

Ecclesiastes 10:18 *By much slothfulness the building decays; and through idleness of the hands the house drops through.*



Because of laziness the roof caves in, and because of idle hands the house leaks

Many thanks to Brother Ken for his introduction. He has made it clear that there is more at stake than simply maintaining a building, but that the saying speaks of an attitude of mind in general and has

implications as to how the House of God – The Ecclesia is maintained.

The NET translation is in more everyday language: *Because of laziness the roof caves in, and because of idle hands the house leaks.* NET

Inaction and idleness has consequences. Why would there be inaction, if someone can see the roof needs fixing? Because everyone thinks somebody else will do it! Often maintaining a house or building, is not particularly pleasant. Insects hide in the crevasses and holes and cracks. It is dirty work, dusty, and unpleasant. No-one likes to do it really. Let's wait until Somebody else takes charge. Then of course Nobody does it. Human beings are essentially selfish. It is easy to make the excuse that fixing the building is not my responsibility, it is someone else's job. It may be the excuse that I don't know how to do it.

Brother Ken reminded us of what happens in the Ecclesia when everybody looks at somebody else to lead the way, or take the initiative at fixing a problem, the issue gets bigger and bigger, until it is too late. It is better for everyone to take it upon themselves to find

out about the issue personally, and get to grips with it when it is just a small matter.

Anyone can learn how to fix a roof. It isn't difficult. Maybe we don't all have the strength or physical abilities to fix a roof, but we can all make a cup of tea, and help in some small way to support the person who is best qualified to fix the problem. In other words, it is about ownership. If we all live in the house we are all equally responsible, not just think the home owner will do all the fixing. Therefore if a problem in the ecclesia is seen, it up to everyone to make sure they make an effort to contribute to fixing it.

Some people do have a weakness for idleness. Laziness is a habit which is not Godly, and is not the way followers of Jesus Christ should behave. Paul the Apostle warns the ecclesia Romans 12:11 *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;* and again: Colossians 3:23 *And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

A helpful passage is in Ecclesiastes 9:10: *Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you all go.*

Brother Ken mentioned these passages:

Proverbs 20:4 *The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

Proverbs 21:25 *The desire of the slothful kills him; for his hands refuse to labour.*

Proverbs 23:21 *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.*

Proverbs 24:30-31 *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.*

These are very useful references, thanks Brother Ken – they show a pathetic lack of interest in hard work, but these same layabouts, get all resentful when they see others thriving and enjoying the fruits of their labour.

There is a contrast in attitudes seen in the approach to the House of God. David wanted to build God a temple in Jerusalem. But he was told he couldn't because he had been a man of war, and had shed much blood. David did not give up, and sulk and get resentful. He was naturally a hard-working man. He dedicated significant time and effort in getting all the materials ready for that building. He would not rest until he had got everything ready for the next man to build it. See 1 Chronicles 29:2-3. He saw it as his responsibility to do his part, and he wanted to do it. It meant so much to him. On the other hand, at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah at the time of the restoration, there was a considerable body of men, who when obstacles or setbacks came along they saw it as an excuse to down tools, and put their feet up and relax. See Nehemiah 4:9-13.

In recent history, there has been a modern academic theory, which has had a major impact on policing initiatives. It was proposed in 1982 by two psychological scholars – and they called it The Broken Window Theory. It is basically just common sense, but the gist goes that if criminals see a broken window it immediately gives the impression of decay and neglect –(see <https://www.britannica.com/topic/broken-windows-theory>) which means the criminals have a greater chance of getting away with stealing or causing more damage. The theory is applied to all walks of life, where if the simple and straightforward problems are dealt with as soon as possible, more serious issues will not develop later on.

As we have seen the Scriptures got there first. The wisdom of the world is but foolishness to God. Nevertheless if the world can see the wisdom, of preventative maintenance, should not the members of

the Household of God? Diligence and alertness and attention to detail is required.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

The building blocks to repair the house are listed by the Apostle: 2 Peter 1:5-10

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Brother Terry