

Living Hope, a study of 2 Peter  
Wk #40: Complacency Kills & Destroys

Mention that we are now attaching the document to the sermon on the MVC website. We are also taking steps to make the website more of a resource to growth and discipleship.

2 Peter 2:12-16 NKJV

*<sup>12</sup> But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, <sup>13</sup> and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse (revel) in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing (reveling) in their own deceptions while they feast with you, <sup>14</sup> having eyes full of adultery (adulterous) and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. <sup>15</sup> They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; <sup>16</sup> but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.*

I want to share a three word evaluation that I learned years ago. It is easy for me to remember and the Holy Spirit has brought it to my mind so many times to protect me.

**Lust.....Sin.....Death**

Many of your translations say desires as the New Living Translation of James 1:15  
*These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

I have observed the depth of this reality throughout my short life on this earth.

**Any lust or desire that is allowed to grow, turns in to a real sin issue that ultimately creates some type of death or destruction.**

Reminder of Christ' teaching in Matthew 5:27-30 lust, sin, and death is deeper than we realize.

John MacArthur in his commentary of the New Testament:

"Beyond sexual favors, the false teachers of Peter's day were also interested in accumulating wealth. The phrase **having a heart trained in greed** indicates that their immorality was always accompanied by avarice. **Trained** (gumnazo), from which the English word gymnasium is derived, is an athletic term meaning "exercise" or "discipline". As a verb, it presents a disturbing description of the false teachers. William Barclay explains:

The picture is a terrific one. The word which is used for *trained* is the word which is used for an athlete, exercising and training himself for the games. These people have actually trained and

equipped and taught their minds and hearts to concentrate on nothing but the forbidden desire. They have deliberately fought with conscience until they have destroyed it, they have deliberately wrestled with God until they have thrown God out of life; they have deliberately struggled with their finer feelings until they have strangled them; they have deliberately trained themselves to concentrate on the forbidden things. Their lives have been a dreadful battle to destroy virtue and to train themselves in the techniques of sin. (*The Letters of James and Peter*, rev.ed. [Philadelphia Westminster, 1976], 392-93; italics in the original)

Without question, Peter understood that their actions were not accidental. Their offenses were crimes of premeditation, not momentary lapses of judgment. As masterminds of sin, the false teachers had planned their attacks and purposed their hearts toward sensual and materialistic ends."

Complacency (noun) Merriam-Webster

**1:** self-satisfaction especially when accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies

When it comes to safety, *complacency* can be dangerous.

**2:** an instance of usually unaware or uninformed self-satisfaction

Complacency kills and destroys but especially with Christ and His church.

Phrases:

*"It's not that big of a deal."*

*"Things have changed so that does not matter like it used to."*

*"No one is going to care anyway."*

*"Who cares as long as it gets done."*

*"Look at all we have accomplished, we'll be fine."*

*"If it ain't broke, don't fix it."*

"You have to challenge yourself. If not, complacency sets in. And bad things happen when people become complacent." Henry Spencer

Jack Nicklaus: "Complacency is a continuous struggle that we all have to fight."

**Passionately loving God and loving others is not fostered through complacency. We must be intentional in our pursuit of Christ by faith through grace.**

Insights by David Ryser.

A number of years ago, I had the privilege of teaching at a school of ministry. My students were hungry for God, and I was constantly searching for ways to challenge them to fall more in love with Jesus and to become voices for revival in the Church. I came across a quote attributed most

often to Rev. Sam Pascoe. It is a short version of the history of Christianity, and it goes like this: "Christianity started in Palestine as a fellowship; it moved to Greece and became a philosophy; it moved to Italy and became an institution; it moved to Europe and became a culture; it came to America and became an enterprise."

Some of the students were only 18 or 19 years old, and I wanted them to understand and appreciate the importance of the last line, so I clarified it by adding: "An enterprise. That's a business."

After a few moments, Martha, the youngest student in the class, raised her hand. I could not imagine what her question might be. I thought the little vignette was self-explanatory and that I had performed it brilliantly. Nevertheless, I acknowledged Martha's raised hand, "Yes, Martha." She asked such a simple question:

"A business? But isn't it supposed to be a body?"

I could not envision where this line of questioning was going, and the only response I could think of was "Yes."

She continued: "But when a body becomes a business, isn't that a prostitute?"

The room went dead silent. For several seconds no one moved or spoke. We were stunned, afraid to make a sound because the presence of God had flooded into the room, and we knew we were on Holy ground.

### **God had taken over the class.**

Martha's question changed my life. For six months, I thought about her question at least once every day. "When a body becomes a business, isn't that a prostitute?"

There is only one answer to her question. The answer is "Yes."

The American Church, tragically, is heavily populated by people who do not love God. How can we love Him? We don't even know Him; and I mean REALLY know Him....

I stand by my statement that I believe that most American Christians do not know God--much less love Him.

The root of this condition originates in how we came to God.

Most of us came to Him because of what we were told He would do for us. We were promised that He would bless us in life and take us to heaven after death. We married Him for His money, and we don't care if He lives or dies as long as we can get His stuff. We have made the Kingdom of God into a business, merchandising His anointing.

This should not be.

We are commanded to love God and are called to be the Bride of Christ--that's pretty intimate stuff. We are supposed to be His lovers. How can we love someone we don't even know? And even if we do know someone, is that a guarantee that we truly love them?

Are we lovers or prostitutes?

I was pondering Martha's question again one day and considered the question:

"What's the difference between a lover and a prostitute?"

I realized that both do many of the same things, but a lover does what she does because she loves. A prostitute pretends to love, but only as long as you pay.

Then I asked the question: **"What would happen if God stopped paying me?"**

For the next several months, I allowed God to search me to uncover my motives for loving and **serving Him.**

**Was I really a true lover of God?**

What would happen if He stopped blessing me?

What if He never did another thing for me?

Would I still love Him?

Please understand, I believe in the promises and blessings of God. The issue here is not whether God blesses His children; the issue is the condition of my heart.

**Why do I serve Him?**

**Are His blessings in my life the gifts of a loving Father, or are they a wage that I have earned or a bribe/payment to love Him? Do I love God without any conditions?**

**It took several months to work through these questions. Even now, I wonder if my desire to love God is always match.**

I am sharing this because this is the evaluation process of my own heart. I cannot become complacent. Every word of God is important whether I understand the meaning or not. I must not be lazy. I must not back off. I must not be satisfied with my past experiences with Father God.

Romans 6:8-14 NLT

*<sup>8</sup> And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. <sup>10</sup> When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. <sup>11</sup> So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.*

*<sup>12</sup> Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires (do not let it reign in your body). <sup>13</sup> Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. <sup>14</sup> Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.*

"Complacency is the deadly enemy of spiritual progress." AW Tozer

John Maxwell: "Of all the things a leader should fear, complacency heads the list."