

Lesson 8 in PROVERBS: LAZINESS VS. DILIGENCE AND SELF CONTROL



Definitions:

- Laziness—having or showing an unwillingness to work. The fact or quality of encouraging idleness; the fact or quality of being slow-moving or sluggish.
- Sluggard—a person who is habitually inactive or lazy
- The word *sluggard* or *slothful man* is used 17x throughout the book of Proverbs.

Definitions:

- Diligence—constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken; persistent exertion of mind or body.
- Self-discipline—discipline and training of oneself, usually for improvement.



What can we learn from the ant in this passage?

1. She does not require an overseer for her to do her work.
2. She prepares her food at the proper time (summer/harvest).
3. She plans for the future—for winter when there is no food.
4. She works hard and has determination.

The author then contrasts the ant with the sluggard:

1. The sluggard is characterized by excessive sleep / lying around.
2. The sluggard is lazy—doesn't work or does very minimal or shoddy work or hasty work.
3. The sluggard does not plan or prepare for the future.
4. The sluggard is negligent.
5. The sluggard does not consider—even that is too much work!

- For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either (2 Thess. 3:10).
- Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve (Col. 3:23-24).

“When we engage in honorable employment we are cooperating with God in caring for and using His creation. We are helping to provide for ourselves and for others and we are growing in character” (Warren Wiersbe).

The Marks of a Sluggard:

1. She loves to sleep.
2. She is more of a nuisance than a help.
3. She dreams about the things she wants to enjoy but won't work hard enough to earn them.
4. She has a know-it-all attitude.
5. She is good at making excuses.
6. She can be paralyzed by fear.
7. She wastes God-given resources and opportunities.

The Marks of a Diligent Worker:

1. She knows that there is no substitute for hard work (Prov. 10:4 & 14:23).
2. She plans her work and works her plan (Prov. 21:5, 25).
3. God blesses her honest labors.
4. God blesses her diligent labor, so she can be generous (Psalm 37:21).
5. She is careful not to incur debt.
6. Her diligence brings satisfaction to her soul.
7. Her work yields a good reputation and makes her a good example.
8. She is ensured to have provision in rough times.



“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble” (2 Peter 1:10).