

CORINTH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

STUDIES IN PROVERBS

LESSON 7: LAZINESS/SLOTHFULNESS

SCRIPTURE READING:

¹³The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets. ¹⁴As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed. ¹⁵The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth. ¹⁶The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason” (Prov 26:13-16).

INTRODUCTION:

- A. According to the KJV Dictionary, Laziness is defined as slothful, inactive, indolent, idle, sluggish, and spiritual lethargy.**
- B. Avoid the habits and character of the sluggard’s presumptuous life:** He delays beginning a job because he is self-indulgent. “I’m too tired, I’ll do it later” (Prov 6:6-10; 26:14). He delays beginning a job because he is dishonest. “I can’t because ...” (Prov 22:13; 26:3). He delays completing a job because he is lazy (Prov 19:24; 26:15). He defends his inaction because he is proud (Prov 26:16). – (Todd Murray).
- C. In the Parable of the Talents (Matt 25:14-30), Jesus condemned the servant who buried his talent.** Jesus referred to him as “thou wicked and slothful servant” (v. 26). Jesus took his talent from him and gave it to another – A “Good and Faithful Servant” (vv. 20-21, 28).
- D. “Laziness may appear attractive, but work gives satisfaction. Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it. No idleness, No laziness, No procrastination: never put off till tomorrow what you can do today”** (Anonymous).

WORLD’S WAY – WISDOM’S WAY

- **World’s Way** – wrong reaction to life and others.
- **Wisdom’s Way** – Biblical (correct) response to life and others.

WORLD’S WAY

- A. The Sluggard (a habitually lazy person) is a Slacker** (Prov 6:9-11; 24:32-34)
1. The sluggard has the inability to get started. He would rather sleep than work – He seeks a little more sleep.
 2. The sluggard does not have a strong work ethic which causes poverty.
- B. Rest Hinders the Sluggard** (Prov 19:15; 20:13)
- The sluggard loses time and money because he prefers to sleep – waste time. They do nothing profitable or productive with their lives. The sluggard lives dishonestly and deceitfully off of the fruit of the labor of others.

- C. The Sluggard Fails to Stick With a Task to its Conclusion** (Prov 19:24; 26:15).
He is too lazy to lift a finger to feed himself. He prefers that others wait on him. Solomon's Proverb – The sluggard dips his hand in the bowl of food, but is too lazy to draw it out and lift it to his mouth – Too lazy to feed himself (The Conclusion).
- D. The Sluggard is More of a Nuisance than a Help** (Prov 18:9; 10:26)
The sluggard is intentionally destructive. He deliberately wastes and destroys rather than build up and preserve.
- E. The Sluggard is Often Very Offensive** (Prov 26:16)
The sluggard thinks that he has all the answers – He is a know it all. He is self-conceited, believing he knows more than seven men of exceptional intelligence. He is wise in his own eyes.
- “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil” (Prov 3:7).
 - “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise” (Eph 5:15).
- F. The Sluggard is Controlled by Excuses** (Prov 20:4; 22:13; 26:13)
He makes up excuses to avoid work or for not going to work. He is unconcerned about getting the work done or being one of the best workers on the job.
- G. The Sluggard is Full of Advice** (Prov 26:16)
He thinks of himself as a super-genius, knows everything better than anyone, and offers advice on any subject. He will not change his mind – advise – even if shown that it is incorrect.
- H. The Sluggard Talks About and Desires Success** (Prov 13:4; 14:23; 21:25-26)
The sluggard has few desires fulfilled and achieves very little in life. They are not willing to work hard to achieve much.
- “The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing” (Prov 20:4).
 - “The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour” (Prov 21:25).
- I. The Sluggard Wastes God Given Resources and Opportunities** (Prov 10:5; 18:6)
The sluggard does not work and suffers poverty. They do not take advantage of opportunities to be productive in life. They sit back idly and wait for God to drop money or life's necessities in their laps.
- J. The Results and Consequences of Laziness as Ser Forth in Proverbs:**
- 1. Laziness leads to Self-Evidence Ruin** (Prov 24:30-34)
The sluggard who allows his vineyard to be overgrown with thorns will be in ruin (unproductive). The sluggard must work diligently to be successful. He may have the best intentions to work hard but he will face ruin – loss of successful due to lack of hard work.
 - 2. The Sluggard Suffers Poverty and Want** (Prov 12:11; 19:15; 20:4; 24:34)
The sluggard who spends his time in pursuit of worthless pursuits and illegal gains is sure to suffer poverty – his needs will not be met.

3. The Sluggard Loses Independence (Prov 12:24)

The sluggard often loses their independence, livelihood, and freedom. They become slaves to others because they refuse to work or they become indebted to others.

4. The Sluggard Faces Perpetual Frustration of Getting Nowhere (Prov 15:14; 13:4; 14:23)

“... fools feedeth on foolishness.” Therefore, their foolishness sustains them and satisfies their appetites which leads to getting nowhere other than living a life of sin.

- As Believers, we are to have an appetite for God’s Word.
- “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet 2:2).

5. Laziness is an Irritant to the Employer (Prov 10:26; 25:13)

A Sluggard – irresponsible employee – is a constant aggravation to the employer. He is not dependable and lacks good work ethic. His work may have to be checked and rechecked to ensure that it is done correctly.

6. The Sluggard Brings Shame (Prov 10:5)

He sleeps in season and misses the opportunity to have productive crops. This laziness is a disgrace to their families. It also brings shame upon their families because of their poor character.

WISDOM’S WAY

- Be Diligence (Correct Response)
- To be diligence is to make effort, be prompt, be earnest, labor, discharging official duties.

A WISE PERSON

Prov 6:6-8 – “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”

- The wisdom way is to be self-motivated and disciplined. The wisdom way is to be industrious and show initiative. Diligence sees that a job needs to be done and does it without being told by the supervisor. Diligence shows wisdom.

Prov 10:4-5 – “He becometh poor that dealeth with slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.”

- Diligence is often recognized in a promotion. The reputation of being a good worker will lead to others wanting to hire you.

Prov 22:29 – “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.”

- Being diligent, skillful and thoughtful in one’s work is the best way to influence an employer. Diligence is often recognized in a promotion. The reputation of being a good worker will lead to others wanting to hire you.

Prov 13:4 – “The soul of the diligent shall made fat”

- Wisdom is willing to work. Diligence enables a person to be satisfied. Diligence in prayer and Bible Study will lead to a life of dedication to Jesus Christ. Diligence will lead to pleasing God.

SUMMARY OF A WISE PERSON (WISDOM’S WAY FROM PROVERBS)

Laziness is of no benefit. The sluggard views hard work as “that’s not my job.” It’s not listed in my job description” and “I do not get paid enough to do that job.” Laziness is offensive, controlled by excuses, leads to poverty, causes shame, leads to slavery, and hinders the sluggard. Wisdom demands diligence, initiative, self-motivation, and productivity. Hard work done in the will of God according to His plans is success. Hard work will be recognized and rewarded.

Practical Application (including results and consequences):

1. Be diligent, be skillful, be disciplined, be productive, and be thoughtful.
2. Always so the best job that you can – your work is a reflection of you.
3. Remember you are working for the Lord.
4. Take the initiative to do a job – do not wait until asked to do it.
5. Remember God will bless and reward your faithfulness.
6. Be part of the solution rather than part of the problem at work.
7. Do not allow sluggards to influence you to become like them.
8. Loyalty, integrity, honesty, and faithfulness are essential to Biblical work ethics.
9. You will not be paid (money) for all the work that you do – never pursue riches or attempt to find security in money.

KEY VERSE:

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col 3:17).

CONCLUSION:

A. Avoid the consequences of the sluggard's presumptuous life: He suffers unemployment (Prov 10:26; 12:24). He suffers hunger (Prov 19:15; 20:4). He suffers unfulfilled cravings (Prov 13:4; 21:25-26). He suffers unnecessary hindrances (Prov 15:19; 18:9). He suffers sudden, unexpected poverty (Prov 20:13; 24:30-34). – (Todd Murray).

B. There Are No Lazy Ants

According to John Silling, a Purdue University entomologist, the ant is an exemplary worker. “Basically the ant’s entire life, which can range up to seven years, is spent working,” says Silling. “They gather food, bring it back to the nest, and use it for day-to-day meals as well as to store for the winter.”

In addition, the amazing insects can be adept horticulturalists, states the professor. Some species “gather bits of grass or leaves and take them back to their nest. On this organic matter, which is used much like fertilizer, they place tiny mushroom spores and grow them for food.” But ants as dairy-keepers? That’s right. “Some ants get the majority of their food by ‘milking’ aphids or plant lice which are often known as ‘ant cows,’ says the scientist. “The ants sometimes herd the aphids down into the ant nests at night or when it starts to get cool; then when it gets warm again, they herd them back up to the plants.” (Michael P. Green)

- As Believers – **Always be busy about our Father’s Business.**

C. ABC’s of Salvation

- **A – Admit** that you’re a sinner and that you cannot save yourself (Rom 3:23, Eph 2:8-9).
- **B – Believe** that Jesus died on the Cross and rose again for your sins (Rom 5:8, 1 Cor. 15:3-4).
- **C – Confess**/Call on Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior (Rom 10:9-13)



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“... the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa 40:8).