

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

RESTING BEFORE YOU'RE TIRED

By Jason Garcia

A lazy person is as bad as someone who destroys things (Prov. 18:9). Through laziness, the rafters sag; because of idle hands, the house leaks (Eccl. 10:18).

The Bible has some very biting things to say to us regarding laziness. This is a struggle we all face at some point—to be neglectful of our duty and choose to take our ease when we need to be about the Lord's business. Proverbs is filled with descriptors of lazy people and warns us lest we become the same idle, inert sluggards described. So how do we avoid making that mistake? After all, we're called to be laborers, to be industrious, and workers in the Kingdom of God (Eph. 2:10). Let's look and see what the Bible has to say about laziness and its consequences versus the standard we're called to meet.

Here's the rundown of a lazy person according to the Holy Spirit: a lazy person hates work: *“The sluggard's craving will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work”* (Prov. 21:25); he loves excessive sleep: *“As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed”* (Prov. 26:14); he gives excuses: *“The sluggard says, ‘There is a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming the streets’”* (Prov. 26:13); he wastes time and energy: *“He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great waster”* (Prov. 18:9 KJV); he believes he is wise but is a fool: *“The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who answer discreetly”* (Prov. 26:16).

Proverbs also reveals the endgame for the lazy: A lazy person becomes a slave to debt: *“Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor”* (12:24); he robs himself of a future: *“A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing”* (20:4); he will come to poverty: *“The soul of the lazy man desires and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich”* (13:4, KJV).

To be sure, there are many earthly repercussions when we're lazy, but laziness, as the Bible describes it, is a sin. God hates it. It affects every aspect of our lives because, let's face it, lazy people are great at finding more ways to be lazy.

I could become lazy in my walk with God and neglect seeking Him and studying His Word on a daily basis, diminishing my spiritual growth in Christ (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18).

I could become lazy in my marriage and not pursue my wife or sacrifice for her as I did in the beginning, and watch as she slowly becomes a stranger, starving for affection. Lazy husbands fail to love their wives as Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25).

I could become lazy in raising my sons and not spend time with them, choosing instead to ignore them and be more interested in television or golf or some other hobby. How quickly I forget that teaching my children the Word of God is second only to learning and applying it to myself (Deut. 6:6-7)!

I could become lazy in managing my finances and overextend my money, accruing enormous debt, and bringing my family into financial bondage and frustration.

The list could on, but surely, we can see how pervasive this sin is and the consequences we suffer and bring upon others when we're lazy. One of the most overlooked qualities of Jesus' character is His industry—His unrelenting desire to work for His Father (cf. Jn. 4:34). Arising while it was still dark to pray (Mk. 1:35), staying

up all night in prayer, then delivering the sermon on the mount the following morning, and then walking to Capernaum to teach more people (Lk. 6:12ff).

Glimpses like this from the Gospel reveal how driven He was and put us to shame. He was, in a word, incessant. There is no room for laziness and excuses in His Kingdom. But oh, how we love to make excuses, especially ridiculous ones. Like the sluggard we say, ***“There is a lion outside”*** (Prov. 26:13)!

Why are these words attributed to lazy people? Because their words betray their laziness. Any excuse, no matter how improbable, is enough to keep them from working. It is beyond pitiful that we allow such frivolous excuses to keep us from our commitments to God and one another. Our conscience may be satisfied, but the Lord is not, and He will call us tepid, idle sluggards. ***“The way of the lazy is a hedge of thorns”*** (Prov. 15:19). You see, if we don’t have a mind to work, then every task no matter how menial will be construed as too hard or dangerous—a hedge of thorns.

Let us be focused and committed to our work. If we’re looking for an excuse, we’re going to find one, but God knows better. We need to tear ourselves away from the TV and flick the Cheetos dust off our chest and find a way to serve! Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might (Eccl. 9:10); whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men (Col. 3:23). – ***Selected*** ■

The Bitter Fruit of Laziness

By Heath Rogers

The book of Proverbs sounds forth a number of warnings against laziness. Consider the results of this way of life:

1. Laziness leads to waste. ***“The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, but diligence is man’s precious possession”*** (Prov. 12:27). The lazy man will not “finish the job” when he returns from hunting and the food will become spoiled and wasted. Many of our most valuable physical possessions require diligent upkeep, but laziness will cause this important work to be neglected. ***“Because of laziness the building decays, and through idleness of hands the house leaks”*** (Eccl. 10:18).

2. Laziness leads to hunger. ***“Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger”*** (Prov. 19:15). If an able-bodied man will not work, he should not have anything to (2 Thess. 3:10). If it was not for the kindness of others, he would not have anything to eat.

3. Laziness leads to poverty. ***“Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread”*** (Prov. 20:13). Man is to make a living for himself and his dependents by diligent work. Hitting the “snooze” button can be a strong temptation, but if one makes it a way of life, he will be poor.

4. Laziness leads to frustration. ***“The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich”*** (Prov. 13:4). Most people want to have things. The lazy man has desires, but experiences frustration because he does not have anything. He would have what others enjoy, but he chose to be lazy rather than to work and earn the money to fulfill his desires.

5. Laziness leads to a ruined reputation. It isn’t hard to recognize the lazy person. ***“I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; and there it was, all overgrown with thorns; its surface was covered with nettles; its stone wall was broken down”*** (Prov. 24:30-31). Everyone knew who owned this field. It was a monument to his laziness. – ***Knollwood church of Christ Articles*** ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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