



PROVERBS

Wisdom For Work

August 4, 2024

1. What are the biblical basics of work?

A. God is a worker.

And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. Genesis 2:2–3 (ESV)

B. God created us to work.

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Genesis 2:15 (ESV)

C. Sin made work difficult and painful.

And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.’” Genesis 3:17–19 (ESV)

2. What does Proverbs teach us about laziness?

Sluggardliness can be more than a negative character trait. It can be rooted in a sinful rejection of our biblical call to work.

A. A sluggard doesn't maintain their possessions.

I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man lacking sense, and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. Proverbs 24:30–32 (ESV)

B. A sluggard pursues rest instead of work.

How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. Proverbs 6:6–11 (ESV)

C. A sluggard sees even a blessing as hard work.

The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth. Proverbs 26:15 (ESV)

D. A sluggard doesn't take the time to eat healthy.

Whoever is slothful will not roast his game, ... Proverbs 12:27 (ESV)

E. A sluggard always has an excuse for why they can not work.

The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be killed in the streets!" Proverbs 22:13 (ESV)

F. A sluggard doesn't prepare for the future.

The sluggard does not plow in the autumn; he will seek at harvest and have nothing. Proverbs 20:4 (ESV)

G. A sluggard lacks initiative.

Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. Proverbs 6:6–8 (ESV)

H. A sluggard is all talk but no action.

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty. Proverbs 14:23 (ESV)

I. A sluggard will experience a hard life.

The way of a sluggard is like a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is a level highway. Proverbs 15:19 (ESV)

3. What does Proverbs teach us about diligence?

Diligence means exercising excellence and perseverance in our work.

A. Diligence leads to financial success.

A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. Proverbs 10:4 (ESV)

B. Diligence leads to positions of leadership.

The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor. Proverbs 12:24 (ESV)

C. Diligence opens doors of opportunity.

Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men. Proverbs 22:29 (ESV)

D. Diligence leads to eternal rewards.

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. Colossians 3:23–24 (ESV)

Life Group Questions

1. **Read Genesis 2:2-3, 15 and 3:17-19.** Why is it important to understand that God is a worker, and he created us to work? How has sin changed our experience of work?
2. **Read Proverbs 24:30-32 and 6:6-11.** What is the relationship between rest and work? When is resting a good thing, and when is it a sign of laziness and a sinful avoidance of work?
3. **Read Proverbs 12:27.** Not taking the time to eat healthy and prepare our food might indicate laziness is creeping into our world. While quick and cheap food isn't wrong, has this become a possible area of laziness in your life?
4. **Read Proverbs 6:6-11.** A diligent person is known for their initiative. In what areas of life are you known for taking initiative? In what areas of life is a lack of self-motivation creeping into your world?
5. **Read Colossians 3:23-24.** Diligence is performing our work with excellence over a long period of time. Diligence leads to financial success and leadership positions, plus it opens doors of opportunity. Most important of all is it leads to eternal rewards. How does remembering that we are working for an audience of one in everything we do help us maintain diligence?