

## The curse of laziness

Prov. 6:6-11 (MSG) *You lazy fool, look at an ant. Watch it closely; let it teach you a thing or two. Nobody has to tell it what to do. All summer it stores up food; at harvest it stockpiles provisions. So how long are you going to laze around doing nothing? How long before you get out of bed? A nap here, a nap there, a day off here, a day off there, sit back, take it easy—do you know what comes next? Just this: You can look forward to a dirt-poor life, poverty your permanent houseguest!*

**Intro:** I read where this classified ad ran in the San Francisco Chronicle. Under "Help Wanted" it said: Executive age 22-60. Job entails sitting with feet on desk from 10 am to 4:30 pm watching others work. Must be willing to play golf every other afternoon. Salary starts at \$2,000 a week. *Then there was this footnote: We don't really have this job open. We just thought you'd like to see in print what everybody is applying for.*

**A man by the name of Sam Ewing once said,** "Hard work spotlights the character of people. Some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all." In those few words, Mr. Ewing sums up a great deal of truth that most of us believe: hard work is the product of people with good character. And most of us pride ourselves at working hard at whatever occupation we have chosen as our livelihood. Even most retired people seem to find plenty to do.

But there are some people that you and I both know who work hard at avoiding work. They seem to get by without having the aggravation of a job, and between our tax money and their excuses, they have a life of relative ease. *I'm not talking about those who cannot work, but those who will not work.*

Eleanor Roosevelt once said "So much attention is paid to the aggressive sins, such as violence and cruelty and greed with all their tragic effects, that too little attention is paid to the passive sins, such as apathy and laziness, which in the long run can have a more devastating and destructive effect upon society than the others."

Someone by the name of Hale said it this way "Laziness grows on people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in iron chains." I have my spells of laziness but I can't imagine not having any drive or ambition to accomplish anything, and having the desire to always engage only in passive activities, always being a spectator, never acting.

Laziness, in many cases, leads to poor health, low self-esteem, lack of hope, and low self-confidence, among other things. It also robs a person of a sense of accomplishment, a sense of self-worth, and self-development. Now I recognize that some people suffer from diseases or illnesses, many undiagnosed, that may deprive them of energy and make it seem as if they're being lazy.

But that is for people who, like I said earlier, can't work, *not for those who won't work*. Today, I want to look at this issue of laziness, or people who **won't work**, because it is getting more entrenched in our society with each passing day.

## I. Definition of a sluggard or lazy person

The origin of that word is from about c.1386 (implied in sluggardly), sluggi "sluggish, indolent," probably from a Scand. word, also meaning a "heavy, slow person." In other words an idle, slothful person, or one who is disinclined to work or exertion. Or someone who is averse to activity, effort, or movement

## II. Tools used by the lazy person

Here I see at least three of them: the first is

### A. **Sunglasses that are too dark.**

This results in not being able to see the things that need to be done. In other words if I don't see anything that needs done, then I don't have to do anything. Or maybe it is won't see instead of don't see!!

### B. **A second tool is excuses.**

Listen to the pitiful excuse the sluggard sets forth in Proverbs 22:13 *The lazy person is full of excuses, saying, "If I go outside, I might meet a lion in the street and be killed!"* **Think of it like this:** If all the crutches in the world were laid end to end, there still wouldn't be enough for all the lame excuses people have. What are some of the excuses that you have heard? One I hear often is **I didn't have time** BUT they have time to watch TV, visit, sit and look out the window, play video games, and other things that fritter away their time .

### C. **A third tool is procrastination**

They always put things off until the last minute. They never finish anything they start but find every excuse for not continuing with any project. They blame everyone and everything else for their own failure to accomplish anything rather than to admit that they are lazy. They are terrible planners, in fact, they don't plan for anything. They just live from second to second, reacting to whatever comes instead of attempting to change things before they happen.

Someone said it this way though, the lazier the man, the more he plans for tomorrow.  
Have you ever heard of the "The Procrastinator's Poem": It goes like this

I've gone for a drink and sharpened my pencils,  
Searched through my desk for forgotten utensils.  
I reset my watch, I adjusted my chair,  
I've loosened my tie and straightened my hair.  
I filled my pen and tested the blotter.  
And gone for another drink of water.  
Adjusted the calendar, and raised the blind.  
And I've sorted erasers of all different kinds.  
Now down to work I can finally sit.  
Oops, too late, it's time to quit.

Procrastination is not your choice for the disease of laziness is it?

III. Where it often starts

**Sadly, I think it is in the home.**

I believe that many children become undisciplined and lazy because parents are too lazy to do the hard work associated with nurturing them properly in the ways of responsible living. Take a simple issue like getting children to straighten their rooms and make their beds, or putting their backpacks and clothes away.

Some parents give up on telling the kids to do this - because they don't listen anyway. They say it is easier to do it themselves. Such parents are actually being lazy without maybe even realizing it. Isn't it true that by their own admission, they are taking the easy route. *And isn't it also true that lazy people take the easy path* parents who do not keep at the task of requiring their children to do what is expected of them - whether it be homework, housework, yard-work, or whatever - are being lazy.

**Lets think about music for another possible example:** Some parents complain about the kind of music their teenagers listen to. Yet, in most cases, teenagers get to listen to what they want because their parents are possibly too lazy to do anything about it. To ask what CDs are being purchased, to listen to the songs that are being downloaded etc. And to discuss the value of the music requires more time and effort than most parents are willing to expend.

**The same thing happens** with TV programs and video and computer games - parents often are too lazy to check them out ahead of time. I will admit that it is true that some parents are too restrictive. However, in most cases today, I would suggest that the problems of

youth are not related to parents demanding too much, but rather of parents demanding too little - all because they are too lazy to do the work of dealing with it, or maybe fearful of their kids responses, so they don't expect too much.

I am not asking you to agree or disagree but I am asking you to think about and evaluate your own family situation and answer for yourselves ( about yourselves. )

IV. The results of laziness There are several First,

A. Laziness brings poverty and insufficiency

*Prov. 20:4 - A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing.* James says you have not because you ask not. But the lazy person has not because he **works not**. All research seems to point out that no one ever drowned in sweat?

B. Laziness brings disgrace

*Prov. 10:4-5 - Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.*

Think of the disgrace of a farmer whose crops are still in the field in the spring? I've always loved the farmer but I have a hard time feeling sorry for the one who does not have the gumption to get his crops off. How about you?? Or what about the person whose home is disgraceful because of lawn not mowed, junk not cleared up, and, well you know what I mean

C. Lazy men irritate those whom they work for

Prov. 10:26 in the NLT actually says it this way: *Lazy people are a pain to their employer. They are like smoke in the eyes or vinegar that sets the teeth on edge.* **Let me give you a personal example concerning this.**

About 37 years ago I worked in a union shop where people were lazy and would not work. The union continually condoned it even after repeated warnings from the company that although the company was willing to share bonuses etc they needed to make a profit in order to stay in business. The conclusion finally was that the company closed the doors and today (some 37 years later) they are still closed.

D. Laziness ends up in unfulfilled desires

Prov. 13:4 *Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper and be satisfied.* People who are lazy generally get nothing they really want. They tell themselves they are happy, but they will not work, so they do not get what they really want. In other words, laziness leads to ruin **Don't forget:** The wishbone will never take the place of the backbone

Now I would like to shift gears from the results of laziness to

#### V. The benefits of laziness addressed

If a lazy person could ever come to grips with his laziness and decides to do something about it the following benefits could be his. First the person who steers clear of laziness will find

##### A. Provision of their needs.

When we work as we ought, God supplies our needs. Proverbs 12:11 says *Hard work means prosperity; only fools idle away their time.* God promises no loaves for the loafer.

##### B. Prosperity

Those willing to work God's way will increase their holdings. God's plan is not necessarily for us all to amass great fortunes, but God desires to meet our needs, and he desires for us to have something to give to those who have need. Let's look at what the Proverbs say about wealth. Proverbs 20:13 reminds us with this *If you love sleep, you will end in poverty. Keep your eyes open, and there will be plenty to eat!*

Now did I misunderstand or are poverty and prosperity at opposite ends of the spectrum? III John V 2 says *Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.* God wants us to prosper and be in good health. I am going to suggest that this means mental health and person who avoids laziness will be a person who has good mental health.

##### C. Honor - those who work diligently bring honor, respect and admiration to themselves.

Grover Cleveland twice president of our country once said of honor "Honor lies in honest toil" Do people honor or respect you because you work hard? If so, you are blessed.

Finally when we steer clear of laziness we will be blessed with

## D. Satisfaction

When we work *God's way*, we are content with what we have. Proverbs 13:4 tells us that *Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper and be satisfied*. Happiness is usually the result of hard work because like Henry Ford once said, you can't build your reputation on what you are going to do. Are you satisfied with your reputation because you have built it on action and not just lazy wishing? If you are, you are a blessed person.

Well in closing I want to sum up laziness with these thoughts and stories

First, John Hill Aughey made this observation "Lost time is never found again."

Second lets not be like the story from Bits & Pieces, April 29, 1993 it said

Sheer laziness has probably been responsible for more shortcuts, not to mention valuable inventions, than we are ready to admit. Most of us are continually on the lookout, at least subconsciously, for easier ways to perform tiring or routine tasks. An example of imagination spurred on by outright laziness is contained in the story of an old mountaineer and his wife who were sitting in front of the fireplace one evening just whiling away the time. After a long silence, the wife said: "Jed, I think it's raining. Get up and to outside and see." The old mountaineer continued to gaze into the fire for a second, sighed, then said, "Aw, Ma, why don't we just call in the dog and see if he's wet."

Instead lets think about laziness like this,

From Our Daily Bread, Sept. 5, 1994

A significant and often overlooked way that we serve God is in our everyday tasks. Martin Luther understood this when he wrote, "The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays -- not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship."

take people working for those things

Church prosperity cannot happen with people sitting there wishing it would come to pass. Christian, are you a doer of the word or a wisher of great possibilities? Each of us alone holds the key. Lets not be lazy about doing the things of the Lord if the church and her ministries are to prosper.

Well laziness is something we are prone to be, but it is something we should try and avoid because it is not good for us. We could say it in a nutshell something like this little three point mini sermon:

- ◆ Laziness is contagious
- ◆ Laziness is corrupting
- ◆ Laziness is costly

This last part, especially for the unsaved, those who will miss heaven when they die unless they take some initiative, is the most dangerous and costly of all, being lazy about coming to Christ and not being ready. If this is you it may surprise you but Jesus actually did the greatest part of making a way to heaven possible for you. To be ready why not cast aside being lazy about your eternal future and read just a bit further and initiate a business transaction with Jesus before it is too late

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.  
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at [lapeerchurch@gmail.com](mailto:lapeerchurch@gmail.com) Subject line: (Salvation)