

How can we live diligently?

1. Take _____.
2. Do something and don't wait for your _____ to change.

The key thing is to do something, commit ourselves to something ... and break out of the idleness that ... (is) the root of the disease of spiritual apathy.

Graham Tomlin

3. Stop hanging out with _____.
- There's an eagle in me that wants to soar, and there's a hippopotamus in me that wants to wallow in the mud.

Carl Sandburg

The only difference between where you are right now, and where you'll be next year at this same time, are the people you meet and the books you read.

Charles "Tremendous" Jones

Spiritually, are you spending time with and opening your life to sloths or eagles?

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Key: trivial, distractions, distracted, distracted, trivial, shallow, overwhelmed, hardhearted, inventory, feelings, sloths

Tug-of-War

Sloth vs. diligence

He told many stories such as this one: "A farmer went out to plant some seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The plants sprang up quickly, but they soon wilted beneath the hot sun and died because the roots had no nourishment in the shallow soil. Other seeds fell among thorns that shot up and choked out the tender blades. But some seeds fell on fertile soil and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted. Anyone who is willing to hear should listen and understand!"

"Now here is the explanation of the story I told about the farmer sowing grain: The seed that fell on the hard path represents those who hear the Good News about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches the seed away from their hearts. The rocky soil represents those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But like young plants in such soil, their roots don't go very deep. At first they get along fine, but they wilt as soon as they have problems or are persecuted because they believe the word. The thorny ground represents those who hear and accept the Good News, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life and the lure of wealth, so no crop is produced. The good soil represents the hearts of those who truly accept God's message and produce a huge harvest— thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted."

Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 (NLT)



Friendswood
United Methodist Church

Sloth

Sloth takes 2 forms:

A. Pursuing things in life that are _____.

At its core, sloth moves us away from everything that ultimately matters and directs us toward simple distractions. Sloth is not mere laziness. ... Sloth saps our time and emotions through a favorite sports team, a new set of shoes, or obsession over our appearance ... In fact, sloth is best expressed not by a lazy attitude but in zeal over petty matters.

Jeff Cook in *Seven*

The same man who spends so many days and nights in fury and despair at losing some office or at some imaginary affront to his honour is the very one who knows that he is going to lose everything through death but feels neither anxiety nor emotion. It is a monstrous thing to see one and the same heart at once so sensitive to minor things and so strangely insensitive to the greatest.

Blaise Pascal

How do we end up pursuing things in life that are trivial?

1. We are inundated with _____.
2. We like being _____.
3. Our enemy works to keep us _____.

There are ultimately two sins that can keep us from salvation.

1. Pride tells us we don't need help.
2. Sloth tells us we don't need to get help now.

For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

2 Corinthians 6:2

B. We pursue what matters most in a _____ way.

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

Revelation 3:15-16

How do we get to this place?

1. We possess a _____ theology.

Salvation is not just fire insurance for eternity.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Philippians 2:12-13

2. We become _____ with the pressures and problems of our lives.

A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ...

Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

Matthew 13:3-4,7-8

The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

Matthew 13:22

The important task rarely must be done today, or even this week.

The urgent task calls for instant action. The momentary appeal of these tasks seems irresistible But in the light of time's perspective, their deceptive prominence fades; with a sense of loss we recall the vital task we pushed aside. We realize we've become slaves to the tyranny of the urgent.

Charles Hummel in *Tyranny of the Urgent*

3. We become _____.

Let others complain that the age is wicked; my complaint is that it is wretched, for it lacks passion.

Soren Kierkegaard

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

James 1:22-24