

4 - Road Skills – Work Ethics

06/20/2010 - Jim Johnson

According to Solomon, you are either an industrious worker or a sluggard. But how do you know? Based on Pro. 26:13-16 we could say...

1. If you see a problem and do _____ about it then you may be a sluggard (13)

2. If you never seem to get _____ you may be a sluggard (14)

3. If you have a hard time _____ what you start, you may be a sluggard (15)

This guy is too lazy to bring the food to his mouth. This was Solomon's tongue in cheek way of saying that a sluggard has a hard time finishing what he starts

4. If you always have an _____ for your failure then you may be a sluggard (16)

5. If the things in your life are _____ apart you may be a sluggard. (24:30-34)

Solomon notes that the field of the sluggard was overgrown; the stone wall designed to keep varmints out was all broken down. The owner did not care enough to maintain it.

It's not likely that any of us, fully fit the profile of a sluggard AND YET it is also true that most of us probably have some sluggardly tendencies in us. So we need to work towards a good solid Biblical work ethic.

STUDY

A. _____ should we work? (a work history)

The first activity we read of in the Bible is work. God did His Work, inspected it, and then declared it to be good. He then made us in His image, which in part means that we are to work as he worked. God instructed man to work in His garden. Some of the work was manual labor & some of the work was intellectual labor. God did not distinguish one kind of work as being more noble than the other.

Even though God gave man everything needed in the garden, He still expected them to work. That is the pattern of Scripture. Though God promises to provide all that we need, He nevertheless expects us to participate in obtaining it. In Prov. 10:3 we are told that God will not allow the righteous to hunger, and yet in 10:4 we are reminded that "*the hand of the diligent makes rich.*" Phil 4:19 tells us that God will care for us, and yet 2 Thess. 3:10 tells us that the person who refuses to work, should not be permitted to eat. God expects us to partner with him in providing for us.

B. How should we work?

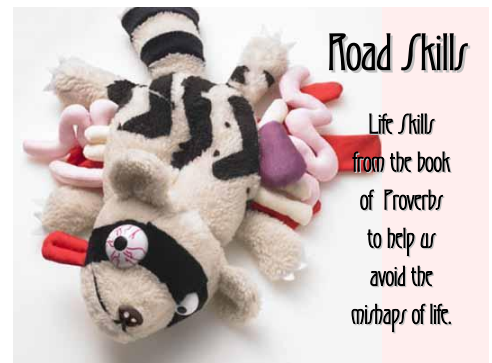
1. We should work with _____ (6:6-8)

We are told to learn from the ant that has no authority over her, telling her what to do and when to do it. Yet she understands the need, she sets her priorities. She sees what needs to be done and she takes those initial steps to do it.

2. We should work with _____ - Prov 12:27

To be diligent is to be careful and persevering in carrying out tasks or duties. The guy in this Proverb is negligent. He hunts his prey and doesn't take the time to build a fire and roast it before he eats it. He is impatient. He cuts corners. He does the easy part and leaves the rest.

3. We should work with _____ - Prov 24:27



Solomon tells us that there are two top priority items for a man. One – to work your fields, grow a crop and provide income for yourself. Then - once you have established yourself financially he can turn his attention toward about building his house (meaning marrying and having a family)

4. We should work _____ - Prov 20:4

The time to plant in Israel was after the autumn, when the rainy season had come. But the sluggard doesn't want to go out and work in the rain and the cold. He rests at the very time he should be tilling. Consequently, at harvest time, there is nothing to show for it.

5. We should work _____ - Prov 27:23-27

The livelihood and prosperity of a rancher rests on the health of his flocks & herds, so he must pay lots of attention to them. The principle is "Take care of your work, your work will take care of you."

6. We should work with _____ - Prov 25:13

Solomon is capturing the atmosphere of harvest. The farmer labors to get the harvest in, and works up a sweat as he does. Once it's in, the cold comes with the snow and refreshes him and his land. A dependable person is as refreshing as that snow.

7. We should work with the _____ in mind. (12:11)

Tilling the soil is slow and steady and blister provoking. And it requires a person to work hard for a while without any immediate return or substantial benefit. And yet the man who works with the end in mind will always have plenty of bread on his table, while the other guy will not.

C. What are the rewards to work?

1. We will _____ - Prov 14:23

2. We will have what we _____ - Prov 13:4

The lazy person is always wanting but they rarely get to enjoy the finer things of life them. Whereas the diligent person has what they want & much more.

3. We will be _____ (22:29)

The person who does their work with diligence and skill will be recognized by those in charge.

4. We will _____ instead of being ruled

The person who does mediocre work will be put to forced labor. He doesn't have choices. He will always do what he is told to do if he wants to eat; whereas the person who is diligent will rule. They will be the one who directs others. They will have choices, and privileges.

CONCLUSION: Most of us need to work, and will be required to work the majority of our lives. The only question is how will we do it? We can work in such a way, that is mediocre and half hearted – and spend the majority of our waking hours in frustration and near poverty OR we can work as God has created us and directed us to work.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. Which of the five sluggard tendencies do you have?
2. Which of the seven traits of good work have you mastered?
3. What one thing do you feel you need to change the most about your work ethic?