

“There's Something to Think About" Ep. 10 Nahum: God's Great Indictment

It is no small thing for God to declare His opposition to someone. Twice in the prophecy of Nahum against the city of Nineveh and the ancient people of Assyria God sets out before them His great indictment of them, “I am against you.”

Within the pages of the ESV version, God makes that announcement, in those terms, fifteen times. Three times God announces this indictment in Jeremiah, ten times in Ezekiel, and twice here in Nahum. God indicts Israel, Judah, false prophets among His people, and the nations surrounding Israel, including Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Sidon and Tyre, Mount Seir, and Gog the king of Tubal.

Those words from the mouth and heart of God, “I am against you,” ought to have us trembling in our boots. So, let’s ask two questions today:

1. What constitutes enmity with God?
2. How can we not be God's enemies?

James, the brother of Jesus and leader of the early church tells us in no uncertain terms what it constitutes enmity with God.

James 4:4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

To be a friend of the world is to take on the motives and strategies of the world rather than the motives and strategies of God Himself for life in the world. What we find in the Bible is that God does in fact set His face against those who reject Him and elevate themselves to the role of god and master in their own lives and in the lives of others.

We find in these fifteen indictments, including the two in Nahum, that God opposes at least five different expressions of worldliness in people. The first expression God condemns is pride. Pride is the personal rejection of God’s sovereignty in our lives and probably is the underlying motivation for all the other behaviors and attitudes God actively resists. Pride that exalts the self over God makes an enemy of God and earns God’s indictment, “I am against you.”

Opposition or oppression of God’s people is a second expression of worldliness God indicts. When we treat the people of God poorly, with less love than that love with which Christ loves the church, we indulge a personal rejection of God’s presence in our culture. God dwells in the midst of His people. As society rejects and marginalizes the church, they reject and marginalize God from culture. The world’s rejection of God earns God’s rejection of the world, “I am against you.”

Self-indulgence, which is a personal rejection of God’s boundaries for our lives; lying or

misrepresenting God's revealed truth about Himself, the sin of the false prophets and teachers, is the rejection of God 's Truth in our lives; and gloating over the despair of others, which is the rejection of God's justice in our world, these are all expressions of sinful worldliness God rejects and to which He responds, "I am against you."

How then can anyone facing God's great indictment avoid God's final judgment? God is just and righteous, but he is not without mercy. Nahum reminds us that though **the LORD is a jealous and avenging God who takes vengeance on His adversaries and keeps wrath for His enemies**, He is also **The LORD slow to anger and great in power**. He is **good , a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him** (Nahum 1:2, 3, 7.)

The apostle John urges the readers of 1 John, **Do not love the world or the things in the world . . . For all that is in the world---the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions---is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.**

James, following up on his definition of the enmity with God, urges these responses from the people of God:

James 4:7-10 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

Jesus simply said, "Abide in me," and let "my words abide in you." When we dwell by faith in Christ, God is not against us. Rather, He makes His home within us.

Until next time, there's something to think about.