



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

April 6, 2008

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

Settled in complacency

by David King

"And it shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency, who say in their heart, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil'" (Zeph. 1:12).

The expression used here, "settled in complacency" literally means "settled on their lees" (KJV, ASV). The phrase is also used in Jer. 48:11 to describe one of Judah's neighbors: "Moab has been at ease from his youth; he has settled on his dregs, and has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, nor has he gone into captivity. Therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent has not changed."

As the latter passage suggests, this expression is a metaphor borrowed from the wine-making industry of that day. Homer Hailey comments, "In making the best wine the liquid is poured from vessel to vessel, separating the wine from dregs or settling. If allowed to remain too long on its lees the wine became harsh and syrupy." The phrase is a fitting illustration of someone who has become so comfortable that they no longer have any passion for improvement. They have become complacent, or "stagnant in spirit" (NASV).

Complacency is the product of a life of prosperity and ease, a condition where people have had it so good for so long that they come to believe it will always be that way. Moab became complacent because they had not "gone into captivity" — that is, they had not suffered the pain and humiliation of subjugation at the hands of a foreign power. The Jews of Zephaniah's day had become so comfortable

in their standard of living that they no longer saw God's hand in their lives — "The Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil." In other words, God is not involved in our affairs, and the world is getting along quite nicely without Him, thank you, so let's just enjoy the life we have. Why disrupt a good thing?

The sin that Zephaniah and Jeremiah are condemning here has nothing to do with idolatry, immorality, or any other form of active rebellion against God. Rather, it is an attitude of careless indifference to God. That attitude may lead to more overt sins, but the immediate problem it causes is spiritual stupor, a sluggish, careless spirit that ceases to strive for excellence. The complacent person just doesn't care anymore, and is perfectly happy to coast along through life preserving the status quo.

The tragedy of this complacent spirit is all the opportunities that are lost. We could accomplish so much more for God, if we would only push ourselves to do it. We could develop talents we did not know we have. We could perform so much good in the lives of others who need our help. We could make a difference in a world that is definitely not perfect. But as long as we are settled in our complacency, none of those possibilities will be achieved.

If we will not stir ourselves out of our stagnant spirit, God reserves the option to do it for us. "I will . . . punish the men who are settled in complacency." Good times always come to an end sooner or later, and we learn the hard way that the best life is for the tough-minded, for those who have a passion to be better.

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.