worst of the worst concerning human beings are appalled by it

Another area that is suffering terribly is the area involving the

F. Spiritual

There has been a dramatic shift. People used to believe in the church. They would get involved. They would serve, they would attend church before going anywhere else.

Not so today. Today, it is, I'll go if I don't have something else to do. And concerning service, well just ask the tired and overworked officers and teachers if there appears to be a spirit of apathy.

III. Possible reasons for apathy

First I believe it has a lot to do with our

A. Litigious society and the greed of the few at the expense of those who might try and be faithful. Take the case of a person injured in an accident and people look and leave without even a call to 911. Part of us as a human being wants to help, but for far too long, we as a society have bitten the hand that helps us.

Example: Someone is in an accident, and you stop to try and help but just make a mistake and to court you go and you can watch all you life savings go right out the window. Now you may be saying but there is the Good Samaritan Law. I acknowledge that that law exists.

But I also know that for every law there is a greedy, thankless person, a crooked lawyer and a crazy liberal judge that will bypass it on any technicality they can fabricate. The result is, people become apathetic about helping and we are reaping what we have greedily sown and allowed as a society.

There is also another reason which I see as

B. Corruption in politics

Politicians and their pawns, the news agencies, lie, wiggle around issues, and deceive, just to get the votes and then they abandon their constituency and do as they please in their power, greed, and arrogance.

And they wonder why people don't want to vote or run for office. Or what about those, esp. in local governments who live under such invasive and intense microscopes? So much so that one small infringement on the more prestigious in a local community and they take those servants to the cleaners.

Then there is

C. Laziness

People don't even want to think about alternatives let alone work on them. You know, it is just too much trouble. So don't bother me cause I don't care

And there is

D. Selfishness

What about me? What about my comfort? What about my convenience? What about my schedule?

Does any of this sound or feel familiar? If so lets move on and look briefly at

IV. How to overcome or avoid apathy First,

Admit to ourselves and to others that we have it and practice it James 5:16

Decide: Decide that it is bad for us. Decide that you are tired of it. Decide to change. Decide to develop a plan to change

Attack: Don't procrastinate. Get passionate about something and start it, then stick to it! Don't give up and just say I don't care

Remember: In each of our lives, there are times where it appears that all is lost and apathy will creep in. It may be divorce, business failure, or health problems. It might be financial challenges, family problems, or job troubles.

Sooner or later, you're going to come to the point where all your mind tells you is, it's time to give up, give in, and forget about trying again. That point can be one of the most important decision points in your life.

Give up, give in, and throw in the towel, and be apathetic, and few people will condemn you for it. Keep going, and more than a few people will think you're a fool.

It's become common in our society to be apathetic and give up. We're all victims, now. We give up early and we give up often. Get apathetic enough and give up enough, and it loses its stigma. Actually, give up early enough, and you might be considered a "trendsetter."

Face it, If you want to get down and give up, nobody's going to get too worried -- but you should be. Nobody has ever accomplished anything good by giving up.

Dale Carnegie said, **and he was right**. "Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all,"

It's one of the things that defines the difference between a loser and a winner: the loser gets apathetic and gives up, the winner goes on. When it's the last hour of the day, the loser watches the clock, the winner keeps on working.

The winner keeps innovating, the loser settles for whatever he has. The winner keeps trying, the loser stops early.

What will be your motto? "Keep on trying," or "Give up early?" Keep on trying! Keep on doing! Keep on achieving! Never give up! **Don't get apathetic about it all**

TS Finally

Refuse to return to the old way

Remember that to be proactive is much less tiring, and a lot more fun, productive, and fulfilling than remaining hopeless and apathetic.

In closing maybe you have been apathetic about getting ready for your forever and now you are sure you are not ready but you would like to be. Read a few more lines and heed the warning and call.

Follow the instructions and it will be the best thing you have ever done and you will be glad you were apathetic no longer

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life. You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)