

# Proverbs Series

## Lesson #022

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Dean Bible Ministries

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**Prov. 14:12, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”**

# **Proverbs**

## **Guide for Skillful Living**

DEATH

LIFE

**“Working Wisely”  
Selected Proverbs**

**1. The value of labor is part of the first divine institution, individual responsibility.**

**Gen. 2:1, “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.**

**Gen. 2:2, “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.**

**Gen. 2:3, “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”**

**Gen. 2:15, “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.”**

**2. As a result of sin, part of God's judgment on the human race involves conflict in the area of personal responsibility and labor.**

**Gen. 3:17, “Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it”: Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.**

**Gen. 3:18, “ ‘Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.**

**Gen. 3:19, “ ‘In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.’ ”**

**3. Laziness, in the sense of slothful irresponsibility toward labor, is as much a product of the sin nature as other foolish sins.**

**4. In the New Testament, we learn that Christ reverses the effects of the Fall, thereby restoring labour as meaningful and significant before God (Eph. 6:5–8; 4:28).**

**Eph. 6:5, “Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;**

**Eph. 6:6, “not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,**

**Eph. 6:7, “with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,**

**Eph. 6:8, “knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.”**

**Eph. 4:28, “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”**

# **The Spiritual Value of Diligence**

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**2 Tim. 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”**

**Heb. 4:11, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”**

## **The Spiritual Value of Diligence**

**2 Pet. 1:10, “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;”**

**2 Pet. 3:14, “Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;”**

## **The Spiritual Value of Diligence**

**1 Cor. 15:10, “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”**

**Phil. 2:16, “holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.”**

**Col. 1:29, “To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.”**

# **Characteristics of the Sluggard; The Slothful, Lazy Person**

**1. The sluggard is lazy, irresponsible, slow to work.**

**Prov. 6:6, “Go to the ant, you sluggard!  
Consider her ways and be wise,**

**Prov. 6:7, “Which, having no captain,  
Overseer or ruler,**

**Prov. 6:8, “Provides her supplies in the summer,  
And gathers her food in the harvest.”**

אָזעל (<sup>ʿ</sup>*āṣēl*) **be slow, sluggish, lazy**

**Prov. 24:30, “I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding;**

**Prov. 24:31, “And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down.**

**Prov. 24:32, “When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction:**

**Prov. 24:33, “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest;**

**Prov. 24:34, “So shall your poverty come like a prowler, and your need like an armed man.”**

## **2. The sluggard lacks initiative and drive.**

**Prov. 6:6, “Go to the ant, you sluggard!  
Consider her ways and be wise,**

**Prov. 6:7, “Which, having no captain,  
Overseer or ruler,**

**Prov. 6:8, “Provides her supplies in the summer,  
And gathers her food in the harvest.”**

**Col. 3:22, “Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.”**

**Prov. 22:13, “The lazy man says, ‘There is a lion  
outside!  
I shall be slain in the streets!’ ”**

**3. The sluggard procrastinates, lives for today and makes no preparation for any contingencies in the future.**

**Prov. 20:4, “The lazy man will not plow because of winter; He will beg during harvest and have nothing.”**

**4. The sluggard delights in sleep, entertainment, recreation, and distraction from the responsibilities of life.**

**Prov. 6:9, “How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?”**

**Prov. 6:10, “A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep—**

**Prov. 6:11, “So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.”**

**5. The sluggard is looking for easy money, easy riches.**

**Prov. 28:19, “He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, But he who follows frivolity will have poverty enough!”**

**Prov. 14:23, “In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty.”**

**6. The sluggard produces many destructive, unintended consequences**

**Prov. 18:9, “He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.”**

## **7. God has ordained severe consequences for sluggardliness.**

**Prov. 15:19, “The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway.”**

**Prov. 10:4, “He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich.**

**Prov. 10:5, “He who gathers in summer is a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.”**

## **7. God has ordained severe consequences for sluggardliness.**

**Prov. 20:13, “Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty;”**

**Prov. 19:15, “Laziness casts one into a deep sleep,  
And an idle person will suffer hunger.”**

**Prov. 21:25, “The desire of the lazy man kills him,  
For his hands refuse to labor.”**

**Prov. 13:4, “The soul of a lazy man desires, and has  
nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made  
rich.”**

## **8. Don't provide material aid to sluggards**

**2 Thess. 3:10, "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat."**

**2 Thess. 3:11, "For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies."**

**2 Thess. 3:12, "Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread."**