

**TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS**  
**CLASS NOTES, SPRING QUARTER**  
**MARCH-MAY 2017**  
**AUDITORIUM CLASS**  
**CASSEL HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**LESSON SIX. DILIGENCE AND PREPARATION VERSUS LAZINESS:**  
Proverbs 6:6-11, 19:15, 24:30-34; 12:11, 24, 28:19; and 10:4-5, 18:9, 21:25-26

## **INTRODUCTION**

A furniture store drew shoppers to a big sale by offering a free recliner to the laziest attendee. "Will all lazy folk come forward?" the organizer asked. One man did not budge. When asked why not, he yawned, "Too much trouble." He was instantly declared the winner.

**Read Proverbs 6:6-11.** This is the basic text for today's study and I want you to understand that two aspects of being diligent are included, as stated in verse 8. One aspect is the need to be workers that are diligent and industrious; whether in the physical or spiritual realm. The second aspect is to be prepared for the future, both physically and spiritually. An additional aspect of this subject is *not* to go to the other extreme and become a workaholic. So, those are the three points that I hope to cover this morning.

**1. First aspect: Be a worker, don't be lazy (or sluggish or slothful, which carry the idea of being slow to respond)!**

Reminds me of the husband who enjoyed doing as little as possible. He ignored his wife's not-so-subtle hints about completing certain jobs around the house, but he didn't realize how much this bothered her until the clothes dryer refused to work, the iron shorted and the sewing machine motor burned out in the middle of a seam. The final straw came when she plugged in the vacuum cleaner and nothing happened. She looked so stricken that the husband had to offer some consolation. "That's okay, honey," he said. "You still have me." She looked at him with anger in her eyes. "Yes," she replied, "but you don't work either!"

God's creation shows us that our Creator intended for man to work, and not be lazy. His efforts would need to be intensified after his sin in the garden, but even before the fall; man was expected to work: **Genesis 2:15** "Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." And even when we get to heaven, God will have work for us to do: **Read Revelation 22:1-3 emphasizing the last phrase of verse three..."and His bond-servants shall serve Him."**

*Do you agree that our natural inclination is to work? Why are some people lazy?* Personally, I believe that Genesis 2:15 teaches that God put it in man to work. To be lazy is sinful. See **Matthew 25:26** where Jesus called the one talent man “wicked and slothful (lazy); **Romans 12:11** “not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit”, **Hebrews 6:11-12** “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises”. People are lazy for various reasons: 1. Easier to let others do the work and man often takes the easier road. 2. Some want something for nothing. 3. Some have learned by example.

*What is our spiritual inclination, to work or be lazy, bearing fruit or indifferent and a pew warmer?* Does not your answer depend upon your commitment to and love for Christ? In every congregation, the 20/80 formula is evident: 20% of the people do 80% of the work. This is one principle that the elders are always trying to change. If the majority of the congregation got involved in the ministry, members wouldn't get burned out so often. This is the reason for our ministry fair each year.

*If you're not actively involved in the work of the congregation here, I would ask you the rhetorical question of why not?* Even if your age or health limits your participation, you can still do something: write cards, call people, etc.

Look at what happens to the lazy person's possessions: **Read Proverbs 24:30-34**. A lazy person doesn't take care of his possessions. He doesn't want to put forth the effort.

*Can we interpret these verses in a spiritual sense to see what happens when we don't continue to grow and mature as Christians? What happens to our faith and spiritual life?* We become weak and apathetic; perhaps even lose our faith.

## **2. Second aspect: Be prepared! Proverbs 10:4-5.**

Maybe you've heard the story of the old-time preacher who had prepared his horse to carry him from town to town as he preached in various churches on a circuit. If so, please humor me. Anyway, this preacher taught his horse to go when he said, "Praise the Lord," and to stop when he said, "Amen." The preacher mounted the horse, said, "Praise the Lord" and went for a ride. When he wanted to stop for lunch, he said, "Amen." He took off again, saying, "Praise the Lord." The horse started going towards a cliff. The preacher got excited and said, "Whoa!" but the horse kept going. Then he remembered and

said, "Amen," and the horse stopped at the very edge of the cliff. The preacher was so relieved and grateful that he looked up to heaven and said, "Praise the Lord!"

*Did Jesus teach the necessity of being prepared?*

Absolutely! Consider the Parable of the ten virgins in **Matthew 25:1-13**. Also consider **Luke 12:35-40**. Could read further in chapter 12, but these verses are enough.

Definitely Jesus warns us to be prepared for his coming or our death...whichever comes first.

The term "prepper" refers to those people who believe that they need to prepare for any kind of tragedy that could happen...loss of power, tornado, terrorist attack, home invasion, etc. There are all kinds of preppers, from the high to low level.

*Are you a prepper?* All Christians are preppers...preparing for eternity.

### **3. Don't be a workaholic!**

A workaholic is someone who has an obsessive need to work constantly. Jesus doesn't want us to be like this. The institution of the sabbath day of rest shows that God intended for us to rest and renew our body and spirit. Jesus told his disciples to come away to rest from their labors. Even our souls need rest. See **Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 6:30-31; Matthew 11:28-30**.

*We need to balance the need to work and the need to rest. Is it possible to be a workaholic for the Lord...neglecting other important matters?* Yes, it is. Rest is just one of the possibilities that we might neglect, not to mention other responsibilities that Jesus wants us to fulfill. The story of Mary and Martha in **Luke 10:38-42** shows us this. What about the notorious preacher kids...where a minister's family is neglected?

Additional questions:

*Proverbs 19:15 tells us that laziness casts into a deep sleep. In what way is this true?* Laziness causes a person to not be productive, not getting things done; as if he were sleeping.

*What lessons can be learned from Proverbs 12:11 and 28:19?*

We need to pursue productive labor rather than waste our time following after worthless pursuits. *What would be some modern day "worthless pursuits"?* Too much time watching television, spending too much time on our smart phones or social media, gambling/lottery.

*In what sense is Proverbs 18:9 true?*

If we are lazy and don't engage in productive labor, that which we are responsible for will fall into disrepair...as if someone destroyed it. Two ways to destroy something. Either attack it directly or not maintain it. This is true both physically and spiritually.

*According to Proverbs 21:25-26, a righteous man is the opposite of a lazy man? How is this true? Diligence is characteristic of the righteous (Proverbs 11:27), therefore he labors to produce and has the resources to share with others.*