

Could You Be A Spiritual Terrorist?

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*"He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer." —
Proverbs 18:9*

Could we picture ourselves strapping on a bomb under our coats, walking into a crowded shopping mall, and blowing ourselves to smithereens along with several hundred innocent victims? Could we imagine ourselves as hostage takers, poised with a scimitar to decapitate a helpless prisoner? Could we picture ourselves cowardly donning ski masks and kidnapping women and children to use as human shields to accomplish our sinister objectives?

Most of us would loathe having to perform what these disgusting images portray, yet amazingly, we may have unwittingly brought such a judgment upon ourselves. Proverbs 18:9 reveals that the slothful or lazy man "is a brother to him who is a great destroyer." In other words, the sluggard or lackadaisical person is just as culpable in the act of destruction as one who ignites a car bomb.

The word "destroyer" in this scripture is from the Hebrew *mashchiyth* (Strong's #4889) whose verb, *shachath* (Strong's #7843), denotes "to corrupt, spoil, ruin, mar, destroy." This verb appears 150 times in the Old Testament, and *mashchiyth*, twelve times, including describing the angel of death, "the destroyer," that God sent to devastate Egypt's firstborn (Exodus 12:23).

Sin and evil have an active and a passive component, often referred to as "sins of commission" and "sins of omission." Interestingly, the first two of the capital sins listed in Revelation 21:8, "cowardly" and "unbelieving," are sins of omission calling for execution in the Lake of Fire. Likewise, Jesus warns in Luke 9:61 of the person who begins the conversion process but then reconsiders: "But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God'" (Luke 9:62).

As much as we may think to the contrary, passivity and neglect can destroy as thoroughly as active terrorism or militant aggression.

Consequences of Neglect

Consider the classic consequences of neglect as described in Proverbs 24:30-34:

I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; and there it was, all overgrown with thorns; its surface was covered with nettles; its stone wall was broken down. When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest; so shall your poverty come like a prowler, and your need like an armed man.

Many proverbs refer to the deleterious effects of neglect or passivity involving the sluggard as both the perpetrator and recipient of ruin and waste. It is a perennial theme throughout the wisdom literature of the Bible:

» **Proverbs 15:19:** The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is a highway.

» **Proverbs 12:27:** The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, but diligence is man's precious possession.

» **Ecclesiastes 10:18:** Because of laziness the building decays, and through idleness of hands the house leaks.

In each of these examples, destruction, decay, or corruption are shown to be the cumulative effects of neglect. A modest coat of paint will protect metal and wood surfaces from rust, rot, and the ravages of weather. However, doing nothing will cause structures to decay incrementally, looking as though terrorists had intended to destroy them. Who needs bombs and explosives when the same effect can be accomplished by doing absolutely nothing?

It is a fact that, ultimately, disease and degeneration are products of neglect. Heart disease and diabetes, for example, are often exacerbated by obesity, which has as its contributory causes, inaction and lack of exercise. In his article, "Alzheimer's as a Cost of Passivity and Laziness," Loyd Fueston suggests:

I think there is a strong connection between the decrease in literacy and the increase in Alzheimer's. Most modern human beings don't use their brains actively in the way of farmers or skilled pre-industrial workers. They pretend to a literate style of brain use, but the reality is that most of us use our brains the way a couch-potato uses his lungs and skeletal muscles.

Many so-called "progressive" politicians claim that broken families, drug abuse, and single-family households are caused by poverty. Poverty, though, is not so much an economic condition as it is a twisted state of mind. Peter and Helen Evans, in their article, "Having No Money Doesn't Mean You're Poor," maintain:

There's a difference between simply being "broke" and being "poor." Almost every one of us has been broke at some point in our lives. Sometimes it was an intentional choice, like subsisting on a part time job while going to school. Sometimes it's just bad luck or the consequence of bad choices. Life sometimes has its downs and we adjust; that's broke. But, when we give up trying to better ourselves, that's poor. And lack of money isn't the defining factor of poverty.

The difference between broke and poor is not a new concept. We've known for ages that if someone doesn't work toward something themselves they don't value it. The "greatest generation," who lived through the Depression and went on to win the second World War tried to give their kids everything they had to work hard for themselves. But they couldn't "give" them the values and stamina that made their success possible. That was the difference between the war against Hitler and the "War on Poverty." Just look at the housing projects to see what happens to something given to someone who has the poverty mindset. We've seen the same cycle with many lottery winners or rock stars; suddenly they're rich but, within a short time they're bankrupt.

Dr. D. Paul Reilly in his podcast, "Time to Think: Ghetto Is a 'State of Mind'" suggests that simply moving out of an impoverished area does not upgrade an individual's "success" potential unless the mindset is drastically altered:

. . . many who are born in the "Ghetto" have a most destructive "State of Mind," the type which frequently utters the following pathetic words. "Man, I was born in the 'Ghetto,' so what do you expect me to do with my life?" or "I was born in the 'Ghetto,' and I guess I'll die in the 'Ghetto.' You can't beat 'The System.'" This kind of thinking is of course deadly, and will literally keep a person down for the rest of his or her life.

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, who wrote the powerful, life-changing book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, said: "Change your THINKING and you change your world. Yes, My Friend, the way in which anyone finally gets out of the 'Ghetto,' out of a state of hopelessness and poverty, is by totally overhauling their THINKING."

Take Action!

The history of the children of Israel illustrates that physically emancipating people from slavery does not automatically unshackle their hearts or minds, nor does it prepare them for productive responsibility in a free society. The Israelites oscillated between acquiescing to God's law to complaining, grumbling, and finger-pointing. Unfortunately, they never overcame these faults.

Likewise, our emancipation from sin does not automatically remove our acquired spiritual shackles. We must gradually grow out of the passive, victimized slave mentality into liberty and freedom by committing our lives to the truth. Without this change of mentality, we remain stiff-necked rebels, resisting God's perfect will for us.

Many of Christ's parables condemn passivity and non-action as equivalent to active evil. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), Jesus tacitly condemns the priest and the Levite for their passivity and their refusal to get involved. In the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:24-30), Jesus condemns the lazy, inactive, and neglectful servant:

Then he who had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours." But his lord answered and said to him, "You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), the foolish virgins squander their opportunity to enter the wedding feast (symbolic of the wedding feast of the Lamb) by refusing to

take action and acquiring a reserve of God's Holy Spirit. In the Parable of the Wedding Feast, Jesus condemns the slothful and negligent behavior of an invited guest who refuses to comply with the demand to put on the symbolical garments of righteousness:

But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 22:11-13)

These parables all show a similar fate for neglect and inaction, punctuated by "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Sleeper Cells and Sponsors

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins could have depicted the original "sleeper cells," those groups that aid the enemy by their lethargy and inactivity. A sleeper cell is defined as a group of terrorists called "sleeper agents" that belong to a large terrorist organization. The cell "sleeps" or lies dormant, not acting until told to do so. Before the greater church of God was scattered, sleeper cells weighed it down.

Closely allied to sleeper cells are passive sponsors of terrorism. Daniel Byman, in his October 6, 2004, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Security Studies Seminar address, "Passive Sponsorship of Terrorism," notes, "A regime is guilty of passive sponsorship if it knowingly allows a terrorist group to raise money, enjoy a sanctuary, recruit, or otherwise flourish but does not directly aid the group itself." Byman points out that not only are Iran and Syria on the list of "tacit" supporters of terrorism, but the Saudis have turned a blind eye to al Qaida, Pakistan has offered safe haven to the Taliban, and even certain groups in the United States offered sanctuary and economic and weapons support to the Irish Republican Army.

The greater church of God has been infiltrated with sleeper cells and passive sponsors of terrorism. After our previous fellowship was destroyed by neglect, the cells became active, endorsing the antinomian doctrine of eternal security. This false doctrine sabotages the Christian by making him believe that his salvation is eternally assured, causing him to neglect the very necessary works that strengthen his relationship with God and help him to overcome his sins and grow in character.

Interestingly, the term "sabotage" has the connotation of slowing something down. Communist Walker C. Smith, in his treatise on *Sabotage*, cites the following etymology:

A striking French weaver cast his woden [sic] shoe—called a *sabot*—into the delicate mechanism of the loom upon leaving the mill. The confusion that resulted, acting to the workers' benefit, brought to the front a line of tactics that took the name of SABOTAGE. Slow work is also said to be at the basis of the word, the idea being that wooden shoes are clumsy and so prevent quick action on the part of the workers.

Some who would not even consider bringing a plastic explosive into the workplace think nothing of spending thirty extra minutes around the water cooler or of idling away their time viewing questionable material on the company computer. Are we built-in liabilities—or worse, actual saboteurs—to our employers by just showing up to work?

As we move in our conversion process beyond justification, we dare not slumber, slow down, or do our work with slackness. The eternal security doctrine has been around since the Garden of Eden, but Jesus warns in Matthew 5:19:

Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and *teaches men so*, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Emphasis ours.)

Those who teach that God's law has been done away are spiritual murderers, attempting to destroy for eternity those who have God's Holy Spirit. We have been called to overcome and grow, going through trials and tests, conforming to the image of Christ, meeting the requirements to be members of God's Family to the extent that we discipline ourselves, subduing our carnal natures, and taking on God's characteristics.

Our Quality Enhancement Project

One of the current buzzwords in higher education today is "quality enhancement projects," defined as designing programs to improve public education by improving teacher effectiveness. The sanctification process, with its tests and trials, is similar, enabling God's called-out ones to become priests and kings in God's Kingdom, having developed empathy like our Elder Brother, learning through the things He had suffered (Hebrews 5:8).

In his Harvard Divinity School Address, essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson realized the value of a minister undergoing life's trials in order to teach more effectively, describing one who has not undergone these quality enhancement projects:

He had lived in vain. He had no one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned.

Overcoming is an active process—resisting the Devil, the world, and our own flesh. By piecemeal passive compromise, and by doing absolutely nothing, children of God can sabotage their spiritual futures, allowing proponents of the once-saved, always-saved doctrine to execute a spiritual son or daughter of God—the ultimate act of terrorism.