

## 02 | The Sin of Complacency

Reaching the Lost Series

Welcome back. This is Lesson Two, The Sin of Complacency. We're going to talk a little bit today about how the Lord views complacency. We're going to look at some scriptures and just talk through this realistically. We're going to talk through what it looks like when we don't take seriously the things that the Lord has asked of us. And I just want to read this quick introduction to you. It says, "Many Christians today are living as though Jesus hadn't said certain things, (i.e., that He is coming soon, that we are to make disciples of every nation and preach the gospel to every creature). The time is short, and the harvest is great, and yet many Christians are still just living for themselves, ignoring the call of God in our lives to reach the lost." And how true is that for so many of us?

Imagine for a minute that you knew something horrible was going to happen to your neighbor—something drastic, life-changing. Something that would potentially cost them their life. Imagine you had knowledge of something that was going to happen. You would do everything within your power to warn them, wouldn't you? Just imagine, for instance, a snake got into your neighbor's house, a deadly, poisonous snake, and you saw it, and you knew your neighbor was going to be coming home. Maybe you have their number and you texted him, "Hey, just so you know, if I saw a snake get into your house. So maybe call an exterminator before you get home." Or if you didn't have their number, you'd be waiting and you'd be looking out the window. You might even

stand in front of the door, "Hey, hey!" You'd do all that you could to warn them, wouldn't you? And yet, if we're honest, we're surrounded by people every day that are facing a far worse fate than that; something that we know will cost them their life. And in fact, it will cost them their eternity. It will cost them missing out on the eternity that Jesus created them for and paid for them to experience everlasting fellowship with Him and with the Father, in the presence of the angels, living the perfect life, on the perfect new earth that we were created to originally enjoy. And yet, if they don't respond to the gospel, if they don't respond to that warning, "Hey, there's a snake in your house!"... Come up with any number of scenarios ... if they don't respond to the reality that they're infected by sin and they're dying, and if they die in their sin, they will spend eternity in hell. That is a far worse consequence than anything natural or temporary that we can come up with.

We know the world is lost and is dying and is on their way to hell—our neighbors, our co-workers, our classmates, the people that check out our groceries—anywhere you go, everywhere you turn. Jesus said that there are two paths in life. The world will tell you there's this path, that path, the path to enlightenment ... you can do this, you can do that. But we know the truth: there are two paths in life, one is narrow and difficult, and it leads to everlasting life; few go that way. The other way is broad and it's easy, and there are many who go by it. The difficult path leads to heaven. The easy, broad path leads to hell. And this "many go"; many compared to few means most. Most people are on their way to hell right now. And it's our job to tell them right now, to stand right now on the path that we're on, the difficult, narrow path with the struggles that we face—life hits us hard, just like it does the world—but we know where we're going. We have an eternal security. We have a future in heaven with the Lord Jesus that He paid for, and we accept it by faith. We

need to tell those on the other path, you're headed not only for a dead end, but at that dead end, when you fall off, you go straight to hell, and you will stay there forever.

And it's going to be a horrible place of torment where people cry out, and they gnash their teeth, and they long for a deliverance that will never come. They will never get out of that horrible place of torment. People that you know, some of them you look in their face, you look them in the eye, and you talk to them every day and you smile, you shake their hand, you hug, you talk about everything but the most important topic, and that is their eternal salvation. And we avoid this because it's awkward. It's an awkward topic. And because it's so awkward and we've avoided it for so long, we end up becoming what the Bible calls complacent. We've fallen into our own security and our own complacency, and we've gotten comfortable in it. Either we don't think about it, the fact that our neighbors are lost forever, or we think about it, and we just quickly put it out of our minds, because thinking about it requires you to get up and do something.

You know, originally the church that Jesus formed was built of living stones; wherever they went, the disciples of Jesus, the church went. Don't get me wrong, I love the church. I was born and raised in the church. I came out of the American church as we know it. But that was never what Jesus told us to do. We were to go and be the church everywhere we went. When Jesus modeled church for us, He did it by asking the disciples to follow Him. And everywhere He went, He preached, He taught, He healed, He delivered, cast out demons ... in the marketplace, the hillside, the seashore ... He brought the church to the people. And yet, not only do we just go to a church where we can get fed, it's rare that we even attempt to invite anybody to go with us. And the reality is, that's not even what Jesus told us to do. He said, be the church, BE the church.

I want to read a few passages of Scripture, because it gives us an idea of how the Lord views complacency, and we need to let these verses penetrate our heart. And some of them, though written many thousands of years ago, speak so true of our time today and the urgency that we need to have. Proverbs 1:32 says, "For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fool destroys them." God likens complacency to foolishness, and it says it will destroy you. Zephaniah 1:12–13; this one really got me. "At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish them who are complacent, those who say in their heart, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will He do ill.' Their goods shall be plundered and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." Do you know what the Lord is saying? I'll tell you what I got from this. Often many of us live just like that, as if God's not going to do what He said He's going to do. He's not coming soon. He's not going to separate the wheat from the tares, the goats from the sheep. He's not going to come and bring judgment to the earth. Our neighbors aren't going to go to hell; none of that's really going to happen. We know it is, but we don't live like it. Jesus said, I will come and punish those who are complacent. The houses that they build and the goods that they've plundered for themselves, they'll lose them. They'll be destroyed. They're not going to hold on to any of those things. But they've fallen into this complacent trap that I have everything I need, and I'm not really concerned with what the Lord said He's going to do.

I pray that we don't live the rest of our lives here on this earth like that with the short amount of time that we have. I want to read another one to you. This is Isaiah 32:9–10: "Rise up, you women who are at ease, hear my voice; you complacent daughters, give ear to my speech. In a little more than a year you will shudder, you complacent women; for the grape

harvest fails, the fruit harvest will not come. Tremble, you women who are at ease, shudder, you complacent ones; strip, and make yourselves bare, and tie sackcloth around your waist." That one shook me up. God was warning them, there are things coming and you're complacent. Strip yourselves of all the things that you have. Lose your trust in the harvest. Put sackcloth and ashes on and cry out to Me.

You know, that's the attitude we should have. Regarding the times that we're living in and the things that are not too far off. There are things on the horizon that are going to change this nation forever. We're in the end, and we are far too complacent for the times that we're living in, considering that this is the generation that God has placed us in, and we're here for such a time as this. This is the end of all things, and we need to herald the truth of God's Word more than ever. We need to plead with our neighbors if necessary. Paul would spend days at a time persuading people, pleading with them, talking through the scriptures with them. He wouldn't let them get away with a "no" or "I don't believe that"; he was driven by something far greater than what the average Christian lives for today. Amos 6:1: "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, the notable men of the first of the nations to whom the house of Israel comes!" Listen, these were notable men who dwelt secure and at ease, and the Lord's saying, "Woe to you, woe to you, who think you're safe, who think you're somebody, who think things are never going to change."

I pray these scriptures are cutting your heart like they did to mine, and that they shake you out of any complacency you may be struggling with or stuck in. The time is short, and the time to do things the way that we're doing them now will eventually run out. And we're not taking advantage of it the way that we should be. We are not running with this commission while we can. Look, Jesus said that we would

be hated by all nations for His sake. That means that even though we have the ability to freely live the Christian life now, times are coming. And you know what? If we're honest, the world hates us. But because for so long here in America, this was a Christian nation, we didn't really experience any persecution. But there are people who, if they could get away with it, they would put us to death even now. There are people that hate us. They hate us. They hate what we stand for. They hate our values. They hate being told what they can and can't do. They don't want to hear the truth of God's Word. And some of them would shut you up at any cost, even if it meant put you to death. And the days are coming. Laws will change. In fact, lawlessness will abound. And eventually the lawless one, the man of sin, the antichrist, will come and put many of us to death. Jesus promised it.

Don't wait until persecution drives you to action. Because for many, it will be too late at that point. Let the Holy Spirit be what drives you. Let the Holy Spirit shake you out of your complacency. And if you're here and you're stuck in this complacency and, you know, and you're thinking, "Gosh, I never thought about it that way"; this is not a guilt trip. There is no condemnation. This is not to shame anybody or judge anybody. This is to wake the sleeping bride. This is to wake the church. Jesus loves you and He is for you. And if He is for you, who can be against you? The answer is nobody. And yet we act as if we're on the losing side and everybody is against us. And they're going to reject me and they're not going to listen. And how do I know who to talk to and what to say? Listen, anybody that's on their way to hell, which is most people, need to hear the truth. It's not that difficult. And if they reject you, that's okay. Tell them you love them, and that Jesus loves them, and then you pray for them, and you don't give up on them and be led by the Spirit. He'll lead you to the right people at the right time.

But more often than not, we don't need to wait for the leading, because everybody around us, for the most part, is not in covenant fellowship with Jesus. Most people go the broad, easy path. Jesus said it would be that way. It's easy to carry out this commission when you think about it. There are just so many people around us to reach. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid of rejection. I pray that the fear of the Lord and the fear of God would be upon you, to heed His word. The fear of man is a snare. People pleasing is not God pleasing. And if you're there, the Lord will help you. But be honest with Him.

And as we close, if this message is piercing your heart, talk to God and be honest about why you've become complacent. Is that just the ease of living the American dream that you grew up in? You're just used to it. You don't think about it. Is there fear involved? Is there a lack of urgency? Has this word reminded you how urgent it is for some people? Today's their last day on earth. It should be urgent for everybody. It should be urgent for everybody that you know; you should have an urgency regarding the commission that God has given us. And if you don't, that's okay. But pray because God's going to help you.

Time is short. People are lost and Jesus is coming. And His plan of salvation is for everybody who will listen and believe and receive. And it's simple. You'd be surprised how easy it is. And I think sometimes often the fear of rejection will keep us from stepping out. I'm going to tell you right now, the fear of rejection is worse than the actual rejection itself. And like I said, the real persecution is coming. But right now, the rejection, even when it comes, it's very light. Those of who have not been interested, my neighbors, they're very polite about it. They say, "Oh, no thank you." I have a house church, and I tell them, and I invite them, and I offer to pray. Some of them are open to it. Some of them are not; but the ones that are not, my heart goes out to them, and I love

them, and I pray, and I'm not going to give up on them. But when they turn me down, it really wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. And that will be true for most cases. But either way, we can't be afraid. We can't be afraid to share. We can't have a fear of man that causes us to be stale and complacent. And we certainly don't want to love our lives to the point that we don't care about others. So, just think about that. Ponder on that thought. That if you knew something bad was coming or something horrible was going to happen, you would do your best to warn them. So, why don't we? Take some time to be real with God. Because He's real with you, and He understands; He already sees what's in your heart. And maybe you've seen something that you didn't realize was there before. And as I close in prayer, talk to God about these things, and let's repent for the sin of complacency, for grieving the Holy Spirit who was sent to help us.

Heavenly Father, we love You, and our desire is to do Your will, to be pleasing to You. What matters to You matters to us and reaching the lost is numero uno—it's number one. So, I pray that You would cultivate a compassion and a stirring in our hearts to step out of our comfort zone, to step out of our complacency—to sense the urgency, to feel the urgency. Father, stir us up, to know the times and the seasons in which we live, to be aware of the fact that You are coming soon, and there are millions of people all around who don't know You. Some of them have never even heard Your name. And yet, we go about our daily lives as if all is well. We park our cars. We walk into the store. We get what we need. We pass several people. We get back in our cars. We go home, and we live our lives. And we don't reach out. We're not even listening as we go about our day to see if the Spirit would lead us to say a word to somebody, to offer a prayer, to invite them to house church, and praise God for those of us who do. But some of us still struggle, including myself. I get



caught up in the daily grind, and I go about my business, and I do what I need to do. Oftentimes, passing people that if I stop and think about it, probably don't know the Lord. And I didn't say or do anything. And again, this is not a guilt trip. This is not condemnation. But I hope it is a wake-up call that there are people sometimes that you pass, sometimes you're in line and you've got a few minutes, but you don't say anything because it's awkward. But the Lord wants to help you with that. He's helping me with that, and I know He'll help you with that.

So, Lord, we repent for the sin of complacency in taking so lightly Your Word and Your promises and the things that You've called us to, and the fact that so many people around us are on their way to hell. May we not live the rest of our lives in this complacent state of, "All of my needs are not met" and getting stuck on ourselves, in our own lives and our own hang-ups and our own problems, but actually step out of this complacency and begin to do something with the commission that You've given us. And give us Your Holy Spirit in greater measure than ever before, Lord. You know we need it; we can't witness without You. But You haven't left us alone; You've given us Your Holy Spirit. And I pray that we would become so close and intimate with Him that He would lead and guide guide us every day; that we would step out and be radical. That we would have the faith, and the confidence, and the boldness to just start up a conversation in line with somebody, wherever it is that we are, "Hey, I don't know if you know Jesus, but I just want to tell you He's coming soon." Let the Holy Spirit lead the conversation. But make sure you're telling people the truth. You're sounding the alarm. You're warning them. You'd be surprised how often these conversations go a lot better than you thought, because you're not speaking your own words, and you're not speaking on your own authority. And the people that you're speaking to are God's creation. His fingerprint is on their

heart, and He has placed eternity in their heart. And, if they're honest with themselves, they know. They know something's missing. And you might just be the one to have the answer.

So, Father, we thank You that Your hand is upon this series and upon these teachings and upon our hearts, and that You're drawing us out of our complacency back into the commission as ambassadors for Christ. We love you, Lord Jesus. You are everything to us. And in Your mighty name, we pray, amen.