

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

13 August 2023

Slothfulness

Text: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat"

I wonder if heaven works this way, "Each to their ability, each according to their need".

What do we work for in heaven?

Can our work be, The Glory of God?

Won't it be wonderful to be able to work to our ability without any hindrance?

Fully able and fully capable for the task at hand without any limitations!

Oh, how wonderful that will be.

I hope you have caught on to this series of things that get between us and God.

They all revolve around self verse being sold out to God.

Are you sold out to God?

If so then this information is good for you to have as reference as you help others become sold out to God.

Today is Slothfulness.

This is not a concept we think of often today.

The "Protestant" work ethic is going away quickly for the average person.

Today it is not do all you can for your employer.

It is do as little as you can get away with.

It is not "do it unto the Lord".

It is why bother.

I told my children that if they give 100% of what they have to give they will always have a job.

I have only been fired once in my life and now that man is a very good friend.

Not because of me but because of Kathy.

He put up with me because of his appreciation for Kathy.

Now we are good friends.

I was let go because two of the other employees told him that I was a religious nut and they did not want me around.

And they had been working longer and so I was let go.

Isn't life interesting?

Other words for our consideration for today are: idleness, listlessness, apathy, indifference, goofing off, wasting time, sluggishness, procrastination, and laziness.

We are again speaking of an attitude.

The sloth is a lethargic animal with coarse hair.

It builds no nest or home, sleeps eighteen hours a day, and wakes very slowly.

You might say it conserves its energy.

But as we all know; to not use is to lose.

It is so inactive that a green algae grows in its hair.

Some humans imitate the sloth.

In a peach picking crew there was a man who moved very slowly.

When the foreman asked him if he had another gear, as he got further and further behind the rest of the crew, he replied, "yeah, but it is so slow that I never use it."

I saw this happen when I was a child in my father's peach orchard.

And we still laugh about it today.

Slothfulness permeates schoolwork, the marketplace, the home, friendships, and Christianity.

Almost no area, except leisure, seems to be immune.

Laziness is soundly condemned in the Bible.

Proverbs 21:25 says, "The craving of a sluggard will be the death of him because his hands refuse to work".

Our text for today is very specific: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

Laziness is the neglect of duty.

Slothfulness is really a sin against ourselves as much as it is a sin against society.

It shows the difference between the person you are and the person you could be.

Paul's letter to the people at Thessalonica indicates that while he was with them, he and his companions did work.

They accepted no gifts of food or other things without paying for them.

Indeed, they worked "night and day" to keep from being a financial drain on anyone and to be a model for them.

God expects us to work.

It is our duty.

When God put Adam in the garden of Eden, he charged him to work and care for the garden.

Work is not punishment for Adam's sin; work is the privilege of man to serve God.

Laziness is the opposite of God's plan for humankind.

Children should learn minor chores that prepare them for the major responsibilities later.

Husbands and wives are to work at their marriage, at being parents, and at their jobs.

A wife's job may be to serve as a homemaker.

If both spouses work outside the home, household chores should be shared.

To do less is to neglect your duties.

Some are too lazy to care.

Some children are allowed to practice sloppiness at home because it is easier for parents to leave them alone than to correct and teach them.

As they grow into adulthood, they carry their laziness with them.

Laziness is a violation of Christian living.

Some might ask, "How can doing nothing be a sin?"

In theology there are basically two kinds of sins: sins of commission and sins of omission.

Sins of commission are the sins we commit; sins of omission are the things we know to do yet do not do them.

In the parable of the talents, the servant who hid his talent in the ground was chastised because he did nothing with his talent.

In fact, the master said, "Throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth".

Likewise, those who do absolutely nothing about their salvation will be lost.

Some Christians are slothful in their prayer life, Bible study, church attendance, witnessing, financial support, and Christian service.

The reason our world does not have an effective Christian witness can be directly traced to laziness and inactivity by Christians throughout Christian history.

We do not work as hard as we should to live as Christian examples.

Christians should be preparing for Jesus' return.

Five of the ten virgins failed to prepare for the return of the bridegroom because of laziness.

Whatever else the parable may mean, it demonstrates that the Lord is going to come again, and we as Christians must prepare for his return.

Laziness is a threat to God's plan.

God does not intend for a person to be idle.

The author of *Proverbs* draws on nature to illustrate God's plan for man.

In *Proverbs 6:6-11* he graphically draws the analogy of the ant as a picture of how diligent one should be about living.

The ant has no commander, overseer, or ruler per se, but still he knows to work.

He works because unless he works he will perish.

He works hard in the summer in order to enjoy the fruit of his labor in winter.

Humankind must do the same.

God never intended for other humans to support the lazy.

Welfare programs are wonderful for the disabled, infirm and unfortunate in society.

Many souls are severely limited by physical, emotional, and mental handicaps that prevent them from working side by side with the healthy and able bodied.

But social programs that encourage one who is not disabled or mentally incompetent to remain unemployed should be eliminated.

Such programs build resentment among people that spills over against the deserving.

To reward laziness is a sin.

Slothfulness is found in the workplace, schools, churches, and government offices.

Every Christian should do his or her best at all times.

We should labor as though God were our employer. *Eph. 6:5-8*

Jesus Christ has commanded us to be an active and effective witness for him.

To do less is wrong.

If you want to have the joy of solid biblical living, you must obey the commands of Christ.

If you are not doing all you can do to bring the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven then ask God to show you how he would have you do this.

You will never regret it and you might regret not doing it.