



Sloth & Diligence

Look Back

10 Minutes

- In his sermon on Sunday, February 25 on Greed, Pastor Curtis noted Toqueville's observation in the mid-1800s that there was a melancholy in the midst of America's abundance. How relevant is that comment today? What are some remedies to a melancholy based on abundance?
- Discuss these questions raised by Dan Wagner, Director of Worship, in his February 28 Lenten meditation on Charity: How has your life been changed through the liberality of others? What is in my house that I can bring to God? Who will thank God for my generosity?

Read Aloud

Hebrews 6:4-12

Head: Observe the text and the author's main points

15-20 Minutes

1. Hebrews 6:4-8 is a difficult passage because it appears possible that individuals who have shared in Christian community and had a sense of the goodness of God's revelation, may not be true followers of Christ. The Bible is clear that true believers will not lose their salvation (see Hebrews 3:12-14, for example). What are some defining marks of a true believer based on this passage?
2. Hebrews 6:10-12 What are some of the motivations for Christians to be diligent?

3. How is sloth different from laziness and rest? What are busy people who struggle with sloth trying to escape?

Heart: Envision how the text—when applied—might transform your inner life in terms of your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

15–20 Minutes

1. Re-read v. 9-12.
 - a. Notice that the author refers to the readers as “dear friends” (NIV, NLT) or “beloved” (NRSV). What does this term draw out in you?
 - b. How does the author’s encouragement in these verses influence your thoughts about God and yourself? What is the challenge or call to action for you?
2. One message of this passage is that spiritual life is a journey, and those who are faithful to the end will inherit the promises of God. Are the faithful active or passive in their faith? How do you characterize your faith?

Hands: Apply the text by moving from inward reflection to outward action looking for ways to live the text out in our lives to serve others

10 Minutes

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Everyone is complacent in some ways concerning their Christian duties. Discuss with your group ways you have or may be struggling with sloth. What has been helpful to you in this struggle?
- Pray as a group, confessing lack of diligence, and asking God to give you the desire to be more diligent in your faith.

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Be invitational to friends and neighbors during Lent. Go to fpchouston.org/worship/lent for a list of Lenten services and extend an invitation to a friend or neighbor to join you for one or more. For example, bring a friend to a Lenten Midweek service at noon (30 minutes) on Wednesdays through March 20. Then go to lunch together afterwards.
- Ask a FPC covenant partner, a neighbor, or a friend to join you on a short Local Mission Partner Field Trip from 12-1:30 pm on Thursday, March 21 to Star of Hope. SOH is a Christ-centered community dedicated to meeting the needs of homeless men, women, and their children. There are many volunteer opportunities to learn about on the field trip. For more information and to RSVP, contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator, at mweir@fpchouston.org.

Reaching Beyond

- Alpha Prayer Requests:
 - Alpha begins April 11. Pray for seekers to join this Alpha session and for volunteers to help with it. If you can volunteer, contact Emmanuel Paulpeter at epaulpeter@fpchouston.org.
 - Pray for the scheduled post-Alpha Group gathering on March 14.
 - Pray that through Alpha and other Outreach ministries that the Holy Spirit will draw non-believers into a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Where is God calling you to be part of making His kingdom come?