

The Foolishness of Laziness
Proverbs 6:6-11
September 13, 2015

Introduction

We are back to **Proverbs 6** where Solomon has written lessons of folly. At first glance, it seems that his lessons are random and are not related to each other. As we learned last week, when we look at it closely, we notice that these four lessons are indeed related to one another. We learned that these are lessons of increasingly worse situations that equate to increasingly worse spiritual conditions of each person, going from bad to worst. The first lesson was about a possible situation that a son makes himself responsible for another person's debt through a promise. This is a bad situation that the son needs to get out of at all cost. Looking closely, we learned that this is a situation that we are all in as sinners—we all owe a debt to God that cannot be repaid on our own.

For this next section of **Proverbs 6 (verses 6-11)**, Solomon shifts his focus on the sluggard, or a lazy person. This is the first time in Proverbs that Solomon talks about the sluggard. When he does, it is not flattering. Interestingly, he does something different with the sluggard that he has not done before with his son. He does not tell the sluggard to hear his wisdom, but rather he tells the sluggard to look at a dumb bug and learn from it. In other words, this dumb bug is smarter than the sluggard! He appeals to the sluggard to learn from the ant and gain wisdom. This person is in a much worse position than the one in **verses 1-5**. The sluggard is heading for ruin and he doesn't even know it. Solomon is urging the sluggard to change before it is too late.

I. A Dumb Bug Teaches Us a Lesson (6-8)

- Ant
 - There are harvester ants—common in Israel
 - They gather grain in the summer to eat during the cool weather
 - Solomon tells the sluggard to look at the ant
 - Study it
 - Learn from it
 - Apply to yourself what you learn from it
 - This bug is smarter than you right now (to the sluggard)
 - The ant's methods
 - No leader
 - No one is telling the ant what to do or guiding it to do what it needs to do
 - They are doing things that needs to be done
 - Gather now for the future
- Sluggard
 - What is in a name?
 - Lazy bum, idler, slacker
 - This is not a person who cannot work (ie disabled or elderly)
 - This is a person what won't work
 - The Bible does not speak good things about the sluggard
 - Sluggard's character
 - Not a self-starter
 - He is in bed
 - Does not do anything to get himself out of bed
 - Do it later is his words
 - Not proactive (plan, think, or do things ahead of time)

***Proverbs 20:4** A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing.*

- Modern day: A sluggard does not set his alarm to get up on time for work frequently, and then he shows up on payday for the check
- He does not plan ahead to protect himself or his family
- Does not finish things

Proverbs 12:27a *The lazy man does not roast his game,*

Proverbs 19:24 *The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he will not even bring it back to his mouth!*

Proverbs 26:15 *The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.*

- Makes excuses

Proverbs 22:13 *The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!" or, "I will be murdered in the streets!"*

- Dissatisfied

Proverbs 13:4 *The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.*

- Life's a mess

Proverbs 15:19 *The way of the sluggard is blocked with thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway*

Clarification: Solomon is not addressing the sluggard on a Sabbath—the day of rest. God has given us a model of rest through Sabbath. Solomon is addressing the man during the work day when he is not working but in bed.

II. Be Lazy, Be Ruined (9-11)

- Get up!
 - How long?
 - Question implies that the sluggard has been in bed for a while
 - When will you get up?
 - Solomon is actually telling the sluggard to get up
 - He is trying to shame the sluggard into action
 - Answer
 - There is no immediate action from the sluggard
 - He answers with a little more sleep
 - Later, I'll do it later
 - Everything is put off
- You're ruined
 - You have lost everything
 - You become like a vagabond—a beggar with no home, little clothes, and no food
 - It will be sudden—like an armed man upon a sleeping victim
 - Total destitution is what happens to the sluggard
 - Solomon is warning the sluggard of his end if he continues to live like that
 - Note the urgency and care
- Lesson
 - God has given us today for tomorrow
 - Save, prepare, plan ahead
 - When we are lazy we are wasting time and hope for tomorrow

- God has given us work

Genesis 2:15 *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*

- After the Fall, our work is cursed with drudgery and exhaustion

Genesis 3:17-19a *To Adam He said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. **18** It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **19** By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground.*

- As Christians, this is our responsibility to work

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. **7** For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, **8** nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. **9** We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. **10** For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." **11** We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. **12** Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. **13** And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. **14** If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. **15** Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.*

III. Digging Deeper

- Spiritual laziness
 - Laziness is a spiritual condition
 - Putting everything off until later
 - Today is the day to get things done
 - Today is the day of salvation

2 Corinthians 6:2b *I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.*

Hebrews 4:7 *Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later He spoke through David, as was said before: "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."*

- People make excuses
- Not now, later, I'm not ready
- Like Solomon's question—How long?
- Salvation is only for today—tomorrow is too late
- Tomorrow is death