

Chasing Away Apathy

"I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth! (Rev 3:15-16 NLT)

Did you hear about the college students who wanted to form a new organization on their campus? They called it the "Apathy Club"? Their "Apathy Club" wasn't going to be like any other student group. Where most organizations have a purpose or goal -- or some common interest to unify and motivate them -- this club was advertised as "believing in nothing, pursuing nothing." They simply didn't care about anything, and they were going to demonstrate their apathy in an organized fashion!

Just one problem...the self-appointed officers of the Apathy Club advertised the first meeting -- and not a single person showed up -- because anybody who might have been interested didn't care enough to attend or show up!

Apathy defined = a lack of feeling or emotion causing inertia or lack of movement.

"The longer I live the
more I believe that
*the greatest enemy
of a victorious
Christian life
is passivity.*"

- CHUCK SWINDOLL

— QUOTABLE CHUCK —

The Story of Rizpah

There was a famine during David's reign that lasted for three years, so David asked the LORD about it. And the LORD said, "The famine has come because Saul and his family are guilty of murdering the Gibeonites." So the king summoned the Gibeonites. They were not part of Israel but were all that was left of the nation of the Amorites. The people of Israel had sworn not to kill them, but Saul, in his zeal for Israel and Judah, had tried to wipe them out. David asked them, "What can I do for you? How can I make amends so that you will bless the LORD's people again?" "Well, money can't settle this matter between us and the family of Saul," the Gibeonites replied. "Neither can we demand the life of anyone in Israel." "What can I do then?" David asked. "Just tell me and I will do it for you." Then they replied, "It was Saul who planned to destroy us, to keep us from having any place at all in the territory of Israel. So let seven of Saul's sons be handed over to us, and we will execute them before the LORD at Gibeon, on the mountain of the LORD." "All right," the king said, "I will do it." The king spared Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, who was Saul's grandson, because of the oath David and Jonathan had sworn before the LORD. But he gave them Saul's two sons Armoni and Mephibosheth, whose mother was Rizpah daughter of Aiah. He also gave them the five sons of Saul's daughter Merab, the wife of Adriel son of Barzillai from Meholah. The men of Gibeon executed them on the mountain before the LORD. So all seven of them died together at the beginning of the barley harvest. Then Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the mother of two of the men, spread burlap on a rock and stayed there the entire harvest season. She prevented the scavenger birds from tearing at their bodies during the day and stopped wild animals from eating them at night. When David learned what Rizpah, Saul's concubine, had done, he went to the people of Jabesh-gilead and retrieved the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan. (When the Philistines had killed Saul and Jonathan on Mount Gilboa, the people of Jabesh-gilead stole their bodies from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them.) So David obtained the bones of Saul and Jonathan, as well as the bones of the men the Gibeonites had executed. Then the king ordered that they bury the bones in the tomb of Kish, Saul's father, at the town of Zela in the land of Benjamin. After that, God ended the famine in the land. (2Sa 21:1-14 NLT)

And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until it rained on them from the sky; and ***she allowed neither the birds of the sky to rest on them*** by day nor the beasts of the field by night. (2Sa 21:10 NASB95)

Rizpah likely erected a burlap tent over the bodies to protect them from the birds of prey. For the entire harvest season she chased away the birds of prey.

Rizpah was compelled by love

- The heart of a mother who loved her sons.

Rizpah was compelled to action

- She put up a tent made of canvas
- She stayed throughout the entire harvest season

Rizpah was compelled with purpose

- passion to ensure her son's lives are honored with a proper burial.
- Get word to the King about her son's bones

How To Chase Away Apathy?

Be compelled by love!

- Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. (Rom 12:9-10 NLT)
- Christ's love compels us! 2 Corinthians 5:14 - we are controlled by the love of God.
- So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35 NLT)

Be compelled to action!

- Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. (Rom 12:11 NLT)
- What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"--but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds." (Jas 2:14-18 NLT)

Be compelled with purpose!

- Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. (Rom 12:21 NLT)
- Freedom Community Church exists to reach people with the life giving message of Jesus Christ so that they might experience the life of freedom and purpose that God intended for them.
- "Being successful and fulfilling your lifes purpose are not at all the same thing; You can reach all your personal goals, become a raving success by the worlds standard and still miss your purpose in this life." Rick Warren

Closing

We are so blessed to live in York - a place of great significance in our nations history. For nine months the founding fathers found this city to be a place of refuge from the war torn city of

Philadelphia. While facing the temptation to wallow in defeat and apathy John Adams famously gave this speech to his compatriots.

Let us awaken then and evince a different spirit - a spirit that shall inspire the people with confidence in themselves and in us - a spirit that will encourage them to persevere in this glorious struggle, until their rights and liberties shall be established upon a rock. We have proclaimed to the world our determination "to die freeman rather than to live slaves." We have appealed to heaven for the justice of our cause, and in Heaven have placed our trust. Numerous have been the manifestations of God's providence in sustaining us. In the gloomy period of adversity, we have had our "cloud by day and pillar of fire by night." We have been reduced to distress, and the arm of Omnipotence has raised us up. Let us still rely in humble confidence on Him who is mighty to save. Good tidings will soon arrive. We shall never be abandoned by Heaven, while we act worthy of its aid and protection." John Adams - York, PA 1777