



Sunday – November 19, 2023

The Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills church of Christ

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805
(863) 688-4336

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Study
9:50 AM Worship
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study

Visit our Website:

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

For Sermon & Class outlines,
Bible Study Materials and
Other Information.

Visit our Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/LakelandHillschurchofchrist for events,
information, and links to our
YouTube Archives

Visit us on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCu7AG_3jUtpBDIr2NPqB3iw for
Live Streams and Video
Archives.

Elders

Bob Marschall
Leon Miller
Larry Wisdom

Deacons

Bucky Day
Sherman Johnson
Michael Sadler
David Williams

Evangelist

Chuck Kozens

Complacency in Christians

By Robert Grode

At that time, I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, "The Lord will not do good, nor will he do ill" (Zephaniah 1:12).

The Bible is one of the most carefully studied writings in human history, but even lifelong scholars accept there are some uncertainties in it. For instance, we do not know Paul's thorn in his side, nor why three gospel accounts decline to point out it was Peter who attacked Malchus. Thankfully, gray areas like these are trivial. However, The Bible is crystal clear on the finality of God's ultimate judgment.

Complacency: In the time of Zephaniah, the people of Judah had lost their way so completely that they were ignoring the very first commandment given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. They were worshipping Baal, Molech, and numerous other pagan gods right alongside their worship of Jehovah God. This, among other prevalent sins, was normalized in Judah to the point that many believed God did not care about their disobedience. The general view seemed to be that The Lord had abandoned them and ultimately, that His judgment would never come. Ezekiel 8:12 speaks of church leaders committing sin in the chambers of the Temple, by then filled with pagan imagery and idols, saying that "...The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land." Because they could not immediately see the consequences of their actions, they became complacent in their belief that God would not come to punish them. This kind of complacency did not end with the people of Judah either. Several New Testament passages indicate that this denial of the Day of Judgment will persist even to the very moment the deniers are punished. 2 Peter 3:4 reads, "They will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.'"

This issue continues to be a temptation today, even among Christians. It has been nearly two-thousand years since Jesus promised his return, and it is not unreasonable to say that the question of whether He will come back in our lifetime has crossed the lips of every Christian across the board. We cannot afford to believe this kind of unhelpful worldview the people of Judah fell into. Our temptation to live in complacency and to believe we can get away with just about anything can bring our spiritual lives to a complete standstill.

Conviction: But not all is doom and gloom. We serve a God who has given us the tools to be confident and steadfast in our faith. We have all that is required to be convicted in our eternal reward. The people of Judah had not only grown complacent in their worship, but they had ceased to believe that Jehovah continued to work in our earthly realm. Their lack of faith that God would fulfill His promise would ultimately result in their separation FROM His promise. Denying that a crime will bring recompense does not make it a reality and affirming that we are one day to be righteously judged for our faith only makes it easier to live a fulfilling, Christ-centered life. Misinformation is all too easy to believe today, and we must be stalwart defenders and students of the Word. Melvin Curry has a fantastic quote,

“You will never be able to acquaint yourself with everything that is false. But if you know what is true, you will be able to recognize all that is false.” Our conviction to follow Christ, through faithful acts such as daily prayer and study, fellowship with brethren, and evangelism, is what allows us to look forward with certainty at the future judgment. We know that God is still working in this world. Our work is proof of that. The deniers 2 Peter speaks of will continually scoff and rebuke our faith, but our conviction in the salvation of Christ and our decision to live by His word confirms that both the faithful and the faithless will be given our proper recompense.

Consequence: What are those consequences? Heb. 11:6 says, *“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”* In order to combat complacency, we must be convicted of the consequences that come with our faith. This passage indicates that not only are we to be active followers of the Word, but that God is assuredly not complacent and will one day convict those who do not believe in the consequences. It is with this that we maintain faith in our eternal reward, and that we continue the work of the church so that the souls of the complacent deniers may also believe He exists, therefore reaping the rewards just as we hope we will on the Day of Judgment.