

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 6:6-11

6 Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.

7 Without having any chief, officer, or ruler,

8 she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.

9 How long will you lie there, O sluggard?

When will you arise from your sleep?

10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,


11 and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 6:6-11

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Since I was a child, I have been fascinated with red ants. I would watch them as they worked, and I marveled at their tiny ecosystem. Each member has a role where there is teamwork, drive, and problem solving skills. When something is placed as a detour in their path, they work hard to solve how to remove the obstacle or go around it to get back on the path. They work diligently without being told or reporting back for next steps. There is order and structure, strength in numbers, and unity amongst the entire colony. As we reflect on the ant and stand in awe of God's intricate design we have much to learn.

The generation we are raising our children in is quite opposite of the ways of the ant. As a teacher, I have seen a shift in children's responses to many things. Students desire to have a quick fix, using artificial intelligence to give them the answer or solution. There is also lack of curiosity and problem-solving skills due to the complacency of slothfulness. Today when you give a child a box of random items to be creative with, they will choose to use the internet to tell them what they should do with it instead of allowing their imagination to take over. As innocent as it may seem to have a quick digital tutorial session, it is a disservice to us when we experience hardships in life. We are told in the book of James to "consider it a pure joy when you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your



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faith produces perseverance" (James 1:2). We are instructed to remain active and have tenacity to keep seeking the Lord when there are obstacles within the path we are traveling, rather than looking to the world for satisfaction and guidance. "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). We will face obstacles just like the ant does, but it is how we respond that guides our direction. The Lord's word is our guide, a lamp to our feet and light for our path (Psalms 119:105). It would be easy to run to the internet for instruction on how to solve any issue we have such as a struggling marriage, parenting problems, and financial hardship. However, we have God's word, his Spirit, and his people to help us.

The side effect from the shift of quick fixes is affecting the workforce. Hard work is on a decline, and apathy is on the rise. We have a generation that would rather use a controller than pick up a shovel. What would happen if an ant colony decided it wasn't going to work because things were too hard, or they were just looking out for their own interest? The whole colony would perish. In the text of Proverbs we are warned against folly and to consider the ways of the ant. "Do everything without grumbling or arguing so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation" (Philippians 2:14-15). When asked to do something, do it cheerfully, with zeal and with determination. "And whatever you do whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17).

We are warned about giving into temptation of slothfulness. We have to fight for the remnant and train up our children. "Be careful, then, how you live- not unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

Questions:

1. As we learn from the ant, how have you been wise and prudent with your time and resources?
2. Proverbs 6:6-11 gives us a picture of a slothful person being admonished by using the example of an ant to compare themselves too. In what areas of your life have you been slothful?
3. As we see this next generation growing quickly in instant gratification, a quick fix, and lack of imagination, it's our job to remind them how to work hard with their hands and to be prudent with their time, talent, and resources. What is your next step in this?