

## Anger and Sloth

This is the fifth and seventh lessons in the series on the “Seven Deadly Sins.”

The fifth sin is ANGER or WRATH.

The seventh sin is SLOTH.

From the introduction to the series:

**The Seven Deadly Sins never occur as a formal list in the Bible.**

Briefly the “seven deadly sins” are:

Pride is excessive belief in one's own abilities that interferes with the individual's recognition of the grace of God. It has been called the sin from which all others arise. Pride is also known as Vanity.

Envy is the desire for others' traits, status, abilities, or situation.

Gluttony is an inordinate desire to consume more than that which one requires.

Lust is an inordinate craving for the pleasures of the body.

**Anger is manifested in the individual who spurns love and opts instead for fury. It is also known as Wrath.**

Greed is the desire for material wealth or gain, ignoring the realm of the spiritual. It is also called Avarice or Covetousness.

Sloth is the avoidance of physical or spiritual work.

**Where did the “seven deadly sins” originate?**

According to *Sacred Origins of Profound Things*, by Charles Panati, Greek monastic theologian Evagrius of Pontus first drew up a list of eight offenses and wicked human passions. They were, in order of increasing seriousness: gluttony, lust, avarice, sadness, anger, acedia, vainglory, and pride. Evagrius saw the escalating severity as representing increasing fixation with the self, with pride as the most egregious of the sins. Acedia (from the Greek "akedia," or "not to care") denoted "spiritual sloth." In the late 6th century, Pope Gregory the Great reduced the list to seven items, folding vainglory into pride, acedia into sadness, and adding envy. His ranking of the Sins' seriousness was based on the degree from which they offended against love. It was, from most serious to least: pride, envy, anger, sadness, avarice, gluttony, and lust.

Later theologians, including St. Thomas Aquinas, would contradict the notion that the seriousness of the sins could be ranked in this way. The term "covetousness" has historically been used interchangeably with "avarice" in accounts of the Deadly Sins. In the seventeenth century, the Church replaced the vague sin of "sadness" with sloth.

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## ANGER

(an'-ger): In the Old Testament, the translation of several Hebrew words, especially of *'aph* (lit. "nostril," "countenance"), which is used some 45 times of human, 177 times of Divine, anger (Brown-Driver-Briggs' Oxford Hebrew Lexicon). The word occurs rarely in the New Testament (Mark 3:5; Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; Rev 14:10), its place being taken by the word "wrath" (see WRATH). As a translation of words denoting God's "anger," the English word is unfortunate so far as it may seem to imply selfish, malicious or vindictive personal feeling. The anger of God is the response of His holiness to outbreking sin. Particularly when it culminates in action is it rightly called His "wrath." The Old Testament doctrine of God's anger is contained in many passages in the Pentateuch, Psalms and the Prophets. In Proverbs men are dissuaded from anger (Prov 15:1; 27:4), and to be "slow to anger" is commended (15:18; 16:32; 19:11). Christians are enjoined to put away the feeling of self-regarding, vindictive anger (Eph 4:31; Col 3:8), and to cherish no desire of personal revenge (Eph 4:26).

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### Mark 3:1-6

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. <sup>2</sup> And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. <sup>3</sup> And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." <sup>4</sup> And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. <sup>5</sup> And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. <sup>6</sup> The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him. ESV

### Eph 4:25-32

<sup>25</sup> Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. <sup>26</sup> Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil. <sup>28</sup> Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. <sup>29</sup> Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up,

as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.                      **ESV**

Col 3:8

But now you must put them all away: anger\*, wrath\*\*, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

\*anger

NT:3709 ὀργή **orge** (or-gay'); from NT:3713; properly, desire (as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind), i.e. (by analogy,) violent passion (ire, or [justifiable] abhorrence); by implication punishment:

**KJV** - anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath.

\*\*wrath

NT:2372 θυμός **thumos** (thoo-mos'); from NT:2380; passion (as if breathing hard):

**KJV** - fierceness, indignation, wrath.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary.

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Rev 14:9-11

<sup>9</sup> And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, <sup>10</sup> he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."                      **ESV**

Proverbs 15:1

A soft answer turns away wrath,  
but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 27:4

Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming,  
but who can stand before jealousy?

## ANGER

This emotion is rich in Hebrew terminology, being represented by seven words, but by only two in Greek. Because the nose was prominent in the hard breathing that accompanied an increase in blood adrenaline, anger was commonly rendered by the Hebrew word for nose, nostril: 'ap. The intensity of anger was expressed by words such as zaa`ap (to rage), cheemaah (heat, anger), chaaraah (to become angry, hot), `üraah (anger, rage), paa`am (to be irritated, grieved), or qaatsap (to burn with anger). The NT employed thumos to describe emotionally intense wrath and orgee as the consequence of a moral judgment, but in the LXX the two terms were interchangeable.

The anger of God is a deliberate reaction to all that violates his holy nature. His covenant people were commanded to imitate his holiness (Lev 11:44), and when they failed to do so, they felt his anger, whether through natural circumstances (Num 21:6) or other nations (Isa 10:5). Even God's chosen servants sometimes experienced his punishing wrath: Moses (Ex 4:14), Miriam (Num 12:9), Jonah (Jonah 1:4), and others. All violations of the covenant agreement exposed the Israelites to God's anger, which could only be averted by true repentance.

Jesus became angry with his disciples when they forbade children to be brought to him (Mark 10:14) and with the hardhearted member of the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 3:5). Similar expressions of anger were directed at the Sadducees (Mark 12:24-27), the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:13-36), and Peter (Matt 16:23) and on each occasion represented his rejection of unrighteousness. Human anger could be selfish (Gen 4:5; Num 24:10), righteous (Ex 16:20; 2 Sam 12:5), or a combination of both (Gen 34:7; 2 Sam 13:21). In the NT anger is usually condemned (Gal 5:19-21; Col 3:8).

## Sloth

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## **Sloth is the avoidance of physical or spiritual work.**

Ecclesiastes 10:18

Through sloth the roof sinks in,  
and through indolence the house leaks.      ESV

Ecclesiastes 10:18

By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands  
the house droppeth through.      KJV

## **Definition**

**Sloth** is defined as spiritual or emotional **apathy**, neglecting what God has spoken, and being physically and emotionally inactive. Sloth can also indicate a wasting due to lack of use, concerning a person, place, thing, skill, or intangible ideal that would require maintenance, refinement, or support to continue to exist.

### **What is the difference between ignorance and apathy? “I don’t know and I don’t care.”**

Religious views concerning the need for one to work to support society and further God's plan and work also suggest that, through inactivity, one invites the desire to sin. "For Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." ("Against Idleness and Mischief" by Isaac Watts).

In the Philokalia the word dejection is used instead of *sloth*, for the person who falls into dejection will lose interest in life.

## **Laziness in the Bible**

Although, as defined above, sloth is more akin to apathy and inactivity, many English speakers narrow it to mean simple laziness, about which the Bible makes many comments.

Lazy person falls prey to poverty

Ridiculously indolent<sup>[11]</sup> and a lover of sleep,<sup>[12]</sup> the lazy person sees lions all over the street<sup>[3]</sup> (overestimating the difficulty of getting a job or working); his desires "kill" him<sup>[4]</sup> because "his hands refuse whatever to labour",<sup>[5]</sup> and his path becomes a "hedge of thorns"<sup>[6]</sup> ... while he is wiser than seven sensible men in his own eyes.<sup>[7]</sup> .... His household becomes a real ruin<sup>[8]</sup> and he falls prey to his "want" (scarcity) coming like an armed person and in the end to poverty, coming upon him like a robber.<sup>[9]</sup> The sluggard (lazy person) will share this fate with the talkative persons, with dreamers that "watch the wind" or "regard the clouds"<sup>[10]</sup> and with those who "chase fantasies" (follow worthless pursuits).<sup>[11]</sup>

If, however, this lazy person is the type that, eventually, "takes his food to mouth"<sup>[12]</sup> (because there is a type of lazy person who doesn't even take his food to mouth<sup>[13]</sup>) and has a job, he is like "vinegar to the teeth" and "smoke to the eyes" for those who send him with any task.<sup>[14]</sup> If the sluggard is rich, he should avoid getting that lazy insensitiveness of the chief people of Zion, that delight themselves in every way possible, and whom the prophet Amos predicted they would become slaves.<sup>[15]</sup>

The lazy person leaves God's gifts unused

The wicked,<sup>[16][17]</sup> worthless servant,<sup>[18]</sup> that buries his talent in the ground, instead of investing the money with the banker, i.e. one who disregards God's gift, leaving it unused, is also lazy.<sup>[17]</sup> His talent will be taken from him and will be given to the one who has 10 talents and the worthless servant is thrown into the darkness of hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.<sup>[19]</sup> (See the parable of the talents.)<sup>[20]</sup>

The lazy person breaks again the commandments of God

Whoever is lazy (slack) in his work becomes brother to one who destroys<sup>[21]</sup> (meaning The Evil-One, the devil because the devil is murderer<sup>[22]</sup>) for the second time<sup>[23]</sup> He breaks again the command of God, Who sent him to work this time, for not obeying God, Who forbids them to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.<sup>[24]</sup>

The growth of the virtues is the enemy of laziness

The Christian must not become sluggish (lazy), but be a zealous follower of those who "inherit the promises"<sup>[25]</sup> because the growth of the virtues makes the laziness go away.<sup>[26]</sup>

[1]

Prov 19:24

The sluggard buries his hand in the dish  
and will not even bring it back to his mouth.

Prov 26:15

The sluggard buries his hand in the dish;  
it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth.

[2]

Prov 6:9-11

<sup>9</sup> How long will you lie there, O sluggard?  
When will you arise from your sleep?  
<sup>10</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber,  
a little folding of the hands to rest,  
<sup>11</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber,  
and want like an armed man.

Prov 19:15

Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep,  
and an idle person will suffer hunger.

Prov 26:14

As a door turns on its hinges,  
so does a sluggard on his bed.

Prov 24:33-34

<sup>33</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber,  
a little folding of the hands to rest,  
<sup>34</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber,  
and want like an armed man.

[3]

Prov 22:13

The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!  
I shall be killed in the streets!"

[4] [5]

Prov 21:25-26

<sup>25</sup> The desire of the sluggard kills him,  
for his hands refuse to labor.  
<sup>26</sup> All day long he craves and craves,  
but the righteous gives and does not hold back.



[6]

Prov 15:19

The way of a sluggard is like a hedge of thorns,  
but the path of the upright is a level highway.

[7]

Prov 26:16

The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes  
than seven men who can answer sensibly.

[8]

Prov 24:30-31

<sup>30</sup> I passed by the field of a sluggard,  
by the vineyard of a man lacking sense,  
<sup>31</sup> and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns;  
the ground was covered with nettles,  
and its stone wall was broken down.

[9]

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When will you arise from your sleep?  
<sup>10</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber,  
a little folding of the hands to rest,  
<sup>11</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber,  
and want like an armed man.

[10]

Ecccl 11:4

He who observes the wind will not sow,  
and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

[11]

Prov 28:19

Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread,  
but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

[12]

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The sluggard buries his hand in the dish;  
it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth.

[13]

Prov 19:24

The sluggard buries his hand in the dish  
and will not even bring it back to his mouth.

[14]

Prov 10:26

Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,  
so is the sluggard to those who send him.

[15]

Amos 6:1-7

"Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,  
and to those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria,  
the notable men of the first of the nations,  
to whom the house of Israel comes!

<sup>2</sup> Pass over to Calneh, and see,  
and from there go to Hamath the great;  
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.

Are you better than these kingdoms?  
Or is their territory greater than your territory,

<sup>3</sup> O you who put far away the day of disaster  
and bring near the seat of violence?

<sup>4</sup> "Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory  
and stretch themselves out on their couches,  
and eat lambs from the flock  
and calves from the midst of the stall,

<sup>5</sup> who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp  
and like David invent for themselves instruments of music,

<sup>6</sup> who drink wine in bowls  
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,  
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!

<sup>7</sup> Therefore they shall now be the first of those who go into exile,  
and the revelry of those who stretch themselves out shall pass away."

Mina & Talent: weight; a unit of money

[16]

Luke 19:11-27

<sup>11</sup> As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. <sup>12</sup> He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. <sup>13</sup> Calling ten of his servants,\* he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' <sup>14</sup> But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' <sup>15</sup> When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. <sup>16</sup> The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' <sup>17</sup> And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' <sup>18</sup> And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' <sup>19</sup> And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' <sup>20</sup> Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; <sup>21</sup> for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' <sup>22</sup> He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup> Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' <sup>24</sup> And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' <sup>25</sup> And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!' <sup>26</sup> 'I tell you that<sup>z</sup> to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.'"

[17] [18] [19] [20]  
Matt 25:14-30

<sup>14</sup>"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. <sup>15</sup>To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. <sup>17</sup>So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. <sup>18</sup>But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup>Now after a long time the master of those servants came and<sup>x</sup> settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' <sup>21</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>22</sup>And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' <sup>23</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>24</sup>He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' <sup>26</sup>But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed and gather where I scattered no seed? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>30</sup>And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

[21]  
Prov 18:9

Whoever is slack in his work  
is a brother to him who destroys.

[22]  
John 8:44-45

<sup>44</sup>You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.<sup>a</sup> He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

[23]

Prov 18:9

Whoever is slack in his work  
is a brother to him who destroys.

[24]

Genesis 3

[25]

Heb 6:9-12

<sup>9</sup> Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. <sup>10</sup> For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. <sup>11</sup> And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, <sup>12</sup> so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

[26]

2 Peter 1:3-11

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. <sup>8</sup> For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. <sup>11</sup> For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.