

The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency (5)**Sermon Title: The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency****IV. COMPLACENCY — THE SILENT KILLER OF SPIRITUAL FIRE****III. A Word to the Long-Standing Members Who Have Become Religious — “From Ritual to Relationship”****1. Beware of the Illusion of Spiritual Health****Scripture:****[Revelation 3:17 NKJV](#)**

¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

There is a unique danger that befalls those who have been in the church the longest. It is not the danger of ignorance, nor the danger of open rebellion. It is the quiet, subtle, almost unnoticeable drift from a **burning relationship with Jesus Christ** into a **busy routine of religious activity**. Every church has seasoned saints—men and women who have attended faithfully for decades, who know the hymns by heart, who can quote the Scriptures, who have served in countless ministries. Their faithfulness is precious and honored before God. Yet the very longevity that once fueled their devotion can, over time, become a trap that blinds them to their true spiritual condition.

Familiarity with holy things can produce one of the most dangerous diseases of the soul: **the illusion of spiritual health**. A person can reach a point where they no longer grow but merely maintain. No longer repent but simply repeat. No longer hunger for God but simply hold on to religious habits. Like a tree that looks strong from a distance but is hollow on the inside, many long-standing believers can appear stable, seasoned, and mature—yet inwardly be dry, complacent, and spiritually asleep.

This is not a new problem. God confronted Israel for drawing near with their lips while their hearts were far from Him ([Isa. 29:13](#)).

[Isaiah 29:13 NKJV](#)

¹³ Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.

[Isaiah 29:13 — Reverse for Clarity](#)

¹³ “If these people had drawn near to Me with their hearts, honored Me with genuine devotion, and feared Me because they truly knew Me, then their worship would have been real.

But instead, they only speak words with their mouths, offer Me honor with their lips, keep their hearts far away, and base their fear of Me on man-made rules rather than true reverence.”

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for being beautifully polished on the outside but empty within ([Matt. 23:27–28](#)).

The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency (5)

Matthew 23:27-28 NKJV

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.

²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Matthew 23:27–28 — Reverse for Clarity

²⁷ “Blessed are those who refuse to hide behind outward beauty while remaining inwardly corrupt. But woe to you who polish the outside while leaving the inside full of death and impurity. For if you cleanse only what people can see, the decay within will still condemn you.”

²⁸ “Just as a tomb cannot disguise the corruption it contains, so a life cannot mask hidden sin forever. If you appear righteous outwardly yet harbor hypocrisy and lawlessness within, you deceive men for a moment— but you cannot deceive God at all.”

And in Revelation 3, Christ Himself confronts a church that had become completely unaware of its true spiritual poverty. Laodicea shocked the Lord—not because they were wicked, but because they believed they were **healthy, rich, and in need of nothing**. Their self-confidence had become self-deception. Their routine had replaced repentance. Their religion had replaced relationship. And so, Jesus lovingly but firmly declared:

Revelation 3:17 NKJV

¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—**and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.**

This is not the voice of condemnation; it is the voice of a Savior who refuses to let His people settle for spiritual mediocrity. Christ exposes their condition not to shame them, but to **heal** them. Not to cast them out, but to **call them back**. Not to crush them, but to **restore intimacy** with them. For it is possible to be in church and yet be far from Christ. It is possible to defend traditions and yet neglect the altar. It is possible to master doctrine and yet ignore repentance. It is possible to possess religious knowledge and lose spiritual power.

Samson experienced this tragedy. He still had the hairstyle of a Nazarite, the reputation of a judge, and the memories of past victories. But when he rose to fight, he discovered too late that **the Lord had departed from him** (Judges 16:20).

Judges 16:20 NKJV

²⁰ And she said, “The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!” So, he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!” But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him.

Outward appearance convinced him he was fine—yet inwardly the fire had gone out. Many churches today are in the same danger: **programs remain, schedules remain, committees remain**, but **the presence is gone**.

And yet—here is the mercy of our God—Christ does not give up on churches that have drifted. He does not abandon those who have grown cold. He does not forsake those who have become mechanical and routine. Instead, He stands at the door and knocks (Rev. 3:20).

The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency (5)

Revelation 3:20 NKJV

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

This is not a text directed to unbelievers; it is directed to the **church**. Christ is knocking on the door of His own people because they have left Him outside their worship, outside their decisions, outside their ministries, and outside their hearts. Still, He knocks. Still, He calls. Still, He longs to **revive what has died, awaken what has slept, and restore what has been lost.**

When revival comes, it seldom looks respectable, orderly, or predictable. To the complacent, it appears undignified. Just as David's passionate worship offended the cold heart of Michal, true revival unsettles the comfortable and exposes the pride of the religious. **Revival is not about appearances—it is about a desperate return to God.** It is the moment when the church stops trying to look alive and finally **becomes alive**.

This section of teaching is a heartfelt plea to every long-standing member who has slowly drifted from relationship into routine. It is a call to move "*From Ritual to Relationship*." It is an invitation to reject the illusion of spiritual health, to return to the altar of brokenness, and to exchange respectability for revival. It is a call to holy renewal. A call for holy discontent. A call for sacrificial commitment. A call for watchful humility.

It is a call to **Awake, arise, and return to Christ** (**Eph. 5:14**).

Ephesians 5:14 NKJV

¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

For the greatest danger in the church is not losing members—it is losing the presence and power of God among the members who remain. This is Christ's gracious warning and loving invitation: **Return, repent, reopen the door—and revival will follow.**

1. Beware of the Illusion of Spiritual Health

Scripture:

Revelation 3:17 NKJV

¹⁷ Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

Teaching: Religion without repentance is a counterfeit revival. Complacency often disguises itself as maturity.

Illustration: Samson thought he still had power until he discovered God's Spirit had departed (**Judges 16:20**). The same danger haunts churches that keep programs but lose presence.

Judges 16:20 NKJV

²⁰ And she said, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" So, he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him.

The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency (5)

2. Return to the Altar of Brokenness

Scripture:

[Psalm 51:17 NKJV](#)

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.

Teaching: Renewal begins when we grieve over sin again. God never revives a heart that refuses to repent.

Modern Illustration: A church may have spotless facilities and excellent music, yet be spiritually barren if no tears of repentance ever fall.

3. Exchange Respectability for Revival

Scripture:

[Revelation 3:19 NKJV](#)

¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Teaching: God would rather have a church that's messy but alive than polished but dead.

Illustration: When David danced before the Lord with all his might, others mocked—but God called it worship (**[2 Samuel 6:14–22](#)**). Revival always looks undignified to the complacent.

[2 Samuel 6:14-22 NKJV](#)

¹⁴ Then David danced before the Lord with all *his* might; and David *was* wearing a linen ephod.

¹⁵ So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

¹⁶ Now as the ark of the Lord came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷ So they brought the ark of the Lord and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

¹⁸ And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts.

¹⁹ Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece *of meat*, and a cake of raisins. So, all the people departed, everyone to his house.

²⁰ Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

²¹ So David said to Michal, "*It was* before the Lord, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel. Therefore, I will play *music* before the Lord.

²² And I will be even more undignified than this and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

The Subtle Dangers of Contentment, Convenience, and Complacency (5)

VI. THE CALL TO HOLY RENEWAL

Jesus stands at the door and knocks — not at the door of unbelievers in this passage, but at the door of the church ([Revelation 3:20](#)).

Revelation 3:20 NKJV

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Revelation 3:20 Reverse for Clarity

²⁰ If anyone **refuses to hear** My voice and **keeps the door closed**, I **will not come in** to him, nor will there be **fellowship** or **communion** between us.

But I still **stand at the door**, patiently **calling and knocking**, longing for that heart to **respond**, so that true **relationship and intimacy** may begin.

He calls us to:

1. **Holy Discontent** — A longing for more of God's presence.
2. **Sacrificial Commitment** — Serving even when it costs.
3. **Watchful Humility** — Daily repentance and renewed dependence on the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:14 NKJV

¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Ephesians 5:14 Reverse for Clarity

¹⁴ "Remain asleep, you who slumber in sin. Stay lying among the dead, and you will continue to live in darkness, for without Christ, there is no light to awaken or guide you."