

## **Sloth** 8 Deadly Sins

Usually, when we think of the word “sloth”, images of the furry, slow-moving creature comes to mind. Its appearance and actions are fairly harmless and not intimidating in any way. After careful consideration, sloth (not the animal) is in many ways one of the deadliest of sins because its presence in our lives is often slow and deliberate, and in many instances goes unnoticed until a crisis causes us to wake up.

Key Verse: Proverbs 15:19, “The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway.”

A sluggard is a slothful person.  
Image of a slug-like person is not very pleasant.

### Proverbs References

- Proverbs 21:25-26, “The desire of the sluggard puts him to death, for his hands refuse to work; all day long he is craving, while the righteous gives and does not hold back.”
- Proverbs 22:13, “The sluggard says, ‘There is a lion outside; I will be killed in the streets!’”

### Definitions

Old Testament: `atsel: Adjective – To be sluggish, lazy

“Sloth” is a noun, generally defined as the quality or state of being lazy, Websters

- A deep-set, despairing apathy – Rooting for Rivals definition

Slothfulness appears when we simply do not care enough to take an action. It can show up in our

- Daily work performance, Colossians 3:23 “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”
- Responsibility to care for ourselves and others under our care: 2 Thessalonians 3:10 “For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”
- Spiritual lives

Why is it considered a deceptive sin?

It is a sin of omission vs. commission: There is a lack of doing an action versus taking an action that is against God’s will:

- Police wrongfully shooting a person versus the officer who does nothing to prevent the wrongful action
- Marriage: “Even if a spouse is working 80 hours a week or engaged in incredible service at home or in church, that spouse is in danger of slothfulness if he or she loses the will to fight for his or her marriage. Marriage requires the daily fight against the ‘laziness to love.’” Rooting for Rivals

Reasons for being slothful or apathetic:

- Busyness
- Fatigue
- Past experiences or childhood upbringing
- Too focused on ourselves
- Hopelessness

Christ addresses slothfulness in his teachings

- The Pharisees and scribes: Matthew 23:23-26
- Mary and Martha: Luke 10:38-42
- Christ's warning about His return: Mark 13:33-37
  - Be on the alert.

Apostle Paul tells the church in 1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

John Owen, "The Mortification of Sin" Book: "When we are inadvertent and negligent, where we are bound to watchfulness and carefulness, that inadvertency [lack of attention/ oversight] does not take off from the voluntariness of what we do thereupon; for although men do not choose and resolve to be negligent and inadvertent, yet if they choose the things that will make them so, they [have chosen] inadvertency...."

### Common themes among each "Deadly Sin"

#### *1. Focus is on the self ("I ....")*

- *Pride, Lust, Greed, Gluttony, Envy, Anger, Sloth*

### Strategies for Battling Sloth

1. Don't let excuses keep you from doing the work God has called you to do.
  - I'm too young.
  - I'm too old.
  - No one else is doing it.
  - There's a lion in the streets.
2. Stay with the basics:
  - Pray
  - Read the Bible
  - Meditate on God's word
3. Take a close look at the fruit you are producing.
  - John 15:4-5, 8 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart

from Me you can do nothing.” “By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.

*Prayer: Psalm 139:23-24, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.”*

#### Conclusion

As believers, we are given God’s Spirit which enables us to work for His glory throughout our lifetime. Our reliance on Him will be the only way that we will be able to be fruitful, and to hear Him say, “Well done...”