

GRO-HI

God's Return on His Investment

Session 5



Expect a return

What we need to avoid to be profitable

- **Faithlessness**

The third servant was condemned not for receiving only one talent, but for doing nothing with it, demonstrating a lack of faithfulness and ultimately being punished.

- **Laziness**

Jesus' point is that readiness for His return involves being active, responsible, and obedient. It means doing good works that produce fruit and please Him

The Slothful Sluggard



A sluggard is someone who is habitually lazy or inactive. Such a person does not take personal responsibility for his own life. The word *sluggard* is used 14 times in the book of Proverbs. In each case, the Bible condemns laziness and warns of the consequences of being a sluggard.

The Sluggard

1. The Sluggard Will Not Start Things

The sluggard has a difficult time with initiative. He relies on others to tell him what to do (Prov. 6:9), and his verbal output outstrips his actual production (Prov. 14:23). He talks of great plans, but he just can't seem to put them into action.

He may be distracted by pleasure and entertainment, or he may simply be unwilling to get dirty and work hard. Whatever the case, the sluggard is known for a lack of genuine accomplishment, since he can't seem to even start things.

2. The Sluggard Will Not Finish Things

Even if you have the wherewithal to start something, you may still be a sluggard. Another quality of the lazy man is that he can't finish things (Prov. 12:27; 19:24; 26:15). Once he gets to work and bumps up against some difficulty or resistance, all motivation vanishes, and the sluggard retreats back into ease.

This is someone who has a growing stack of half-read books on his desk, a host of home projects still awaiting completion, multiple promises to friends and family left unfulfilled, a collection of almost-written articles in the queue, and a gym membership that hasn't been used since January 2018.

3. The sluggard will not face hard things

The sluggard will also refuse to face hard tasks. To mask his laziness, he will find refuge in cowardly excuses like, “There’s a lion outside, I shall be killed in the streets” (Prov. 22:13). Confronted with hard decisions and potentially hard conversations, the sluggard is thrown into indecision, wavering between multiple options, and will turn to entertainment to take his mind off the work before him. Netflix or Fortnite can be the opiate of the sluggard.

4. The sluggard is anxious and restless

Because he is living contrary to the way he was made—to work and build and accomplish and create—the lazy man is constantly restless and full of anxiety. He may long for greater productivity and accomplishment, but because of his unwillingness to work, he will exist in a perpetual state of craving without fulfillment (Prov. 13:4). Eventually, these unfulfilled desires will wreak serious havoc on the sluggard’s life (Prov. 21:25–26).

5. The Sluggard Has Constant Trouble

The sluggard's life is beset by constant trouble (Prov. 15:19). Since he fails to complete his work in the allotted hours, he's in a constant hurry to fulfill his responsibilities and often annoyed at those around him for taking up all his time.

The sluggard may have financial trouble (Prov. 12:11; 19:15; 20:4; 21:5; 24:33–34) or live in perpetual messiness at home. He may not be able to keep a job for any length of time because of his inability to discipline his time, shun distraction, and work hard. Simple responsibilities like paying bills and maintaining his vehicle will be neglected and cause unnecessary friction.

The sluggard may desire to grow spiritually, but the disciplines of regular Bible reading, prayer, theological and devotional study, church commitment, and consistent gospel relationships are just too much for him to bear.

6. The Sluggard Is a Nuisance to Others

Because the lazy person is unwilling to work hard and develop his skills, he has little to offer others. He's mostly a nuisance to those who might require his service. "Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him" (Prov. 10:26).

Unproductive, unfocused, concerned about self more than others, the sluggard drives his employers nuts and won't survive long in any environment that requires diligence and self-denial. Ultimately, the sluggard is in the same class as a thief and vandal (Prov. 18:9).

Matthew 25:11

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.”

What has God given to all of us?

