

**Over the past few weeks, we have considered what Solomon beheld in the fallen and sinful world of his time:**

When we consider what Solomon beheld in his day, we realize that nothing has changed to this present day; sin continues to wreak havoc on humanity. Our first parents' sin is our sin; their disobedience and rebellion against God is our disobedience and rebellion against God.

*Romans 5:12: Wherefore, as by one man in entered into the world, and death by sin; and so, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*

*Ecclesiastes 7:29: Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they sought out many inventions*

Apart from God intervening and saving us from our sins, we would continue to walk in darkness, disobedience, and rebellion against our Creator and our God. This is the world that Solomon beheld; it is the same sinful world that we live in today; nothing has changed.

*That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been*

**After beholding all of the oppressions that are done under the sun by those that are powerful, Solomon turned to behold those that were envious and jealous toward the diligent, skilled, and hardworking. (Successful)**

These are the go-getters, who are good at what they do, they work hard in their craft, and as a result of their hard work, they are successful. And then, there are those that envy the go-getters/hard workers/successful.

The envious/jealous, (and as we shall see, LAZY); when they SEE diligence, skill, and hard work in others, instead of being happy for them, learning from them, and being motivated and inspired by their success, they envy and hate them.

*Again, I considered all travail (or all of man's toil and labor), and every right (or successful/skillful) work, that FOR THIS a man is envied of his neighbor. This is vanity, and vexation of spirit~(V4)*

What is ENVY? It's discontentment/resentment toward another person because of what they possess, or because of their success, skill, or their happiness and prosperity. At the root of envy is selfishness!

Then we turned to several instances in the scriptures where good people were envied and hated of their neighbor: The most famous of course was the what Pontius Pilate BEHELD in the chief priests toward Jesus after when they delivered Jesus to be crucified.

*Matthew 27:18: For he knew that for envy they had delivered him*

Proverbs 27:4: Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

This ought to move each one of us to take a good hard look to see if ENVY and JEALOUSY exists in our lives. How do you and I look upon one who is successful because of their hard work? Or, godly because they are wholly devoted to God in their hearts?

Beloved, we ought to praise God when we see goodness and godliness and righteousness in someone else; we should never envy them! Philippians 2:3-4

We ought to be happy and rejoice for those that have done right and been blessed of the Lord! We ought to admire God's work whenever we see it perfected in someone else!

**(V5): Solomon now turned from the diligent and hard worker and those that sinfully envy them to the lazy and idle fool. What a contrast?!**

So, we have the hard and diligent worker; one who is successful, and now, one who is an idle fool. Solomon here describes (for us) one of the identifying characteristics or behaviors of a fool.

The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh

He will envy/hate the hard worker while not lifting his own hand to work or labor. The fool's idleness is even more exposed to our sight by their bodily position or posture. We've all seen those who will stand in lazy defiance with their arms folded, who refuse to lift one finger to labor, work, or to employ themselves for their own benefit, support, or to help their neighbor.

Solomon in the Proverbs calls this person a SLUGGARD or one who is SLOTHFUL. The sluggard/sloth is lazy and indolent; a couch potato and one who will find every excuse to avoid any type of exertion, activity, or work.

BUT the lazy and indolent sluggard wants the success that comes from hard work, (they want the fruit of hard work and labor); but without exerting themselves to do any work.

Proverbs 6:6-11, 19:24, 20:4, 21:25-26, 22:13, 24:30-33, 26:13-15

As parents, we need to start at a young age with our children, teaching them the goodness and profit of working hard/laboring with their hands, and that God has given it to us to work and labor in this life; and we must also teach them the profit of exercising their minds in studying, reading, thinking, and learning; (especially in the things of God); but we also need to teach them the vanity and sin of idleness and laziness; and that there is no profit in it.

Old Christian friend of mine would always say, an idle mind is the devil's workshop

Furthermore, the lazy and indolent sluggard is never happy; they enjoy nothing in their lives because they've worked for

and accomplished nothing in their lives; and as long as they are in such a case, they will never be able to do what Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 3:12-13.

**Let's bring this into the spiritual realm: Proverbs 13:4: The SOUL of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the SOUL of the diligent shall be made fat**

The Christian life is not for the spiritually lazy and indolent. The Christian does not fold his hands together and eat his own flesh. In fact, the Lord Jesus likened being His disciple/following Him or being a worker in His Kingdom to putting your hand to the plow.

Luke 9:62: No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God

But since the sluggard detests industry, labor, and work, they will refuse to apply their hearts and minds to the words of Christ.

The sluggard will not search the scriptures to find the precious words of eternal life that are found within them. To be a Christian to so many, is to just believe and then start attending church once of week; (but even that will take some effort); but really, there's nothing else required to be a Christian right? Sadly, this is what many believe! But this is NOT the Christian life that is defined in the Word of God!

If you have turned from your sins to Christ in repentance and faith, you are no longer going to be carried along effortlessly in the current and course of this world. To believe/trust Christ is to turn against your sins, and to go against the current of this world. If you're a Christian, you must be part of the godly resistance!

Resistance takes effort! Christian, you better be part of The godly Resistance against the god of this world and against this world's damning message, you better constantly be turning from and resisting your sins, or you will find yourself being resisted by God!

James 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:8-9

In Ephesians 6:10-18, we understand that we must STAND AGAINST, WRESTLE AGAINST, and WITHSTAND the god of this world.

**Which path are you on in your life?**

Are you going in the same direction that everyone else is going in the world? Are you at home and comfortable in the middle of the world? Or are you going against the tide and against the philosophy and gospel of this world? Luke 13:23-24, Matthew 7:13-14

**Christian, you are NOT to be spiritually lazy and indolent. There ought to be no such thing as a lazy Christian.**

Listen to these Biblical Characteristics of the Biblical Christian: They violently press their way into the Kingdom of

Heaven: The True Christian is going to have Christ! You're not going to keep them from Christ!

Matthew 11:12: The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Luke 16:16

If you're a child of God, you will STRIVE to enter in at the strait gate, you will give diligence to make your calling and election sure, you will work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, you will study to show yourself approved unto God, you will be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth!

The Christian does not fold his hands together in idleness and eat his own flesh; or as it means, the Christian does not destroy his own life by his/her own spiritual laziness and inactivity; especially in the things of God.

**Better is an handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit (V6):**

This at first glance would seem to be a good place to be; BETTER to have a handful with quietness; but then, in context, is Solomon describing the sluggard who refuses to labor with his hands? Who folds his hands together in idleness and who is envious of the diligent and hard worker? And how only has a handful because of his/her inactivity and laziness?

Proverbs 15:16-17, 16:8, 17:1

**Seek ye the LORD; that's gonna take some effort on your part!**