

dissatisfaction with what He does provide! No wonder it is found in the same list of sins as craving evil things, engaging in idolatry, committing sexual immorality, and presumptuously speaking against the Lord!

The Israelites grumbled about the fighting they anticipated in entering and settling in the land God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the land already inhabited by hostile, idolatrous, unrighteous nations.

But how does this desire for exemption from all struggle and conflict with dangerous enemies apply to us today?

One expression of this desire is found in the tendency among many believers to avoid forming and expressing and taking a stand on moral issues that affect their society and culture, the tendency to avoid ridicule or ostracism or even persecution by those who resist or reject or openly oppose the gospel. We are tempted to avoid identifying ourselves as Christians, identifying ourselves with Christian standards or causes or organizations or even fellow believers, in the workplace, at school, in our communities, and especially when we are away from home.

We may try to soothe our uneasy consciences by saying to ourselves something like the following: