

Complacency

*“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! (Amos 6:1)*

Big Idea:

We must repent of complacency because (v. 8) . . .

I. Judgment is Coming (vv. 9-14)

While it is not the highest motivation for following the Lord, impending judgment is a good reason to repent! Even at the height of God’s anger, he reasons with his people. Since sin, even the sin of complacency, is irrational, God graciously announces the logic for returning to him in order to gain a soft heart of compassion for those he is burdened for. The first reason is that he is God and we are not. That means that if God says we are in danger of judgment if we do not conform our lives to his priorities of generosity toward the poor and disenfranchised, then we must pay attention. Secondly, he tells the complacent that they must understand that their neglect of his burdens for the poor and unjustly treated is ultimately self-destructive. Thirdly, God threatens his church with exile. Remember Israel was a unique combination of church and government, a theocracy. So when he says that he will deport his people, he is saying that he is going to shut their church down as much as he is promising to overthrow their government.

II. God Hates Pride (vv. 1-7)

If anything makes God more angry than complacency, it is pride. The Israelites’ smugness over their supposed accomplishments exacerbated God’s anger and hastened the threat of his judgment. The leaders of Israel considered themselves to be the supreme leaders of the preeminent nation on earth. There are three verbs which vividly describe how incensed God is when he discovers ungrateful pride among his people. Generically, he “abhors” their self-confidence. Specifically, he “detests” (cm. 5:15, 21) their trust in fortresses (cf. Dt. 28:52). They supposed that these strong places protected them from military threat and would protect the treasure they had taken by violence and usury from the poor. They represent any man-made plan that deludes someone into thinking he does not need to trust God. The third verb describes what God will do to those who insist that something is more trustworthy than he is, even to the point of using that fortress to shield them from his judgment and free them to take advantage of others.

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever considered that lack of concern and care for others is actually self-detrimental? Why might this be counterintuitive? How does gospel logic prove this to be the case?
2. What might you tend to put trust in besides God?
3. What is one way you might consider cutting back so that you have more to give?
4. Even in his words of judgment, how does God show himself to be gracious in this passage?