

Speaking to the soul

Laziness

As a door swings back and forth on its hinges, so the lazy person turns over in bed. Proverbs 26:14

The writer of the Proverbs has a great deal to say about laziness, and he is terrified of it. He sees it as the surest route to poverty and, in a society without a welfare state, that could easily spell starvation and even death. Fighting the war against laziness starts at the very beginning of the day when we decide to stop turning over in bed and actually get up! Laziness will try to lure us into its trap if it possibly can.

A Latin proverb says: “As worms breed in a pool of stagnant water, so evil thoughts breed in the mind of the idle.” I don’t believe that there is anything wrong with times of relaxation. The problem that the writer of the Proverbs identifies is that without a clear sense of direction and purpose, evil thoughts can take root and breed. CH Spurgeon, the famous Victorian Baptist preacher, wrote: “Some temptations come to the industrious, but all temptations attack the idle.”

Laziness is clearly something to fear, but I don’t believe that God invites us to sit in judgment on other people’s supposed laziness. I suspect we would all be very good at identifying

laziness in other people, but we can, and should, look at our own lives and ask whether we are being as busy and fruitful as God wants us to be. God certainly isn't calling us to be over-busy and to neglect to have times of relaxation and ease. That would be as destructive as laziness.

If you have a wonderfully comfortable bed then I am delighted for you, but there comes a time when we must leave it behind us and get on with the work God wants us to do.

QUESTION

When are you tempted to be lazy?

PRAYER

Lord God, I thank you for all that you are asking me to do each day. Help me never to miss out on your blessings through being lazy. Amenexcuses. Amen

