

Sloth - A Deadly Sin



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Sloth is a deadly sin because it is so easy to *not* do what we *should* do concerning many things. The devil makes it easy to *not* teach or correct a child when we know we *should*; to *not* attend a church service when we know we *could*; or to *not* encourage someone who really *needs* encouragement. It is so easy to just *let it go*.

Sloth is inaction—failing to do something we *should* do. James 4:17 “*If, however, a man knows what it is right to do and yet does not do it, he commits a sin.*” In a spiritual sense it means not being eager to do anything relating to spiritual matters. Sloth is being indifferent to the grace and mercy of God. Sloth is placing little value on the gift of the greatest value—the gift of God’s Son and the promise of eternal life.

Spiritual sloth is to neglect worshipping God by *not* thanking Him for all things. Everyone has been the recipient of God’s blessings, but not everyone thanks Him *for* those blessings. Sloth is a sin that is all too often repeated.

Being slothful to attend church services, because we want to sleep late Sunday morning, sets the wrong example for others in the home—we do not make the effort to do what we *should* be doing—Hebrews 10:25 “*not neglecting—as some habitually do—to meet together, but encouraging one another, and doing this all the more since you can see the day of Christ approaching.*”

Setting a wrong example for children or young Christians in the family, because we are being slothful to do what we *should* do, is harm-

ful to them spiritually. It sends the message that our sleep comes first, and singing hymns, praying, and listening to a message of God’s Truth, comes second. Mark 9:42 “*Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.*”

Our slothful attitude shows that our priorities are in all the wrong places. We should be zealous for God’s truth, because Satan makes it easy to be in a spiritual slumber and have little interest in spiritual things. We must realize Romans 13:11 “*that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*”

We can be guilty of sloth by doing things *ahead of* what we should do—like reading the daily newspaper before reading the Bible; eating before asking a blessing; or leaving the house for an activity before asking for divine protection. Sloth is a deadly sin.

If we want to know God, we need to know His Word, and be open to conviction. Our faith in God should fill us with joy and peace. Thinking about what God has already given us, compels us to praise Him. The Spirit of God is given to believers who ask to be filled; we are then inspired to praise God *from whom all blessings flow*.

Synonyms for sloth are: disinterest, idleness, laziness, and inactivity—it is just *not doing* something we *should* be doing. A famous person said: “*We cannot do everything at once, but we can do something at once.*”

Jesus denounced the Pharisees for their slothful ways Matthew 23:23 “*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done,*

without leaving the others undone.” We should tithe on our gain, but never be slothful to show mercy or be honest.

Sloth is an inclination *not* to work; to be very slow in doing something; or to delay taking action—which could be applied to many areas of life. Many things we *should* do and take *care of* every day, but if we do not do them, it is the sin of sloth. We must admit it, repent of it, and then carry through with our responsibilities as God enables.

Each day should begin with Bible reading and prayers—not forgetting to include thanks and praise to God for what He has graciously given us. To neglect doing any of those things is sloth and a sin. A lukewarm attitude toward spiritual matters is denounced in Scripture. Revelation 3:15 “*I wish you were one or the other!*” 16 “*Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.*”

We should be glad that we are *able* to do what God *wants* us to do—worship Him in church; share our blessings with others; and to encourage someone going through a tough time. Romans 12:11-12 “*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*”

If we do not show a genuine interest in living God’s Truth, we could not expect to see anything different in the children. Sloth is an indifferent attitude toward our responsibilities to God—like failure to confess our sins; not making an effort to help the needy, or failure to respond in a Christ-like way.

Depression often leads to sloth. A believer has everything to live for and everything to hope for—knowing that our sins are forgiven, and since we have God’s promise of Eternal Life, that is more than enough reason to be zealous for spiritual things.

We should anxiously await the return of Christ. *Romans 5:1-2* “*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*”

If we have a financial debt to pay, we should want to pay it back as soon as possible. *Romans 13:7-8* “*Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding.*”

Sloth can make us spectators—not actively helping when we can easily help. It is the lukewarm attitude of the people of Laodicea *Revelation 3:15*. Sloth is the sin of the one-talent man who was given God’s Truth, but he kept it to himself. Rather than sharing that knowledge, he buries it—doing nothing with it. In the eyes of Jesus it was sloth—the man was not doing what he should have been doing—growing spiritually.

Sloth is not always laziness, as some of the busiest people in the world, are the most slothful. A person can be so busy with their own affairs, that they overlook the needs of everyone else. It is possible to help everyone who knocks on our door, but turn a deaf ear to the requests of our own children. We must not be slothful in giving our time and interest, if a child or family member wants to tell us something, or to just share an experience.

We can be slothful by using insulting words and not caring about the feelings of others. We can be slothful by giving someone the silent treatment rather than making the effort to say *I’m sorry*. There are tests that will reveal a slothful attitude in us; Do we spend the evening working on our pet project instead of helping the children with homework? Do we spend our money on ourselves, when we could very well give it to someone with very little? Have we justified a

selfish purchase, when we have not asked God to show us someone who *could* use the money?

Sloth and indifference can cause us to bury the gift of giving to others. We can all too easily do nothing to help someone with our energy and our time. To be slothful is to just *let it go* and do nothing—like the one who buried the talent.

The second group in the parable, who used their talents were zealous for spiritual things, and anxious to help those who needed it—not as any merit, but only because of enthusiasm for God’s truth, and being glad He *gave* the opportunity to help someone.

They know that when they reach out to help a child, a loved one, or a family in need, they reach out to hold the Master’s hand. They simply helped others, because Jesus helped everyone. True relatives of Jesus are *Matthew 12:48-50* “*Who is My mother and who are My brothers?’ And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, ‘Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.’*”

When we are connected to the True Vine, we care about the needs and feelings of others. We give and share and help, because we *want* to—that is being united with Christ and getting rid of sloth. Everyone has responsibilities and we all make choices in how we carry through with them. We should see those around us as valuable in the sight of God; and we should be joyful to have the opportunity to help by giving our time and energy.

Whatever type person we *may* have been, anyone can change—if they *want* to. God can bring about change by giving us His Holy Spirit, who will *inspire* us to change from slothful ways to helpful ways. Instead of being *disinterested*, we can be *very interested* in the needs of others.

Jesus said *Matthew 10:42* “*Whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the*

name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.” Helping someone because Christ would want us to, is evidence that we are a true follower of Jesus, who promises a spiritual blessing.

When we help those in our own home, we set a right example to the children. When we *take* the time to *give* our time to anyone who needs our help, we have, through the grace of God, eliminated sloth—we are following the Savior.

With God’s help, may we all, through confession, repentance, and commitment to His Truth, show that sloth is a thing of the past, and that we will be joyful for each new day God gives us—a day that provides an opportunity to do what God wants us to do.

If we are one with Christ, then we have His attitude, and we will look for ways to help someone. *Philippians 2:1-2* “*If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.*”

When sloth is gone, selfishness is eliminated. The apostle then gives this truth on getting rid of sloth—*Philippians 2:3* “*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*”



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