

“OH GOD...!”

TEXT: *Psalm 42:1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

THESIS: To decry the loss of fervency among God's people in their frustration w/sin, lack of prayer, lack of compassion & lack of conviction.

INTRO.: A. The average believer today is like the Kamikaze (suicide) pilot in WWII who flew 30 missions - he was involved but not committed! Complacency is serious sin. There is only a short step from Apathy to Apostasy. Apathy is when you know what is right & do nothing about it. Apostasy is when you know what is right & sin in spite of it.

ILLUS.: The 1st meeting of the Apathy Club was posted on the college bulletin board. When the meeting time arrived no one showed up due to lack of interest. So it is in the church. Isaiah said:

Is. 64:7 *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.*

B. The O.T. indictment is a N.T. dilemma. Few stir themselves up to take hold of God! We don't expect anything from God & get what we expect! The average Christian worships his work, works at his play & plays at worship! We need to rekindle the fervency of our faith. We need to cry out: **“OH GOD...!”**

ILLUS.: Someone said that the average church today is more concerned about the air-conditioning than the prayer conditioning. Room temperature has become more important than spiritual temperature!

I. THE “OH GOD!” OF DESPERATION:

NOTE: Often people who are desperate cry out to God when they never seek him any other time. You will hear from the lips of the desperate mother whose little child has just been run over by a car, *“Oh, my God!”* Usually she only uses God's name in vain & I suspect if that be true of her or you, you are then using His name in vain in that emergency also!

Is. 64:1 *Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,*

A. The Frustration of Waiting:

1. Isaiah was expressing his impatience at God's long-suffering & longed for judgment on sin.
2. Isaiah's heart ached for justice & judgment.

ILLUS.: Most believers today want the Rapture to come so they can receive their rewards & go on to heaven...they are not concerned with God's righteous judgment on sin & sinners.

In Rev. 6:9,10 we have the record of future events & the saints martyred for Christ long for the Lord to avenge their death.

Rev.6:9-10 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

B. The Failure of Fervency:

ILLUS.: George Whitefield announced his call to preach & the Pastor asked him to meet him at the river. He led George into the river & Whitefield protested that he had already been baptized. His Pastor pushed him under the water, held him there then jerked him out only to push him under & hold him down again. Whitefield was struggling & finally the preacher pulled him up & said: *“George, when you want God with the same intense desire that you want to breathe, then you will see the hand of God on your life.”* History records that Whitefield got that fervency. How about you & me?!

Ps.42:1 *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

II. THE “OH GOD!” OF INTERCESSION:

Ex.32:31,32 *And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*

ILLUS.: Moses was either on his knees asking God to kill the Israelites or asking God to save them!

A. Serious Prayer:

Ja.5:16 *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

1. James used Elijah as an example of serious, fervent prayer.
2. Elijah was able to shut off heaven's faucets & turn them on again thru prayer...but it wasn't accomplished with a half-hearted prayer.

1 Kings 18:42 *So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees...*

3. But though he prayed intensely, he had to repeat that exercise 7 times before the rains came.

B. Passionate Prayer:

ILLUS.: An American Missionary became legend for his passionate prayer life. He got the nickname "Praying Hyde." Things weren't going well at a mission station in England & "Praying Hyde" came & prayed God's blessings down on the work. Immediately things changed, the services were packed & at the 1st message 50 men accepted Christ. Evang. Wilbur Chapman asked Hyde to pray for him. He entered the room, closed the door & dropped on his knees. After 5 minutes w/out a sound he finally cried out **"OH GOD!"** Then for another 5 minutes with tears streaming down his face & He knew he was in God's presence, *"there came up from the depth of his heart such petitions for men as I had never heard before. I arose from my knees to know what real prayer was."*

Where is the **"OH GOD!"** in *our* praying?!

III. THE "OH GOD!" OF COMPASSION:

Mt.23:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*

A. Wet Eyes:

1. Where are the tears in our eyes for the lost.
2. Christians today are suffering from the *"curse of dry eyes."*

ILLUS.: Jeremiah is called the "weeping Prophet" because of his compassion. Hear him as he weeps over the nation of Israel.

Jer.13:17 *But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive.*

3. Dry eyes produce few souls.

Ps.126:5-6 *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

B. Broken Hearts:

ILLUS.: One inner city church-planter was asked how he had been so successful where others had failed stated: *"Wet eyes. Bent knees. Broken hearts."* Paul had a broken heart for his brethren.

Rom.9:3 *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:*

IV. THE "OH GOD!" OF CONVICTION:

Rom.7:24 *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

A. The Convicted Saint:

1. Paul expressed his frustration at his continual struggle between the old & new nature.
2. Any believer who is not constantly conscious of his failures & sinfulness is either a) not saved, b) lying to himself or c) reached perfection!

B. The Convicted Sinner:

Lk.5:8 *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*

1. Sinners used to come to the altar weeping over their lost condition & their realization of sin.
2. Where is that sense enormity of guilt before God? That sense of insult against Deity?

NOTE: Saint & sinner alike need a fresh view of how heinous their sin is in God's sight. **"OH GOD,** *help us to see how we have offended You!*" should be our prayer.

3CONCL.: We need to be shaken & awakened to our complacency! We need to cry out: **"OH GOD!"** out of **DESPERATION** as we see the wickedness of the world around us. We need to cry **"OH GOD!"** as we **INTERCEDE** for others out of **COMPASSION,** & finally out of **CONVICTION** for our own sin.