

CRIMINAL SLOTHFULNESS IN A CRISIS HOUR

TEXT: *Hebrews 6:12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.*

Proverbs 19:15: Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

Isaiah 28:9: Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

Satan's main tactic in the early church was to slow down their spiritual progress to the point they were greatly in danger of apostasy.



Jesus said:

John 10:27: My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me:

Romans 8:14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

To follow on, to be led, denotes progress.

The spiritually-minded know it means “staying close” to Jesus Who is ever leading His Own onward. Paul is writing in this letter, as it were, to the church – exhorting and warning them to arouse themselves to watchfulness. He urged them to press along in their pilgrimage.

He told them they were dragging their feet, that for the time they ought to be teachers, they themselves needed again to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. Again, they are become such as have need of milk:

Hebrews 5:12-14:

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

It is from this criminal slothfulness the apostle seeks to awaken them to advance beyond the first principles of Christianity and to go on to perfection. To stimulate their sluggish souls, he sets before them the awful consequences of apostasy, as well as the danger of committing the unpardonable sin which, by this neglectful carelessness, they would bring upon themselves.



If after receiving so many spiritual gifts and blessings, and after making the wonderful profession as they had done, if they should then apostatize, He represents their case as hopeless.

These warnings are not worthless words to a real child of God. They are the very means of our Faithful Redeemer to make us move forward, lest we fall into apostasy.

Paul didn't want to leave the impression that he was clubbing them with scarecrows or myths in the dangers of backsliding by this word:

Hebrews 3:6: But Christ as a Son over His Own house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Hebrews 3:12: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the Living God.

Paul knew the saints are in constant danger of apostasy thru neglectful slothfulness, and gave a remedy in the following verse:

Hebrews 3:13-14:

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;



He commends them then for the good works they had performed. He assures them God would not forget.

Hebrews 6:10: God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed to His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Paul says:

Hebrews 6:11: And we desire that every one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

He knew that slothfulness is one of the most common hindrances to the full growth in Grace, and it comes from resting satisfied in attainments already made. He proceeds to warn them particularly against this insidious vice, exhorting to pursue the course of those ancient saints who had successfully run this race and had won the prize. Notice the text:

SLOTHFULNESS

Hebrews 6:12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.

Saints, we have the same race to run. We are beset with the same temptations and dangers from without, and are hindered by the same tendency to forgetfulness and laziness or sloth from within. Just as those to whom the exhortations were originally addressed, so these were written for our admonition and learning, lest we fall into satan's snare as they.

Notice again that the evil we are exhorted to shun is slothfulness. The bad consequences of this harmful failure to keep on the move for God is that we become lazy and indifferent to the warfare we are engaged in — a warfare against sin, satan and our old self, or human nature, which has a natural aversion to exertion.

It requires strong warnings to arouse the mind from its natural love or ease and sluggishness.

Especially, will you heed Christ's command?

Luke 16:16: The Law and the Prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

For the carnal mind is enmity against God and holiness; it is not subject to His Law. As long as this depravity of nature prevails, just so far will there be a reluctance and unwillingness to turn the whole life into fervent loving service to Christ.

We know that the conscience condemns, according to the Light of the Truth of God which is in the heart. Thus slothful Christians can develop a weakened and seared conscience — like unrepentant sinners. They instinctively turn away from pondering their disobedient ways and sinful neglect of so great salvation. This is the reason for so much pain, remorse and uneasiness among the carnal.



Excuses are invented by the carnal to stay away from Church because they are remained corrupt in the heart, and dull and sluggish in spirit. The soul naturally turns away from that which makes it feel uncomfortable. It turns to that which is more congenial with its present heart condition.



When our checkered ways have been exposed by the Holy Spirit, we are awakened and aroused to hunger and thirst after Christ. Then, there is no more disposition to indulge in slothfulness. Love stirs and draws us to pursue after more of Jesus. But when love grows cold, in the same proportion, the soul moves heavily into drowsiness until the spiritual senses become benumbed.

Prayer, which was once a delight, becomes a burden. The closet duties are neglected, or hurried over without much thought or feeling. Bible reading and meditation are lost in T.V., and in gadding about.



Under the withering influence of slothfulness, precious opportunities of spiritual growth and progress are suffered to slip away, and the soul becomes weaker and emptier unto slumber. Then sleep comes to the virgins . . .

Matthew 25:1-3:

1 Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

Ephesians 5:14: Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Romans 13:11-14:

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Mark 13:32-37:

32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, Who left His house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.



O Christian, awake. Consider your real condition.

“Awake to righteousness and sin not, for the time is far spent and the night cometh when no man can work. Let us not sleep as do others, but watch and be sober.”

1 Corinthians 15:34: Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

John 9:4: I must work the works of Him Who sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

1 Peter 4:7: But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-28:

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the Breastplate of Faith and love; and for an Helmet, the Hope of Salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16 Rejoice evermore.



17 Pray without ceasing.

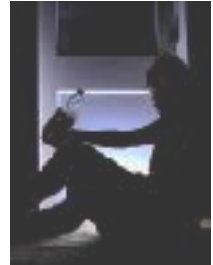
18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.



23 And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Eternity, with all its awful realities, is coming, and will soon be here. The true Bride of Christ HATH MADE HERSELF READY, and is helping much in turning the unsaved souls of the lost to find Christ as Saviour, and then as Lord and Master.

In closing, there is none so indifferent, slothful, or drowsy about his soul's salvation as you are who are without Christ. No one knows better than you do that it bears little on your mind as to where you will live eternally.

The devil tries his very best to keep such thoughts away from laying hold on your soul, lest you seek the Lord and find Him precious to your eternal soul that will never die.



Believe the Gospel — that He died for you.

Romans 5:8: But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 14:9: For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living.

Repent, and receive Him today.

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