

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.”**

אָזֵל (*ʿāṣēl*) **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."