



Reflections from a sermon on Sloth.



Sunday 20th April. 2008.

- Many think the term simply means **laziness**. Others suggest a term like **despair** or even **spiritual weariness**. It is more than this!
- Sloth is essentially a giving up on life. "I couldn't care less." Is the mantra.
- There is no passion or intensity in living just a numbing paralysis.
- Sloth is beginning to think that satisfaction can never be found and that living is meaningless.
- Sloth is precisely a **lack of passion**, a **settled laziness** that couldn't care less, it is a **dullness** too.
- **Christianity** encourages a passion for life and all that is good and so opposes sloth.
- **The truth is that sloth is an undoing of creation**, a denial of the goodness of the world around us, the world God made.

- Dante describes sloth simply as the **failure to love God** with all one's heart, all one's mind and all one's soul. Our Holy Communion liturgy reminds us (p. 202), each time we use it, that that is the **first and great commandment**.
 - Paul in one of his letters encourages his readers, and us, to “rejoice in the Lord always” – to find our joy in God.
 - Paul is encouraging us to be redirected toward things that foster and feed life, **to the very source of life itself**.
 - Are we **acquiring**, seeking God, deliberately, intentionally, corporately and individually?
 - Overcoming sloth leads to true passion.
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- Sloth is overcome when we learn again what the human race had at the beginning: a simple, uncomplicated enjoyment in the presence and love of God our creator.
 - Are we too busy to desire God?

A review of the 7 deadly sins –

A sentence to think about and to act upon.

Pride – Pride only thinks about me – it is the worship of me, myself, and I. It is a self-righteous, self-sufficient, and self-centered and the only way to overcome it is to **get over you and get under God.**

Envy – to have an evil eye for things you want but don't possess. It rots your reasoning and ruins your relationships. The only way to overcome it is to stop comparing, stop complaining and to **learn to stay content.**

Anger - an emotion that doesn't produce the righteous life God desires. It is fruitless, foolish, and forbidden and **it must be harnessed.**

Gluttony – to be mastered by your appetites. It's perfidy against God, poverty to your life, and poison to your body and to overcome it you must **learn to EAT properly** – Enjoy your blessings – Account to others – Train your bodies.

Lust – an insatiable craving to gratify and satisfy a legitimate God-given desire in an illegitimate way. It destroys your convictions, character, and connections if not contained. **Proper respect for one and all is needed.**

Greed - human desire gone awry. It's consumption out of control. It is when we allow ourselves to be controlled and devoured by some desire for material things. **Learning liberality works.**

Sloth – failing to take advantage of God-given opportunities and abilities. It results in poverty, problems, and pain. Not everyone who is poor is lazy, but everyone who is lazy will become poor. **Desire life, desire God.**

Summary of Sins and Virtues.

Sin	Spiritual discipline	Virtues	Spiritual steps
Pride	Confession & service	Humility	Repentance
Envy	Faith	Contentment	Faith
Anger	Silence	Peace	Forgiveness
Gluttony	Fasting	Temperance	Self-control
Lust	Fellowship	Love	Respect for others
Greed	Sabbath	Generosity	Liberality
Sloth	Worship	Passion	Desiring God

Table from "the seven deadly sins and how to overcome them" by G. Tomlin.