

**Community Group Growth Questions**

1. Share with the group any insight, truth, or observation from Sunday's message that helped you, troubled you, or ministered to you.
2. What image comes to mind when you hear the word "sluggard"? What are the main characteristics of a sluggard? Proverbs 6:6-11, 10:26, 12:27, 13:4, 15:19, 18:9, 19:24, 20:4, 21:25-26, 26:13-15
3. What is it that a sluggard lacks that might be contributing to his laziness? (I.e. ability, zeal, energy, motivation...?)
4. What is the opposite of laziness (sloth)? How does the ant exemplify this?
5. What lesson is implied in the ant's having no chief, officer, or ruler? (Prov. 6:6-8)
6. How do we define the line between genuine rest and laziness? What necessarily precedes rest?
7. How are we to view laziness in ourselves? In others? How can getting a Biblical view of work help us in a fight against laziness? 1 Cor. 15:58; Ro. 12:10-11; 2 Th. 3:7-13; 1 Tim. 5:8; Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:9

**Living on Mission**

1. Tradition lists "sloth" as one of the "Seven Deadly Sins": lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, pride. Do you consider sloth (or laziness) to be deadly? If so, how should you combat it?
2. John Piper says, "Our heart exploits our mind to justify what the heart wants." What things are you doing that temporarily satisfy the desires of your heart but are producing no real eternal fruit in you, your family, or God's church? How has your mind rationalized the time you spend on these things? Spend a moment asking God if these activities are pleasing to Him or if they are a result of laziness.
3. What changes do you need to make to foster godly diligence in your personal, spiritual, and missional life?
4. Is it possible that your busyness is actually masking laziness? If so, what changes will you make in order to use your time in ways that are more God honoring?

**This Week's Reading:**

Monday: Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4  
 Tuesday: Proverbs 13:4,11; 14:24; 26:13-15  
 Wednesday: Proverbs 21:17,20,25-26; 22:4,13  
 Thursday: Proverbs 27:23-27; 28:20  
 Friday: 1 Cor. 15:58; Ro. 12:10-11; Eph. 4:28  
 Saturday: 2 Th. 3:7-13; Eph. 5:15-16; 1 Th. 4:11-12

**Additional Resources:**

*Biblical Productivity* by C. J. Mahaney

[http://www.onthewing.org/user/Dsc\\_Biblical%20Productivity%20-%20Mahaney.pdf](http://www.onthewing.org/user/Dsc_Biblical%20Productivity%20-%20Mahaney.pdf)

**Next Quarterly Members Meeting** – Sunday, July 22

**Boston Mission Trip:** Total cost is \$500. Initial deposit of \$150. Email [contact@martinsburgchurch.org](mailto:contact@martinsburgchurch.org) or go to [missions.martinsburgchurch.org](http://missions.martinsburgchurch.org) to register.

**Student Community Group:** Meeting at Culbertson's Home – throughout the summer - Contact Justin at [justin.j.culbertson@gmail.com](mailto:justin.j.culbertson@gmail.com) with any questions.

**Interested in Membership?** Our next Gospel Class will be offered on Saturday, July 21. Email [tammy@martinsburgchurch.org](mailto:tammy@martinsburgchurch.org) to register.

**Baptism Celebration** is scheduled for Sunday, July 22. Sign up at [baptism.martinsburgchurch.org](http://baptism.martinsburgchurch.org) or call the church office at 304-596-9330 to register.

**Discipleship Opportunities:**

- Men's Bible Study begins July 21 – meets every other Saturday – Contact Ray Borden at [rtjml@msn.com](mailto:rtjml@msn.com) or Dan Edman at [c.dan.edman@martinsburgchurch.org](mailto:c.dan.edman@martinsburgchurch.org). Workbook needed.
- Women's Bible Study begins June 21 – meets every Thursday at 6:30 pm – We will cover Beth Moore's "David: Seeking A Heart Like His" – Contact Tammy Borden at [tammy@martinsburgchurch.org](mailto:tammy@martinsburgchurch.org) - Need to purchase workbook and register for the class by June 14.

**Pastor On Call:** If you or your family have an emergency and need to get hold of a pastor from Friday morning through Monday morning please call 304.616.9007 to reach The Church at Martinsburg's Pastor on call.

**Missionary Toolbox:**

"The sluggard in Proverbs is a figure of tragi-comedy, with his sheer animal laziness (he is more than anchored to his bed: he is hinged to it, 26:14), his preposterous excuses ("there is a lion outside!" 26:13; 22:13), and his final helplessness.

- (1) *He will not begin things.* When we ask him (6:9-10) "How long...?" "When...?", we are being too definite for him. He doesn't know. All he knows is his delicious drowsiness; all he asks is a little respite: "a little...a little...a little...". He does not commit himself to a refusal, but deceives himself by the smallness of his surrenders. So, by inches and minutes, his opportunity slips away.
- (2) *He will not finish things.* The rare effort of beginning has been too much; the impulse dies. So his quarry goes bad on him (12:27) and his meal goes cold on him (19:24; 26:15)
- (3) *He will not face things.* He comes to believe his own excuses (perhaps there *is* a lion out there, 22:13), and to rationalize his laziness; for he is "wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason" (26:16). Because he makes a habit of the soft choice (he "will not plow by reason of the cold," 20:4), his character suffers as much as his business, so that he is implied in 15:19 to be fundamentally dishonest...
- (4) Consequently he is *restless* (13:4; 21:25-26) with unsatisfied desire; *helpless* in face of the tangle of affairs, which are like a "hedge of thorns" (15:19); and *useless* – expensively (18:9) and exasperatingly (10:26) – to any who must employ him...

The wise man will learn while there is time. He knows that the sluggard is no freak, but, as often as not, an ordinary man who has made too many excuses, too many refusals and too many postponements. It has all been as imperceptible, and as pleasant, as falling asleep."

-Derek Kidner, *Proverbs* (IVP, 1964), pp. 42-43.