

TRUTH SERIES

VOLUME 3



Laziness

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LAZINESS



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SÃO PAULO – SP – BRAZIL – 2009

I thank the Holy Spirit, who comes to revive us and encourage us to grow always, teaching us to leave aside laziness and self-indulgence, which are great threats to our salvation.

I dedicate this book to the warriors, workers and builders of the Lord, who never give up on their mission. May they receive a large reward.

**“From the days of John the Baptist until now
the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,
and the violent take it by force.”
(Matt. 11: 12)**

INTRODUCTION

Hmm! I'm too lazy to start!

I only hope you don't get lazy to read. I promise to be brief.

Laziness was a subject that I have never thought of writing, but when the Lord gave me this series, right after "*Work*" (volume 2 of this series), the title of this book came to my mind. Surely He has a purpose. Perhaps the people of God come to discover that this work of the flesh is still hidden in their inner and it's time to throw it away. With it in our 'inner closets' (our soul) His work is delayed and we take the risk of seeing destroyed what we have striven so much to build.

It's worth remembering that laziness cannot be confused with rest, peace or inner stillness. The bible says in *Ps. 23: 2*: "He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters." Nothing is so good like God's rest after long battles!

Laziness, on the other hand, is the aversion to work, sluggishness, negligence, indolence, idleness; therefore, contrary to God's Word. We can say that it is part of 'the travel package to sin and death' planned by the serpent in Eden and that, unfortunately, became incorporated by the human flesh, impeding progress, the flow of the Spirit and, still worse, the development of our salvation. The work of emotional release is not possible when there is laziness in the heart of some people. No pastor in the world will solve their problems. So they begin and end their walk the same way: spiritual babies, immature beings who desire always to be fed by others because they have no desire to grow, nor the courage to start the building of their own walls. Bringing down or destroy is easy. Constructing is a slower and hard process that requires readiness, planning and maturity, putting into action the free will of each one.

We can see that laziness is involved with the three major areas of human life: spiritual, emotional and material. It is related to the process of constructing and destroy what we have; prosperity and poverty; the exercise of the authority and the spiritual gifts that have been delegated by God to us.

In fact, laziness is contrary to what we talked in the book about "*Work*", which is the effort we need to make to be like the Creator and fulfill our mission. It takes effort to build projects and material things, to have true prosperity as well as to exercise the spiritual authority that we received from Jesus, expressing properly the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This requires of us training and discipline until the new habit is incorporated. Hence, Paul speaks in *1 Cor. 15: 46*: "But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual." Therefore, if someone is too lazy to follow the usual steps of a Christian, how he can be an anointed servant later? He didn't exercise the Word, he did not sow; there will be no fruit (gifts and spiritual fruit) to be reaped. When certain people understand that this process takes some time to be formed, they start to feel lazy only watching the huge work that needs to be done inside them. So, they give up even before having started the work. When they realize the mistake that was made, may be too late. What must be understood is that a child does not go to sleep at the age of three months and wakes up the next morning with five years. The growth is gradual and natural, directed by the Spirit Himself. Let's allow Him to be our teacher?

I wish you a good reading and a good reflection. I prophesy the boldness of the Holy Spirit in you! Hallelujah!

Tânia Cristina

Notes:

- Words or phrases enclosed in brackets [] or parenthesis (), in *italics*, were placed by me, in most cases, to explain the biblical text, although some verses already contain them [not in italics].
- The version used here is the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV – 1989 (1995)
- NIV = New International Version (it will be used in brackets in some verses to facilitate the readers' understanding).

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To build and destroy

The bible says:

- *Prov. 14: 1*: “The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.”

- *Prov. 15: 19*: “The way of the sluggard is blocked with thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway” [NIV].

- *Prov. 19: 24 (Prov. 26: 15)*: “The lazy person buries a hand in the dish, and will not even bring it back to the mouth.”

- *Prov. 20: 4*: “The lazy person does not plow in season; harvest comes, and there is nothing to be found.”

- *Prov. 21: 25*: “The craving of the lazy person is fatal, for lazy hands refuse to labor.”

- *Prov. 24: 30-34*: “I passed by the field of one who was lazy, by the vineyard of a stupid person; and see, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior” [NIV: “I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgement; thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest – and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man”].

- *Ecc. 10: 18*: “Through sloth the roof sinks in, and through indolence the house leaks.”

- *Ecc. 11: 1-6*: “Send out your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will get it back. Divide your means seven ways, or even eight, for you do not know what disaster may happen on earth. When clouds are full, they empty rain on the earth; whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie. Whoever observes the wind will not sow; and whoever regards the clouds will not reap. Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything. In the morning sow your seed, and at evening do not let your hands be idle; for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.”

- *Hag. 1: 6-11*: “You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and you that earn wages earn wages to put them into a bag with holes. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider how you have fared. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored, says the Lord. You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. ‘Why?’ says the Lord of hosts. ‘Because my house lies in ruins, while all of you hurry off to your own houses. Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew (*answer of prayer*), and the earth has withheld its produce (*material blessings*). And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and animals, and on all their labors.”

- *Hag. 2: 4-9*: “Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, according to the promise

that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.”

As a conclusion to this item, we can say that laziness is linked to the act of building and destroying:

- 1) To build our own spirit from the right mold of God’s word (*our ‘second house’; the former was our ‘old self’ who lived in contact with the world*).
- 2) Good relationships, marriage and healthy family life.
- 3) Dwellings.
- 4) A temple where to do the Lord’s work.
- 5) Profession.
- 6) Ministry.
- 7) Stable financial life
- 8) Good health.
- 9) Self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, respect of people for us and all healthy characteristics of our personality and emotional life.

Reading all the biblical texts above, we can also say that laziness is related to tranquility or suffering, to the sowing in all areas of our life, to a practical action, to aversion to work, to lack of wisdom to act in those situations where we need victory, as in the conjugal and family area, for example.

Prosperity and poverty

- *Prov. 3: 27*: “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.”

- *Prov. 3: 28*: “Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it’- when you have it with you.”

- *Prov. 6: 6-11*: “Go to the ant, you lazybones; consider its ways, and be wise. Without having any chief or officer or ruler, it prepares its food in summer, and gathers its sustenance in harvest. How long will you lay there, O lazybones? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior.”

- *Prov. 10: 4*: “A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.”

- *Prov. 13: 4*: “The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing, while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied.”

- *Prov. 14: 23*: “In all toil there is profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.”

- *Prov. 19: 15*: “Laziness brings on deep sleep; an idle person will suffer hunger”.

- *Prov. 20: 13*: “Do not love sleep [*ignorance, indolence, unawareness*], or else you will come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread.”

- *Prov. 28: 19*: “Anyone who tills the land will have plenty of bread, but one who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.”

As a conclusion to this item, we can say that laziness is linked to our prosperity or our poverty, since they depend on our work, endeavor, dedication and readiness to the sowing. In other words, to use or not the power we have in our hands to bless other lives. Laziness prevents us from helping our neighbors, precisely when we have perfect conditions for this, because it is a carnal and spiritual tie that needs to be powerfully broken. Without our donation to the other, as creatures made after the image and likeness of God we lose the chance to develop spiritually and we are robbed of our opportunity to prosper in the material life. Sowing, surrender and donation were means provided by God to perfect our salvation and to bless us here on earth. It's no use just talking, it is necessary a practical action. For example, if you know that you need to give first to receive later (*Lk. 6: 38*: “give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back”), and stay too lazy to do that cleaning in your closet, which is already waiting for years for this, you are sinning and feeding evil. Someone can be in need of something that you keep there. In few words, laziness prevents us from doing good (for ourselves and for others), therefore, leads us into sin:

- *Jam. 4: 17*: “Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin.”

As result, we impoverish.

We can also say that laziness is linked to physical unconsciousness (the natural sleep) and spiritual unconsciousness (lack of understanding), vagrancy and bad ways. Many do not prosper materially because, instead of improving themselves in what they do and to go to fight, they prefer to spend time with things and people that do not edify. They throw away the precious years of their lives, and when they wake up they have lost the great chances that God put in their ways.

Others lose the chance of developing themselves spiritually and knowing the depth of God's heart because they don't have willpower to separate few minutes of their day

to pray and come into His presence. This also refers to prosperity. Laziness prevents them from learning, growing, to sanctifying themselves and being instruments in God's hands.

Exercise of authority and spiritual gifts

- *Prov. 12: 24*: “The hand of the diligent will rule, while the lazy will be put to forced labor.”

- *Prov. 12: 27*: “The lazy do not roast their game, but the diligent obtain precious wealth.”

As a conclusion to this item, we can say that laziness is related to the fact of not to exercise authority and the gifts received from God.

The spiritual gifts, when exercised, bear fruit, and they will later define God’s call to a ministry. Being diligent (*active, zealous, applied, he who strives*), is actually a gift to be developed by human being because it gives rise to perseverance. The bible says: “And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (*Rom. 5: 3-5*). It is in the time of tribulation, when all seems contrary, that we must be diligent, active, zealous, applied, warriors.

In second place, since the Creation God has delegated His authority to man:

- *Gen. 1: 26*: “Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion (*authority*) over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’”

Jesus came and remembered us:

- *Lk. 10: 19*: “See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you.”

Paul not only reminded us of this (*Rom. 5: 3-5*) as made us to understand that the spiritual authority given by God is ‘conquered in war’; that’s why laziness robs us of it. Who sits down without fighting for his blessings, thinking that they will fall from heaven because demons became nice and let him receive them is completely wrong. To achieve our material blessings we must first break the spiritual barriers, often present in the form of wrong knowledge that make us to ignore the truth and power of God’s word which is generator of the miracles we need:

- *Hos. 4: 6*: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”

- *2 Cor. 10: 3-6*: “Indeed, we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle rose up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ. We are ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.”

- *Eph. 6: 10-12*: “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Therefore, it is written above:

- *Prov. 12: 24*: “The hand of the diligent will rule, while the lazy will be put to forced labor.” This means that who strives, begins to exercise the authority, but who lets

himself be led by laziness, resisting to God's training, will never be able exert it. On the contrary, he will be subjected to the yoke of the enemy.

Epilogue

“My waters flow from my throne and my altar, so that my Body on earth may be blessed and fertile. I have called you to exercise the priesthood I gave you in holiness so that my waters fill you and, through you, my little ones may quench their thirsty and find the true way to seek me. Perfect yourself every day in my presence and, as I did with Abraham, I will make your offspring great and prosperous. As for your calling, don't stop nor share it with the lazy and scoffers but use the authority that I have given you and be my watchman.”