

“The Complacency Of Fools

Shall Destroy Them”. Proverbs 1:32 NASB

“The Complacency Of Fools

A clarification (from last week)

Infidelity

- Definition: A betrayal of trust or exclusivity in any committed relationship (married or not).
- Scope: Broad; includes emotional affairs, inappropriate communication, sexual acts less than intercourse, or any behavior violating agreed-upon boundaries.
- Context: Applies to marriage, dating, or any partnership.

Adultery

- Definition: Sexual intercourse with someone other than one's spouse.
- Scope: Narrow; specifically refers to sexual unfaithfulness within a marriage.
- Context: Legally significant in some places, potentially grounds for divorce or even criminal prosecution, and carries historical/religious weight.

Key Difference

- All adultery is infidelity, but not all infidelity is adultery. Infidelity is the umbrella term, and adultery is a specific, often more severe, category under it.

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Hosea 4:15-19

15 “Though you, Israel, play the harlot, let not Judah offend.

Do not come up to Gilgal, Nor go up to Beth Aven,

Nor swear an oath, saying, ‘As the Lord lives’—

16 “For Israel is stubborn Like a stubborn calf;

Now the Lord will let them forage

Like a lamb in open country.

17 Ephraim is joined to idols, Let him alone.

18 Their drink is rebellion,

They commit harlotry continually.

Her rulers dearly love dishonor.

19 The wind has wrapped her up in its wings,

And they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

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Nor swear an oath, saying, ‘As the Lord lives’—

The prophet Hosea warns Judah not to imitate Israel's bad example of physical and spiritual harlotry. At this point in history, Judah and Israel were separate kingdoms, having split after King Solomon's death (1 Kings 12:16-17). God sent prophets to both kingdoms, as they both inherited the covenant Israel had entered into (Exodus 19:8).

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- a. **Let not Judah offend**: At this time, God’s people were divided into two nations - Israel to the north, and Judah to the south. Israel’s apostasy was far more ingrained, so Judah is cautioned that they must not follow their neighbor’s sinful ways.
- b. **Do not come up to Gilgal**: The cities of **Gilgal** and **Beth Aven** were centers of idolatry in Israel. For a citizen of Judah to travel there meant they shared in Israel’s idolatry.
 - i. At one time, **Gilgal** was a place where prophets were trained under Elijah and Elisha (**2 Kings 2:1; 4:38**). But in Hosea’s day it had become a center of false worship (**Hosea 9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4; 5:5**).
 - ii. There is no city actually named **Beth Aven**. Hosea is twisting the name of the city of Bethel - meaning “House of God” - into the more fitting name **Beth Aven**, meaning “House of Deceit.” Bethel was the southern center of calf worship established by Jeroboam I (**1 Kings 12:28-29**). ©2018 David Guzik

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16 “For Israel is stubborn,
Like a stubborn calf;
Now the Lord will let them forage
Like a lamb in open country.

How does a calf differ in stubbornness from a cow or a sheep?

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- a. **Israel is stubborn like a stubborn calf**: Cattle can safely feed out on the open range, because they are not easy prey for predators. But **a lamb in open country** has strayed from the shepherd and is vulnerable. Hosea’s point is plain: if you act like a stubborn cow, don’t expect to be protected like an obedient sheep.

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How do you think they experience shame “because of their sacrifices”?

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Hosea 4:17- 19

Ephraim is joined to idols: The tribe of “Ephraim” was the largest tribe in Israel. Therefore, the prophets often referred to Israel as “Ephraim.”

Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone: This is one way to express the judgment that is coming against Israel. God will simply leave Ephraim **alone**. When the mighty Assyrian army comes against them, they may fight for themselves - God will **let him alone**.

i. We don't want God to leave us **alone** because we need Him to protect us against our spiritual enemies. Satan wanted to sift Peter like wheat, but Jesus did not leave Peter alone to face the attack. Jesus prayed for Peter, and he emerged victorious (Luke 22:31-32).

ii. We don't want God to leave us **alone** because we need Him to protect us against ourselves. Left to ourselves, with our own sinful hearts, we will surely drift away from the LORD. All God must do to make certain a man goes to hell is simply **let him alone**. Our prayer should always be, “LORD, don't leave me alone. Keep working on me.” ©2018 David Guzik

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“Whatever you do HE will make good of it. But not the good HE had prepared for you if you had obeyed HIM”. C. S. Lewis from The Space Trilogy #2

What are your thoughts regarding this statement?

Can you think of a verse that might apply?

2 Samuel 14:14 ...“Yet God does not simply take away life, but devises plans so that the one who is banished is not driven away from Him”. The Amplified Bible

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Applications - what things should I remember from Hosea 4:15-19?

1. Don't Play With Compromise

Half-hearted faith always erodes over time. Guard your practices, influences, and habits.

2. Avoid Places and Patterns That Pull You Away

Gilgal and Beth-aven were worship centers tied to idolatry.

God basically says: Don't even go there.

“You don't prove maturity by hanging around temptation—you prove wisdom by steering clear of what shapes you badly”.

3. What We Attach Ourselves To Shapes Us

Whatever gets your trust, fear, hope, or obsession becomes a kind of functional “idol”—career, approval, pleasure, security, or control.

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Applications - what things should I remember from Hosea 4:15-19?

4. Sin Eventually Carries Consequences

The imagery of being “swept away” and put to shame shows that unchecked rebellion leads to loss and exposure.

God is patient—but not indifferent. Consequences are often part of His discipline, meant to wake us up.

5. God’s Warnings Are Merciful

Hosea isn’t written to crush people—it’s written to rescue them.

These verses are God raising His voice before disaster fully lands.

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God is not proud. He will have us even though we have shown that we prefer everything else to Him. C. S. Lewis