



# WEEKLY SERMON

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## “Blessed Assurance”

Every real hymn has its story, if only we could discover it. We know little or nothing of the real origin of many of the best hymns. Their story is shrouded in mystery. Of other hymns, however, much had been brought to light by patient students of hymnology. One such hymn is “**Blessed Assurance.**”

Francis Jane Crosby was born into a family of strong Puritan ancestry in New York on March 24, 1820. As a baby, she had an eye infection which a quack doctor treated by placing hot poultices on her red and inflamed eyelids. The infection did clear up, but scars formed on the eyes, and the baby girl became blind for life. A few months later, Fanny's dad became ill and died. Mercy Crosby, widowed at 21, hired herself out as a maid while Grandmother Eunice Crosby took care of little Fanny.

Grandmother took the education of her little granddaughter on herself and became the girl's eyes, vividly describing the physical world. Grandmother's careful teaching helped develop Fanny's descriptive abilities. But Grandmother also nurtured Fanny's spirit. She read and carefully explained the [Bible](#) to her, and she always emphasized the importance of prayer. When Fanny became depressed because she couldn't learn as other children did, Grandmother taught her to pray to God for knowledge.

In 1834 Fanny learned of the New York Institute for the Blind and knew this was the answer to her prayer for an education. She entered the school when she was twelve and went on to teach there for twenty-three years. She became somewhat of a celebrity at the school and was called upon to write poems for almost every conceivable occasion.

One evening, Fanny's friend and composer Phoebe Palmer Knapp was visiting and played a tune on the piano, asking Fanny what it sounded like. Fanny responded, “**Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!**” Phoebe and Fanny then continued to sing the melody and write the lyrics together.

**Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.**

**Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending, bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.**

Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blest;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Refrain

This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.

In conclusion, here again are two Psalms that contain the words “**SONG**” or “**SING.**”

Psalm 96:1-3, “**O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. (2) Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. (3) Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.**”

Psalm 98:1, “**O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.**”

In **HIS** Amazing Grace,  
*Pastor David Miklas*

# “Character and Laziness”

**INTRODUCTION:** As we continue our study on “Building Godly Christian Character”, let me remind you of our definition of Christian character, which is “the subconscious doing of right or moral excellence with firmness and a consistency for Jesus Christ.” Let me enhance this definition with these statements.

**Character is the inward motivation to do what is right according to the standards of the Word of God.**

**Character consists of the stable and distinctive qualities built into an individual’s life which determines his or her responses, regardless of the circumstances. It is the PREDICTOR OF GOOD BEHAVIOR.**

In Proverbs 21:25-26 we read, “The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.” Did you notice in verse 25 the word “slothful”? The word “sloth” means lazy, and the word “slothful” means laziness.

Let's consider some of the inherent problems in America, the excuses the people make for having the problem when the real problem is slothfulness or laziness.

**Many people will not finish what they start.**

**Many people do not have a job, even though there is not a shortage of employment opportunities.**

**Many people will not live within their means; therefore, they depend on the government (welfare and food stamps) and blame their lack on the economy.**

**Many people will divorce after two years of marriage and place the blame on the immoral times.**

One word will address these excuses and the real reasons behind these problems - **slothfulness or laziness.** Today, because of government programs, we meet lazy people in all walks of life. It is easier to wait by their mailbox to receive a government handout than it is to work a job.

We have a lot of folks who say, **I wish I could**, or **I wish I had**, or **I wish I did**, but when you get right down to it, they appear to be lazy. The following are common symptoms observed in lazy people. Examine yourself, because having just one symptom is placing your life in danger.

**1. The lazy person does not think he is lazy.** Proverbs 26:16 says, “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.” Slothful people are always busy explaining why obstacles keep them from doing their work. The lazy person is always waiting for better working conditions; therefore, he will get the job done tomorrow.

Be careful of obeying statements like, “**Don't work too hard.**” One reason our nation is falling apart is because of the labor unions striking for an honest day's pay. Tell me, what happened to an honest day's work?

Do you find yourself saying: “**I can't find a job today; I'll get one tomorrow; I need a break**”? If you are thinking right now that you are not slothful, you probably are. Will you admit you need character? If you make excuses about not fulfilling duties in your Christian life, you are probably slothful.

**2. The lazy person never gets a task finished.** Proverbs 12:27 says, "The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious." The Bible tells us that the hunter has fun on his hunt, but he won't clean the meat.

To the slothful person, every job is a mountain of horror, not a door of opportunity.

To the slothful person, school is a curse, not an opportunity to learn; he probably won't graduate.

To the slothful person, working for parents is a curse, not an opportunity to prove his love to his parents.

Proverbs 24:30-31 says, "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

In these verses the Bible teaches us that the lazy person had a field, but he did not till the land. Therefore, the field was overgrown with weeds, a harvest was never brought in, and everything went to ruin. What a sad testimony!

Listen, perhaps the most distressful thing I face in the ministry is people who promise to do something, or to participate in a ministry, and they start out doing it, but then either drop off into inconsistency or they just quit. Where does that leave those depending upon them? Out in the cold having to pick up the slack or to curtail the ministry because of laziness.

**3. The lazy person will always need a boss.** Proverbs 12:24 teaches, "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute." The sluggard is not a self-starter; he must have a boss to stand over him. The lazy man's philosophy is that nothing is so important that it cannot be done at another time. Today or now is not important to him.

The slothful man never considers that he must give an account to God for his labor.

The slothful person perceives leaders as negative because they seem to recognize his laziness. (Rarely will a lazy man become a leader.) A trait of the slothful person is complaining. He gripes about inclement weather because it will ruin his playtime. However, the hard worker will find a way to work, even if it is raining.

Someone said this, "The lazy Christian hath a mouth full of complaints, when the active Christian hath a heart full of comforts in meeting people's needs."

Don't marry a lazy person. Don't hire a lazy person. To keep from hiring a lazy person, always seek character references. By all means, don't associate with a lazy person.

Someone with character must oversee the characterless.

**4. A lazy person will ignore the principles of his employer.** Matthew 25:26-28 says, "His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents."

The servant in these verses was lazy. He would not invest the money entrusted to him in the way he knew his master would want him to invest it. The result was that the lazy person lost his opportunity to work with finances.

**5. The lazy person is weak or soft.** Proverbs 6:10-11 teaches, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."

Usually a person becomes lazy gradually. Strong people start making many soft choices and start down the path to slothfulness. Needing just a little more rest or taking a few more minutes on break before starting the project or taking the easy road or doing the easy job takes a hard worker down the path to laziness.

Proverbs 20:4 says, "**The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold, therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.**" The lazy person says, "**I can't go out and prepare the land for winter wheat. It's 45° F. I don't have a heated cab for my tractor. I will wait and plant corn in the spring.**"

The slothful person says, "**I don't want to dig ditches; I'm allergic to shovels.**" Before long, making excuses to cover laziness and choosing the easy way becomes a way of life - a soft, seemingly easy, way.

**6. The lazy person hurts those around him.** Proverbs 18:9 says, "**He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.**" People who associate with a lazy man cannot depend on him. It is usually better to stay away from a lazy person.

Many times when a shiftless person is given a job about which he complains, the boss sometimes tries to accommodate him by changing his work to suit him. However, it is not work that needs to be changed; the worker needs to change.

Proverbs 10:26, "**As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.**" Vinegar sets the teeth on edge; smoke makes the eyes water. That is exactly how the lazy person affects those around him.

Slothful people care about themselves, their wants, and their demands.

**7. A lazy person is not known for his love of others.** Romans 12:9-11 says, "**Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another, Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.**" In the above Scripture, a description of the qualities of a person who loves others is given.

If you truly love others, you will not be slothful in your treatment of them. A lazy person cares only for themselves. For a slothful person to care about others, he would have to stop thinking of himself.

**8. A lazy person leads a life of discomfort.** Proverbs 15:19 says, "**The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.**" A lazy person feels that to work is to be uncomfortable; however, a lazy person eventually discovers that not to work is usually more uncomfortable. By the time that discovery is made, it's too late for the lazy person to mend his ways. The slothful person does not have the knowledge or character to correct his plight.

**9. The lazy only dream of success.** Proverbs 21:25-26 teaches, "**The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.**" Not working gives the lazy person time to dream of all the possessions he wants. Because of his big dreams and not working to fulfill them, he becomes depressed and cannot sleep.

Proverbs 26:14 verifies this: "**As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.**" All his unfulfilled dreams bring depression, no rest, and then no strength for work. He is so lazy that he even gets tired of dreaming and tired from being tired. Most dreams are nightmares to the lazy person, but a man of character will wake up and make the dream a reality.

**10. The lazy person gives no thought for tomorrow.** Proverbs 6:6-7 says, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler."

Lazy people have a I Corinthians 15:32 attitude: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." God made the ant with an instinct to prepare for the off-season. The sluggard does not even have the intelligence of an ant.

**11. The lazy person will not take care of his house.** Ecclesiastes 10:18 says, "By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through."

- Do you fix broken items at home?
- Is your house in good repair? Do you keep the outside painted? Is the lawn nicely landscaped?
- Is the lawn manicured and trimmed?
- Do you help to keep the house of God in good repair?
- When volunteer help is needed, do you offer your services?

**12. The lazy person spends his time with people of like character.** Proverbs 18:9 teaches, "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster." The old saying, "Birds of a feather flock together," is true of lazy people. They attract and are attracted to lazy people, and people who waste - time, food, and money. Someone who wastes his food is someone who probably didn't have to earn it, or if he did earn it, he wasn't diligent in doing so. Because of that lack of diligence, he really has not paid for the food, so he doesn't really appreciate it.

**13. The lazy person believes his own lies and destroys himself.** In Proverbs 22:13 we read, "The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets." The lazy person says, "I'm hungry," but he makes an excuse like, "It's too cold or too hot to work. I can't possibly earn the money to buy some food." He has lied to himself about his laziness for so long that he now believes his lies and destroys himself. The age-old adage is true: "A little hard work never killed anyone."

In today's society, often a little injury gives people the excuse to be placed on the disabled list for the rest of their lives. These lazy people convince themselves to work is to destroy themselves.

Characterless people are not concerned with keeping a good work record. They don't mind even lying to themselves and making excuses for not working. How sad to live a life of laziness!

Have you ever thought why God's power is needed to build character? The problem is found in the experience of the Apostle Paul when he said in Romans 7:14-24. impossible Those who think that they can perfect character qualities or keep the law of God do not understand that it is humanly impossible to do so.

God designed life with continuing impossibilities so that we will be aware of our total dependence upon Him and cry out for His supernatural power. Demonstrating specific character qualities is not possible without a change of heart, and this **REQUIRES** an act of God's **SUPERNATURAL POWER.**

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If God has spoken to your heart, after reading the sermon "Character and Laziness" right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know



Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, “**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**”

Romans 10:13, “**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**”

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **“I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to [pastormiklas@aol.com](mailto:pastormiklas@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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