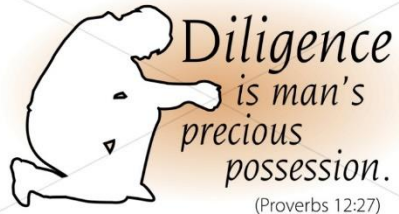


Address: 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sun Worship Service: 10am, Sun School: 11.45am, Wed Prayer Meeting: 8pm
Website: www.sovereignhopebpc.org
Rev Dr Jack Sin: 91160948 (hp) / jacksin710@gmail.com
Elder Loke Tat Luen: lloke822@gmail.com

The Biblical Case Against Sloth & Indolence

Richard Sibbes said in "A Puritan Golden Treasury",

"There are no men more careful of the use of means than those that are surest of a good issue and conclusion, for the one stirs up diligence in the other. Assurance of the end stirs up diligence in the means. For the soul of a believing Christian knows that God has decreed both."



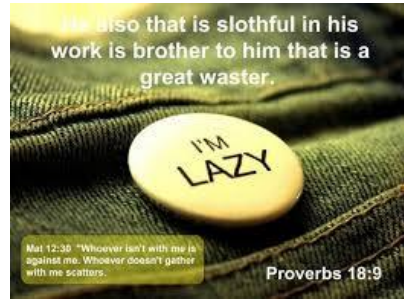
We live in an increasingly lazy and slothful world where diligence and industry are frowned upon. Productivity is down in many countries and companies and schools as some tried to work the barest minimum for maximum wages. In schools, the grades are often down too as some students are obsessed with their favorite pastimes, excessive use of HP pr computer games, movies and social media and other activities as distractions and devotion to God and important academic studies and our spiritual life are often neglected. What does the Word of God have to say about this phenomenon? Consider the following biblical insights in this current concern.

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
James 4:17

We need to want to do what is right before God. Diligence in our work is often taken lightly and sloth and laziness has become the order of the day even in the school, camp and church, adversely affecting the testimony of many. Here are some relevant verses from the wise king, Solomon on the topic of laziness from the Word of God and a short exposition to go with it.

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

When we are idle or lazy, we have a tendency to be prone to sin and wasteful living with no good consequence. When we do not feel like studying or working, wasting our time becomes very easy to do. Ephesians 5:15-16 says, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." We must remember our time, money, possessions, everything we think of as ours is really the Lord's, and we are but stewards of them and are accountable for the way we would use them! It may be easy to waste time, money and effort and have an excuse that makes us feel better, but when we stop to think about it in light of these things, we are wasting what belong to the Lord God Almighty instead of being good and faithful stewards of our time and talents for Him.



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

This is strange and extraordinary that some are rewarded for laziness these days. In some countries when there is social welfare like the US, Australia and the UK and parts of Europe, it makes economic sense for some not to work and get the state funded support than to work in a low paying job and get almost the same or less. Although some will get MORE if they work, but due to sloth, they rather be jobless and get free handouts instead. Fallen man is often lazy and never contented. They may want something, but do not want to actually WORK for it!

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 says, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." Some have their fathers always paying for everything for them eventually, thus confirming our slothfulness more and more. **Laziness is a curse to us and a great disservice to others. May the Lord deliver us from such selfish indolence and labour on for Him!**

Proverbs 22:13 "The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets."



There is always an excuse we can find for our laziness, but how many of them are actually sound? There are many excuses like 'I am tired' or 'I don't feel like doing it' or 'I will do it tomorrow'. When we look at them closely, it is obvious that that is all that it is, an excuse and often we are guilty of it. Most "reasons" we give

for not being able to do something that needs to be done cannot really be a justifiable one. Next time you are tempted to be lazy, pray and tell it to God first and consider how unreasonable it would be as a steward of God. Recognize it and get out from laziness into industry and do it anyway! DIN stands for '**Do It Now**' or '**Delay It Not**'.

Proverbs 20:4 "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing."

What does the Bible say will be the fruit of our laziness? We will be left out of the spiritual harvest and there will be no blessings or rewards! A basic agricultural rule is that we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:9) and if we do not sow the seed and water the crop, then we should not expect any harvest of it at all. It is like a student who does not study hard for examinations should not expect to get good results or some who do not



work should not expect to get paid a decent salary. We get the consequences of our inactivity in the end. Galatians 6:7-9 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

King Solomon warns us in Proverbs 6:6 "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:"

There is an amazing tiny creature that is almost everywhere. It is in the house, the school, office, camp, garden, road, roof, and everywhere and it is always on the move. Have you seen a stationary ant before? That is a dead ant! We need to look at ourselves and recognize the slothful man in ourselves. What can we do to remedy

this malady? God has given us the answer. Go to the ant and learn from it, He tells us. Observe and emulate their organised and industrious ways. This is wise! Note what ants do in WORK. They work HARD and they work EFFICIENTLY. Ants are very organized and focused; when they want to get the work done, it is not easy (except with a can of Sheltox) to stop them.



You can put all kinds of barriers (that the slothful would love to use as an excuse) in their way and they will find a way to overcome them. So determined are they, that when faced with a moat of water, the first in line will willingly drown so the next one can walk on its body and get a bit further! THAT is determination! That is finding a solution with hard work in the strength of God even if it an uncomfortable one! **Do we know and learn from the ant? Laziness can stop them from getting done for the Lord like praying, reading the Word or serving the Lord. Let us watch and learn from them. That is what the Titus 2 women are all about! Teaching other poor young women and how to raise children and how to work hard effectively, thus blessing our husbands and households with the fruit of our labour (Titus 2:4-5).**

JC Ryle said, "I should as soon expect a farmer to prosper in business who contented himself with sowing his fields and never looking at them till harvest, as expect a believer to attain much holiness who was not diligent about his Bible reading, his prayers, and the use of his Sundays."

It is said that Jesus' story of the five talents in Matthew 25 is a good example of Christian diligence. The parable illustrates how we should be industrious with the talents that God provides us. In the parable, the lord provided each of his servants a certain number of talents. It was known by all his servants that the lord expected them to increase his talents while he was gone. When the lord returned, he rewards the industrious servants that had brought increase to his talents (Matthew



25:21, "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

God gives us talents that we should use it diligently for the benefit of others. (1Pet 4:10,11) Whatever talents God has provided us with, God expects us to demonstrate Christian diligence. Christians are to be industrious and bring increase to His Kingdom. If we are faithful in our good works, God will continue to bless and give us a good result for the building of His Kingdom.

Conclusion

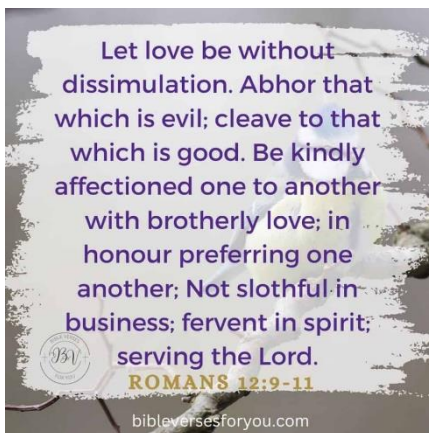
Romans 12:11 says, "*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord*". Indolence in school, work, home or church is a real problem for some today and we need to address it. Is it a concern for you in the second half of 2024? An idle mind is a devil's workshop. Deal with it as a sin to be confessed and repented of before the Lord and ask Him to help you to be industrious in His Word and hardworking for Christin His work. **There will always be times in our lives when we need to rest and retire for a while, such as during an illness and hectic week of work, and to rest on the Lord's Day. These are times when you really must rest and relax and there is nothing wrong with it.**

However, is our way of life in depths of slumber always and wasting our time away with excessive watching of the TV, movies on Netflix, social media, playing mobile or computer games for many hours, or loafing around aimlessly, or just listening to unedifying music, idleness without any honest labour done? Perhaps it is an opportune time to look at our heart and see if there is sloth residing there and deal with it accordingly.

Let us be diligent to study and apply the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15), pray to God and reach out to others with the gospel in the second half of the year and diligently grow in the fear of God. A Puritan once said, "*idleness tempts the devil to tempt us!*" Something to ponder and pray about.

Jack Sin

(For furthur studies, read http://www.access-jesus.com/Matthew/Matthew_25_21, and <http://www.scriptural.org/topics/diligence.html>, and Mt Henry's and Mt Poole's Commentary on the Bible.)



Prayer and Practical Support for Ps Lazarus....

Pastor Lazarus is the Pastor of Calvary Reformed Church in Bangalore, a Sovereign Hope BPC



associated missions for many years in the extension of the gospel in India. He was recently diagnosed with ***Aplastic Anaemia***, a blood disorder and needs medical treatment.

We have received an update on 22 Jul from a Pastor in Bangalore on the medical condition of Ps Lazarus:

- Ps Lazarus has been readmitted at Baptist hospital yesterday evening due to fever. His blood counts were very critically down yesterday, and therefore started giving him platelets.
- This afternoon brother Shijo and I visited him and met with the doctor and discussed the treatment plan. His children's bone marrow match test result was out that morning, but the result was half match, hence bone marrow transplant treatment wouldn't be possible. Then the doctor suggested the second option, which is injection, and Ps Lazarus' family agreed for the same. If everything goes well, this treatment will start from Wednesday or Thursday (*ie. 24 or 25 July*).
- Four counts of injection be given within four days of treatment and within three months body would respond positively. **Total treatment cost would be around 13 lakhs (~\$20,000)**. This week, as the treatment begins, 7 lakhs to be spent at once for purchasing the injection medicine. Thank God, many people are coming forward to support God's faithful servant. We are also doing our part. Thank you for your prayers and sacrificial giving.



Pray for divine mercy and grace for the family as they look to the Lord in this critical matter. Anyone who is burdened to financially help this faithful servant of God, do let Dn Paul Tan of SHBPC know soon. You may also designate your fund to India missions (Pastor Lazarus) through SHBPC. We will coordinate and send the funds to him as needed for his treatment as the Lord provides.

Heb 6:10 says,

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

Church Session of Sovereign Hope BPC



Memory Verses Exercise

July 7 "Overcoming the Bondage of the World"

Exod 1:21

And it came to pass, because the midwives _____ ,
that he made them houses.

Jul 14 "Divine Preservation in the Plan of God"

Exod 2:25

And God _____ the children of Israel,
and God had _____ unto them.

Jul 21 "God's Answers for Man's Excuses"

Exod 3:14

And God said unto Moses, _____ :
and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel,
_____ hath sent me unto you.

Answers: feared God, looked upon, respect, I AM THAT I AM, I AM

Memory Verse

Exod 4:31 And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "**When God Used Human Vessels [Exod 4:1-21]**", the study on the "**Book of Exodus – Supernatural Guidance in the Wilderness of Life**".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "**Power Display of Divine Power [Exod 8:1-28]**".
4. The Sunday School class today is a special seminar by Dr Samuel Gan on "**Age of Mankind, the Lineages and Evidence of Genesis in China**". All are welcome.
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Old Testament Foundations and the 10 Commandments. Join us for a time of profitable learning. **[Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178]**.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. **[Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551]**.
7. Pray for:
 - Medical: Pastor Lazarus [leukemia], Anthony [lung cancer: narrowing airways], Samuel Wong [multiple health conditions], Aunty Chwee Lian [hip fracture], Daniel Phang [high blood pressure], Kin Hoong [monitoring of heart and lungs pressure].
 - Travels: John A (Philippines), Marilyn (Philippines)
8. **Church Family Day** will be held on the morning of **National Day Wed Aug 9** at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Details will be available soon. All are welcome! Register with **Paul Tan (hp: 9731-4733)**.
9. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.