



SAMPLE LESSON

revised 11/20/24

Lesson 13

Working Hard? or Hardly Working?

A Study of Diligence and Laziness

Key verse: *"The soul of a sluggard desires and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich." Proverbs 13:4*

Proverbs 14:23 reminds us that "in all work, there is profit." It is a privilege and a blessing to work, whether in the workplace, at home or in ministry. The quality of our work is a reflection of who we are and the truth we proclaim. Christians should work with discipline, diligence and thoughtfulness. We should work as if God is our supervisor. As you study diligence and laziness, allow God to show you areas where you may be falling short.

The three words translated "sluggard," "slothful," and "lazy" all carry the idea of being lazy, idle, slack, and faint. "Diligent" can mean "to cut or sharpen" and describes the kind of worker who is sharp, decisive, disciplined and determined. It implies a faithful, persevering worker who pursues excellence and quality.

1. Describe the lazy and the diligent worker in the following table:

Verse	Lazy	Diligent
10:4-5		
12:11		
12:24		
12:27		
13:4		
21:25-26		

2. The sluggard is described with some vivid examples in Proverbs 19:24 and Proverbs 26:14-15. Describe a lazy person in your own words.
3. The lazy man neglects to care for what he has. Proverbs 24:30-32 tells us about the vineyard of the lazy or slothful man.
 - a. What was the condition of the lazy man's field and fence?
 - b. What caused it to be in that condition? Whose fault was it?
4. Proverbs 18:9 says the one who is slothful in his work is related to the great destroyer (waster). What does a lazy man waste or ruin?
5. Read Proverbs 6:6-11. The ant can teach the sluggard a lesson. How does the way of an ant differ from those of a sluggard?
6. The sluggard is full of excuses as to why he can't do what is expected of him. Draw a line from the verse to the excuse that is very similar.

Proverbs 10:5	"It's too hot to do anything today!"
Proverbs 12:11	There's no good reason to do that that I can see.
Proverbs 20:4	"I'd like to do it, but I'm just too tired!"
Proverbs 22:13	"This is a formidable project. It may just eat me alive!"
Proverbs 26:16	I don't have time tonight--I have a date with some friends.

7. Look up a few of the following verses and explain the possible results of being slothful (some are in the table above):
 - a. Proverbs 12:24
 - b. Proverbs 13:4
 - c. Proverbs 19:15
 - d. Proverbs 20:13,
8. Proverbs 15:19 says that “the way of the slothful man is as a hedge of thorns.” What does that verse imply about the life of a slothful man (consider a man trying to make his way through a hedge of thorns)? Would his slothfulness have an impact on anyone else around him?
9. Read Proverbs 10:26. Smoke and vinegar are irritating and can even cause pain. What is this verse saying?
10. What do Proverbs 12:27b and Proverbs 16:3 tell us about our work?
11. How can Proverbs 13:4 be applied to our walk with the Lord?
12. What do you learn about the diligent man from the following verses?
 - a. Proverbs 12:14b
 - b. Proverbs 21:5a
 - c. Proverbs 27:23-27

13. In question 5, we looked at the example of the ant (Proverbs 6:6-8). What is the ant's reward?

14. How does diligent work pay off? (See Proverbs 12:24 and 22:29)

15. Considering your own "work" whether it is outside or inside the home, what have you learned from this lesson that you can apply?

- a. What are some practical ways that you can demonstrate diligence as you pursue the tasks in front of you?
- b. Do you see yourself in some of the sluggard's excuses?



Confirmation from Scripture:

What does Colossians 3:23-24 say about work? How should we do our work?

Proverbs challenge:

Read Proverbs chapter(s) 8-10. Choose a proverb to study and discuss.

*"The world is full of willing people: some willing to work
and the rest willing to let them." (Robert Frost)*