

Slothfulness...a Disease of the Saints

Exodus 15:26 *“And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.”*

If you don't want to be told how to conduct your life, don't read the Bible. If you don't want your life examined to determine whether or not you are lazy, don't read the Bible. The Bible has much to say about slothfulness, that is, laziness.

Slothfulness prevents success in life

Proverbs 15:19 *“The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.”*

If you are lazy, you will not have success in career, success in family, and success in school. Everywhere you turn, you will hit the thorns. And yes, a lazy man is a poor Sunday school teacher, preacher, deacon, evangelist and singer.

A friend of mine grew up in a house his father constructed. His father planted a hedge around the boundary of the property. The hedge he planted had long, sharp thorns. Even a dog dare enter the property through the hedge, much less a man. This hedge bring to memory Proverbs 15:19. In all directions, the thorns were there to stop advancement. If you are lazy, you will have no success regardless of the direction you choose in life.

Slothfulness creates waste

Proverbs 18:9 *“He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.”*

Who is your brother? What is your brother's name? I have a brother named Dave and a brother named Jim. If you are a lazy person, next time someone ask you your brother's name say “waster.” Reread the verse above. I do not have a brother named “waster.” Laziness and Waste are brothers.

Proverbs 12:27 *“The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.”*

As a child, if we killed a rabbit, it went in the pot on the stove.

We ate it. My father forbade his children from killing wild game for any reason other than for food. One night I accidentally ran over a rabbit in my blue Volkswagen. I stopped, picked up the rabbit, brought it home, dressed it, and put in the refrigerator. Mom and dad were already in bed when I arrived home. Next morning, mom rejoiced when she opened the refrigerator and saw the “food” I had brought home. We were not terribly poor, but neither were we wasteful. Such was my upbringing- than God, I am blessed for it.

Slothfulness leads to want

Proverbs 24:30-34 *“I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; 31 And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. 32 Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. 33 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: 34 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.”*

What happens to a neglected garden, neglected because of laziness? What happens to a neglected crop? Weeds overtake it. The fruit of the crop is lost. The slothful man in Proverbs 24 let his crop become overtaken by weeds. He lost the fruit it could have yielded. Have you ever seen a garden someone planted then deserted? Weeds, thorns, and thistle crowd out the good plants. The man fell into want. He had no food. According to verse 34, he is now crying as a poor man “help me, I am hungry.” No one responds to his plea, so he becomes as desperate as an armed man who robs to satisfy his wants.

Proverbs 21:25 *“The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.”*

Shame on the US government. They had good intentions: feed the poorest, disabled, sick, elderly, and build them a house to live in. This approach ruined generations of people. A goodly portion of the population thinks the US government owes them a living. One reason it breaks my heart when a man who wants to work can't get job is because thousands will not work in a pie factory.

Abe Lincoln said “you cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could but will not do for themselves.”

Slothfulness leads to destruction

The lazy man in Proverbs 24 let the fence around his field fall over, according to verse 31.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 *“By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.”*

A few miles from my home there is a neglected farm. A farm that is properly taken care of is a beautiful site with barns and fences and sheds and cattle. It is such a peaceful site. The farm near my home is a shameful site. The barn roof is falling in. The walls are falling down. In time gone by, it was likely a show place. Likely, laziness is the reason for its demise.

One of the churches in Ghana, Africa wanted my help for a new church building. Yet, the building we preached in was neglected. The shutters were falling off. The door was off the hinges. The men of the church were too lazy to keep up the house of God. They were told that if they could not be trusted to keep their present building in good repair, God could not trust them with a new building.

How much of the shabby, eyesore buildings in our country are due to *slothfulness*. *“By much slothfulness the building decayeth.”* Why is your yard not mowed? Why is your fence falling down? Why has that tree the wind blew down been laying there 14 years? While some are not able physically, most of us are able to keep what God has given us in good condition. If you will not take care for what you have now, can God trust you with something bigger and nicer? NO!

Slothfulness withholds God’s blessings

Judges 18:9 *“And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land.”*

You can’t get to Canaan land sitting in your recliner or lying in your bed. Israel had to walk to Canaan- Canaan never came to them. By the way, their feet got sore, but they kept walking.

God owes you and me the same- nothing. Yet, He has big warehouses filled with blessings. Slothfulness will empty your cup. God wants to run your cup over.

What does God owe a lazy man? The truthful answer is “nothing.”

Solomon 5:1-9 *"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. 2 I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. 3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? 4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. 5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. 6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. 7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. 8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love. 9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?"*

In this passage, the beloved stopped by his garden on the way to visit his lover. He gathered her some nice things. When he arrived, she was asleep. She arose, but it was too late, verse 6. He was gone. She missed a blessing. Sleep, slothfulness, will rob you of blessings.

Slothfulness tarnishes the joy of Christ's Coming

Matthew 25:5 *"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."* The ten virgins were at the right location waiting for the bridegroom. Yet, they were asleep. Were their intentions right? Did they really desire to meet him? If you are asleep, you are not looking for the Lord to come. Will you be ashamed at his coming?

Matthew 25:26 *"His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:"*

The master returned from his journey to find the servant to whom he had given one talent still possessing one talent. The servant was a coward. He hid the talent the master gave him rather than invest it.

Upon his return from the journey, the master pronounced the servant “*wicked and slothful.*” He was lazy. He did not hide the talent because he was afraid of losing it. He lied. He hid it because he was too lazy to invest it and make gain for his master. Will Jesus label you “slothful” upon his appearing?

There will be a sad awakening for the redeemed that are not busy at the time of the Lord’s return. All through the land there are sleeping saved people. They are at ease in Zion. Their harps are on the willow tree. I somehow feel the Lord will, in his own way, reckon with the *slothful*. In Matthew 25:30, the master cast the slothful servant into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He never lost his soul. He was simple overwhelmed at the shame he brought to his master. He let the master down. Have you let the Lord down? If you are asleep, you have let Him down. There will be tears at the judgment!

Slothfulness hurts the work of the Lord

Romans 12:11 “*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*”

“When I get the house painted, I will paint the church.” What happened to putting God’s work first? You are not lazy. Busy people are not lazy. However, you are busy about the *wrong* things. You put your business ahead of what God has for you to do. The people in Romans 12:11 were not lazy. They were “*in business.*” They were lazy about God’s work. Why can’t you come to church Sunday evening? If you had an evening job, you would not miss the job. Why can’t you attend church Wednesday evening? If you had a work assignment on Wednesday evening earning pay, you would show up at the factory. Folk will stand on their head to please the boss, but will look for excuses to mistreat God. If you are guilty of such behavior, shame on you. Find an altar and repent before Him.

The field is white unto harvest, but the laborers are few. Many are asleep.