

SLOTH

*Hebrews 5:11-6:12; 2 Thess. 3:10; Eccles. 10:18;
Proverbs 24:30-34; 20:4; 26:14; 22:13*

Introduction: What is Sloth?

A Sluggard's Life (Proverbs 26:13-16)

In His Home (Eccl. 10:18; Proverbs 19:24; 26:14-15)

Proverbs 26:14-15 As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed. ¹⁵ The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 If a man is lazy, the rafters sag; if his hands are idle, the house leaks.

At His Work (Proverbs 12:27; 14:23; 20:4; 24:30-34)

Proverbs 24:30-34 I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment; ³¹ thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. ³² I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: ³³ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-- ³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

His Excuses (Proverbs 22:13; 26:13; Matt 25:24-30)

Proverbs 22:13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!" or, "I will be murdered in the streets!"

His Wisdom (Proverbs 26:16)

Proverbs 26:16 The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who answer discreetly.

His Status (Proverbs 10:26)

Proverbs 10:26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is a sluggard to those who send him.

His Heart (Pro. 1:7, 4:23; 14:27; 3:5-7)

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the *wellspring of life*.

The Sluggard's Sentence (2 Thess. 3:7-13; 1 Tim. 5:8, 13)

2 Thessalonians 3:10-13 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "*If a man will not work, he shall not eat*." ¹¹ We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. ¹³ And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone does not provide for *his relatives*, and especially for his *immediate family*, he has denied the faith and is *worse than an unbeliever*.

1 Timothy 5:13 Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.

The Sluggard's Salvation (Rom. 12:9-13)

Romans 12:9-13 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Questions for Reflection:

- *Do you ever struggle with apathy? You might not consider yourself a slothful person, but have you encountered spiritual sloth in you?*
- *What kind of sloth are you?*
- *Are you tempted to quit or to coast?*
- *How do the warnings and promises of Scripture help us to resist sloth and persevere in the faith?*