

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXIV

June 29, 2014

No. 26

A Lion Is In The Streets

(Jerry Fite)

Is this plausible, a lion is roaming the streets and by-ways? My luck, I will be killed by the lurking beast! You know how ferocious a full grown lion can be, don't you? Therefore the prudent decision today is just stay inside, and maybe tomorrow will be a safer day to be out and about.

Such are the thoughts of the lazy person: *“The sluggard saith, ‘There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets’”* (Proverbs 26:13). Again, *“The sluggard saith, ‘There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets’ ”* (Proverbs 22:13).

The lazy imagine all the bad things that can happen related to the task ahead, instead of taking the first step in getting the work done. Vital energy is spent, but no fruitful gain is enjoyed. *“As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the sluggard upon his bed”* (Proverbs 26:14).

“The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns; but the path of the upright is made a highway” (Proverbs 15:19). It is not that the task of accomplishing important things is easy, but too often we create fanciful barriers

out of needed discipline. Consequently we have reasoned ourselves, thinking prudently of course, out of even starting the needed task.

This foolish thought process can occur in seeking the lost. We know Jesus prioritized this work while He lived upon earth. *“For the Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10). We energize our resolve to walk as Jesus walked knowing it is God *“who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth”* (1 Timothy 2:4). We realize the apostles and faithful of the first century are no longer here, and we must hold forth the word of life to those in our time dead in sin (Philippians 2:14-16).

But you know the times we live in is not conducive for walking up and talking to a neighbor about their soul. They might think you are stalking the place for a future break in. Talking distinctively about spiritual matters will probably make them think you are a member of some cult. After all, “religious talk” today only makes people mad. Why should I make my neighbor my enemy? So, we reason ourselves out of offering the greatest

gift our neighbor could ever receive: “eternal life” (Romans 6:23, John 10:10).

Not everyone will accept the message you offer, or graciously receive you as a person. But some will! Why create barriers that are not up yet, and never start the needed task of saving souls in your time. Use your energy wisely in accomplishing the task, not rationalizing away a current opportunity.

Get started! *“I am interested in studying the Bible. Would you be interested in studying with me?”* No, don't toss and turn on your bed thinking of all the negative answers that could possibly arise. Get started! Try different approaches, and find one that works best for you.

I am writing while taking a few days to relax in a cabin on a river. I know an oxygen enriched body is good. But I might be slain by a lion if I venture out doors. In reality, the vigorous walk brought me in close proximity to chickens, deer and turkey. I was not approached by a man-eating lion. I am determined not to be slothful in the more important tasks requiring spiritual discipline. How about you?