

DESIRE WITHOUT EFFORT = NOTHING

The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing;
but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.
Proverbs 13:4

NOTHING FROM NOTHING LEAVES NOTHING

Let's see what this truth says. And then we will try to figure out what it means and how to apply it to our lives.

The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.
Proverbs 13:4

First, what do the words mean?

The soul (*nepeš* - the inner being with its thoughts and emotions, breath, the entire person, the seat of one's personality, their mind, will, passions, and volition, everything that makes them who they are)

of a lazy man (*'āṣēl* - sluggish, slothful, useless, someone who will always fail because of laziness that becomes moral failure, a person who is undisciplined to work or exert himself)

desires (*'āwāh* - to want strongly, to long for, to crave)

and has nothing (*'ayin* - none, no, not, nothing, nonexistence, without. Note: "he hates the process by which results are to be obtained");

but (conjunction, contrast)

the soul (*nepeš* - the inner being with its thoughts and emotions, breath, the entire person, the seat of one's personality, their mind, will, passions, and volition, everything that makes them who they are)

of the diligent (*ḥārūš* - sharp, industrious, a person who is characterized by care and perseverance in carrying out tasks. Note: diligence is not satisfied with desire, but with possession)

shall be made rich (*dāšēn* - to be satisfied, to grow fat, having an abundance, thrive, to be made prosperous, to be richly supplied).

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Next, what can we know about the lazy man, the sluggard?

1. He Will Not Begin Things

He does not know how long he will allow himself to be this way.

How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep— so shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, and your need like an armed man.
Proverbs 6:9-11

2. He Will Not Finish Things

Just beginning something is too much for him, and the impulse that started the action quickly dies.

The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, but diligence is man's precious possession.
Proverbs 12:27

A lazy man buries his hand in the bowl, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.
Proverbs 19:24

The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth.
Proverbs 26:15

3. He Will Not Face Things (challenges, hardships, tough times)

He comes to believe his own excuses.

The lazy man says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!"
Proverbs 22:13

And he believes his own reasons for his laziness.

The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly.
Proverbs 26:15-16

4. Therefore, His Life is Hard and Difficult, Needlessly

The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is a highway. Proverbs 15:19

THERE IS A COST FOR EVERYTHING OF VALUE

Note the requirements for discipleship and even for following Jesus. Then compare them to your own life. What is your conclusion?

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him (1) deny himself, and (2) take up his cross, and (3) follow Me." Matthew 16:24

Jesus was talking to His disciples (note the context). So does this cost have to do with something deeper than discipleship?

Then He said to them all (more than just His disciples), "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him (1) deny himself, and (2) take up his cross (how often) daily, and (3) follow Me." Luke 9:23

Luke adds the word, *daily*. What does this mean regarding our relationship with Christ? What are the implications? Again, note the context.

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them (multitudes), "If anyone comes (to move toward, approach) to Me and does not hate (*miséō* - in this context, it means to love less, see Mt. 10:37) his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot (*dúnamai oú* - not capable, not able, without power, will not happen under any circumstances no matter how hard one may try) be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot (*dúnamai oú*) be My disciple."

Luke 14:25-27

Application: So what should we do when it comes to our desire for a deeper faith and relationship with Christ? How are we to approach Christ and examine our own life? What does Jesus say about this?

Example One:

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'"

Example Two:

Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.

Conclusion:

So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake (*apotássō* - to abandon, to bid a formal farewell, to renounce) all (*pás*) that he has (anything owned or possessed) cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:28-33

ONE LAST LOOK

Finally, what are the spiritual implications of this truth? And how does it speak to you today?

The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich (satisfied, supplied abundantly).

Proverbs 13:4

Are you diligent in your relationship with Him? And if so, in what way?

Do you have a desire for more of Him, yet find yourself lacking when it comes to commitment or action? And if so, do you expect an outcome different than what this Proverb teaches?

Remember the prayer of total full surrender.

A PRAYER OF FULL SURRENDER

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,
acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:1

Dr. Walter L. Wilson's (1881-1969) prayer to the Holy Spirit.

"My Lord, I have mistreated You all my Christian life. I have treated You like a servant. When I wanted You, I called for You. When I was about to engage in some work, I beckoned You to come and help me perform my task. I have kept You in the place of a servant. I have sought to use You only as a willing servant to help me in my self-appointed and chosen work.

I shall do so no more.

Just now, I give You this body of mine; from my head to my feet, I give it to You. I give You my hands, my limbs, my eyes and lips, my brain. All that I am within and without, I hand over to You for You to live in it the life that You please. You may send this body to Africa, or lay it on a bed with cancer. You may blind the eyes, or send me with Your message to Tibet. You may take this body to the Eskimos or sent it to a hospital with pneumonia. It is Your body from this moment on. Help Yourself to it.

Thank You, my Lord; I believe You have accepted it, for in Romans 12:1, You said 'acceptable unto God.' Thank You again, my Lord, for taking me. We now belong to each other."