

Proverbs: Great Advice for Everyday Living

Lesson 27 - Consider the Ant

Warm up -

1. What's your favorite form of recreation or relaxation?

2. What do you suppose God did on the seventh day of creation when he rested?
 - took a nap
 - went for a walk
 - went fishing
 - figured out what to do next
 - other:

3. Why do you work?
 - need money
 - like the job
 - something to do
 - to build my resume
 - other:

Lesson -

You've seen the bumper sticker: "I'd Rather Be Fishing." Quick - what would you rather be doing right now? Fishing? Taking a nap? Climbing a mountain? Playing soccer? Painting a picture? Watching a movie? Dancing? Reading a novel? Great! The choices are limited only by your imagination. God wants us to enjoy this dazzling creation. He wants us to relax and have fun.

But our recreation has a purpose. It's to prepare us for work. That's lives simply trying to get by, doing as little as we possibly can, God has a name for us - "sluggard." And God is not pleased with sluggards.

Get down on your knees and watch an anthill for a while, says the writer of Proverbs. There's your example of how to work. The busy ants can be your source of wisdom. Fine, you say. That's the nature of ants. But why should I work hard?

Several reasons. For one thing, we represent Christ to others. So our reputation is the Lord's reputation in the minds of our neighbors. For another, working hard keeps us out of trouble. Spending our time diligently carrying out God's will in our lives keeps us from temptations. Finally, God knows what

is best for us - if we decide not to follow God's direction for our lives, we're inviting disaster.

God's not a workaholic and doesn't want you to be one either. That's why God created the rhythm of work and play and rest. Enjoy them all.

Read Proverbs 6: 6 - 11

1. As you read, notice what the ant does that is so good.
2. What does laziness bring about?
3. Imagine Solomon saying these verses to someone who's lazy. Try reading the verses that way.
4. Do you do your work without prompting, like the ant? In what ways are you like the sluggard?
5. Too much rest, says Proverbs, and "poverty will come on you like a bandit." Is poverty always the result of unwillingness to work hard? What other reasons cause poverty?
6. How could this passage affect your attitude toward this coming week?
7. How can we tell the difference between what is rest and what is laziness? Share your ideas for developing a proper balance in your life between rest and work and play.
8. Is there such a thing as working too hard? What happens to people when they spend all their energy doing their work? Share examples you know of.
9. How do you deal with people who are lazy - at school or at work or in your family?