

# The High Cost of Complacency

Study Questions | 04.07.24

Brett McBride | Amos 6



## Consider

**Discuss:** Thinking globally and about Toronto, what people in our world would be without i) a bed to lie on ii) a couch and time to lounge on it iii) nutritionally healthy foods iv) caviar, truffles and lobster v) proper hygiene products vi) perfumes, face masks and professional pedicures vii) concert or sports events tickets, restaurant meals viii) music or tv/movie streaming services ix) clean water to drink x) beer and wine.

- Describe the people you think of when you consider these different categories. Which are necessities and which are luxuries? These are only physical things, now make a list of emotional and mental needs and luxuries, thinking of those same people – e.g. safety.

## Let's Examine

### Setting the stage: Amos 6:1-7

- **Discuss:** Read 6:1-7 How do these verses show us that they had a false sense of security?
- **Discuss:** Brett points out that God's laws given through Moses – and specifically Leviticus – gives repeated warning to His people if they turn from Him and begin to misrepresent Him with sin. There will be consequence. From v.1, how is complacency and their sense of security a sin?
- **(OPTION:** Look at James 2 and discuss how it addresses the same issue from a New Testament perspective. How does this passage reflect turning from God's righteousness, and values? How is what James is talking about the same and how is it different? What are the underlying principles to guide us?)
- **Discuss:** Look at how their lifestyle and life choices are described, how is that similar to our lives in Toronto?
- **Discuss:** Is there any evidence of grief for what is happening with God's people and their relationship with God?
- **Read 6:7-8:** What is God's response to their complacency and lack of concern for others?
- **Discuss:** Decadence, complacency, and false sense of security was ruling the lives of the people. What should have been ruling their lives as God's people?

### Church history: a very brief summary

**Discuss:** Explain what Brett meant when he summarized the events after the Berlin Conference in this way: *All of this resulted in a movement of wealth and resources – enjoyed by a few – negatively impacting the many!*

**Discuss:** Now comment on this quote from Brett's sermon: *What we are seeing in our day and age – is the most dramatic move of migration and displacement the world has ever known! ...the direction of migration flow - is from the places that were pillaged – to the fortresses that profited off them!...* De-stabilization – whether economically, or politically – has led to displacement. *And as people are displaced – not because*

***they didn't love home – but rather are seeking for a future and a hope – they are moving towards the places that prospered from the de-stabilization and injustice!***

**Discuss:** There are some arguments/narratives which people – Christian people – have made to justify their ungodly attitudes and behaviours over the years. Brett made a number of “They are....” statements which have been made towards ‘others’ during slavery, colonization, and segregation which we are hearing again regarding the displaced people seeking a future in another part of the world. Create your own list of these accusation or false definition of people - ways that we ‘other’ people with our words - based on your memory from Brett and what you have heard yourself. Note the pattern of similarity between what has been said before and what is being said now.

Often these statements or narratives are used to justify inaction or complacency or the protection of what we have and status quo. But also...

***When we are not experiencing injustice firsthand – we can become anesthetized to its impact.***

***When “I’m” not going through something – I can become complacent to it – and overlook it – because the status quo is working in my favor. ...That’s just ‘human nature’!***

***But let’s remember – ‘human nature’ is also ‘sinful nature’! It’s not the spirit of Christ! (Brett)***

**Discuss:** How do we safeguard against this anesthetic or complacency?...so it doesn’t grip our lives but rather the Spirit of Christ does?

## Let’s Apply

**Group Discussion:** How does Micah 6:8 corroborate with these statements of Brett below? And what should our personal response be to these words in Micah and from Brett?

***(Brett) I assume that [God] sends us warning signs – just as He did in Amos’ day.***

- ***If you have everything you need – but it’s never enough – something is wrong.***
- ***If you focus excessively on your own needs – and never give thought to the needs of those around you – something is wrong.***
- ***If your heart doesn’t break and weep for the needs of others – or lead you to help the poor – something is wrong.***
- ***If you don’t pay your workers – or have integrity in your business dealings – something is wrong!***

**Personal Reflection:** Do you feel that God is sending you a warning sign? Is God challenging you to see the vulnerable and those needing justice in those who are around you? Does God want you to be the catalyst for them to be helped, to meet the love of Jesus? If so, what is your next step?

**Discuss:** Brett showed the image of “Christ of the Abyss” and emphasised that Jesus came for each and every soul who is making a journey to a new place to find a better life. How did the image within the context of the thousands of lives lost in the seas while attempting new life affect you? How did it speak to you about the Gospel and love of Jesus Christ for the world?



# Let's Pray

- **Spend time praising God:** for his faithful love and grace despite our humanity
- **Confess** (silently or out loud) when your eyes are on yourself, your status quo, your comfort
- **Ask the Holy Spirit** to empower each person in your group to seek God First and his Righteousness.
- **Continue to pray** for the church around the world; That we will follow the ways of God – reflecting his Character and heart, rather than drifting into our own complacency and false sense of safety.

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## ***Do you feel the need to Lament?***

*Know that Lamenting is something that people of God have done for thousands of years – including David. If you want to know more, look at these Psalms. Psalm 13, 22, 80. Can you find others?*

*There are 4 parts to prayers of lament which might be helpful:*

- 1. As you take your heavy heart to God: acknowledge your heart's heaviness to Him.*
  - 2. Cry out your complaint to Him. Shake your fist, allow yourself to be grumpy or angry.*
  - 3. Ask God to hear you and respond.*
  - 4. Confess your Trust in Him and who He is.*
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