

**LESSON 4: LAZINESS**

This includes:

- 1. LEADER PREPARATION**
- 2. LESSON GUIDE**

**1. LEADER PREPARATION****LESSON OVERVIEW**

It can be easy to fall into the trap of laziness—spiritually, physically, and relationally. Things in life seem to be going well, and suddenly you realize you've gone weeks without talking to Jesus or going for a run or serving other people or really working hard on a project. One of the biggest reasons we fall into the trap of laziness is because we get comfortable. This lesson will take a look at how we can stop being lazy and pursue a lifestyle of faithfulness.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- 1. WHAT:** We can move from a lazy attitude to a faithful attitude.
- 2. WHY:** Teenagers can experience greater joy and freedom when they're faithful with the time, gifts, and opportunities that God has given them.
- 3. HOW:** Students will talk about specific ways they can work hard and faithfully serve God and other people.

**PRIMARY SCRIPTURE**

Proverbs 6:6-11

**SECONDARY SCRIPTURES**

2 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 13:15-16; James 2:14-20

**TEACHING PREP**

**LEADER  
TIP**

**Use this short overview to prepare for your lesson. While you may not want to convey this information word-for-word with your group, you'll want to absorb it as you prepare to lead.**

**Read Proverbs 6:6-11 and James 2:14-20.**

The book of Proverbs is filled with great nuggets of wisdom. Looking at an ant can be quite interesting. If you have the time and you are near an anthill, go do exactly that. Watch how the ant works. Ants don't sit around and hang out. They are always on the move and with purpose. (On picnics, that purpose is to eat something delicious we left out!)

Ants carry much more than their own weight and are an amazing example of how we can come alongside others and help carry one another's weight and burdens physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Teenagers

shouldn't need others to tell them what to do all the time, but too often they sit around until someone says something and then respond out of guilt or a fear of getting in trouble.

When teenagers get up and do something for God and for others, their faith shines through. It takes hard work and effort, but it is worth it because it is what God calls us to do: to serve others and, in doing so, to serve Jesus. It isn't about working hard so we can earn God's love or make God love us more. It isn't about working hard so we can prove we're "better" than other people. It's about being faithful with the time, gifts, and opportunities that God has given us.

This week's lesson is closely related to the previous lesson on entitlement. If you used the Ashton Kutcher video clip during that discussion, consider referring to it again as you talk about the importance of hard work.

## **THE BEFORE & AFTER [OPTIONAL]**

### **TEXTS OR TWEETS**

**Send one or both of these messages to your students prior to your meeting. As with the rest of the curriculum, edit these questions to fit the needs of your ministry.**

- Feeling tired or lazy? Don't let that be the reason you miss out on group tonight!
- What's the difference between being laziness and taking time to rest and recharge? Join us this week for some solid answers.

### **PARENT EMAIL**

**Send this email to parents following the lesson to encourage them to continue the conversation at home. Feel free to edit and customize the email to fit your ministry needs.**

Dear parents,

This week we wrapped up our series on the topic of lifestyle, with an emphasis on choosing and living wisely. Our goal each week has been to provide a very practical series of conversations about issues teenagers are facing today: drugs and drinking, anger, entitlement, and laziness.

In this final lesson, we explored Proverbs 6:6-11 and James 2:14-20. In the Proverbs passage we talked about the ant and how it doesn't need to be told to get up and go do something. It simply does what is most helpful to the colony. In James, we looked at how our faith is best expressed in our deeds and how faith without good deeds is dead.

Jesus wants us to work hard and be productive. This doesn't mean we have to always be busy and stressed—the Bible teaches the importance of rest and reflection. Instead, it's about being faithful with the time, skills, and opportunities that God gives us. Our students talked about how this is important in their friendships, at school, in their jobs, in their sports and activities, and in their faith. They can choose to be faithful instead of being lazy.

I encourage you to keep the conversation going with your teenager. Consider building your conversation around these kinds of questions:

- Why would God be displeased by human laziness? How does laziness keep you from experiencing freedom in Christ?
- Explain the difference between being lazy and taking time to rest.
- Talk about a time you worked really hard on a project or assignment or task or skill—how did you feel after you were finished?
- How can you know if your true motivation is to work hard to honor God or to work hard in an attempt to earn God's love?

Thanks for all your prayers for our students and our ministry. Have an amazing week!

**LESSON 4: LAZINESS****2. LESSON GUIDE****GETTING THINGS STARTED [OPTIONAL]**

Preview this video for your group: [youtu.be/yZLiCA\\_1j-w](https://youtu.be/yZLiCA_1j-w) (or show another clip about laziness). You will need an Internet connection and a computer or tablet to display the video for your participants.

Welcome your students and invite them into your meeting area. Open in prayer, and then play the video clip. Then **ASK**:

- *Is this video painfully funny, painfully true, or both? Explain.*
- *Which of those five inventions would you most want, and why?*
- *Why does our culture make things that perpetuate laziness?*
- *Can you think of any invention that has made life easier without making us lazier as a result? Explain.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *There are plenty of ridiculous inventions in our world that really have no purpose. Honestly, who needs help licking their ice cream? But if we're all honest, we'd probably admit that we have our lazy moments—maybe lots of them! As followers of Jesus, we're called to avoid the trap of laziness—spiritually, physically, and relationally.*

**TEACHING POINTS**

Use the Teaching Points to help students capture the essence of each lesson with more discussion and less lecture-style teaching. Remember: All throughout these lessons, it's up to you to choose (1) how many questions you use and (2) the wording of the main points—keep ours, or change the wording to make it clearer for your audience.

Read Proverbs 6:6-11 together as a group. Consider dividing verses among your students so several people have a chance to read.

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Let's spend a few minutes exploring what it means to be like an ant—and how we can move from laziness to faithfulness.*

## 1. LAZINESS ROBS YOU OF JOY AND LIFE

### ASK:

- *On a scale of 1-10—1 being super lazy and 10 being uber productive—where would you place yourself? Why?*
- *Without saying any names, describe the laziest person you know.*
- *Tell us about the last time your laziness made you miss out on something amazing.*
- *Proverbs 6 uses ants as an illustration of hard work—the opposite of laziness. What other animals are also great examples of that truth?*
- *Why would God be displeased by human laziness? How does laziness keep you from experiencing freedom in Christ?*
- *Explain the difference between being lazy and taking time to rest.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *This passage of Proverbs brilliantly illustrates how God wants us to work hard and be productive. This doesn't mean we have to always be busy and stressed—the Bible clearly teaches the importance of rest and reflection. Instead, it's about being faithful with the time, skills, and opportunities that God gives us. This is important in our friendships, at school, in our jobs, in our sports and activities, and in our faith. We can choose to be faithful instead of being lazy.*

## 2. WORKING HARD BRINGS JOY

### ASK:

- *Talk about a time you worked really hard on a project or assignment or task or skill—how did you feel after you were finished?*
- *Think about the people around you who are happiest. Are they generally selfish or unselfish? Why do you think that's the case?*
- *Think about a time you served someone or worked with a team that was serving other people. What was that like? What was most rewarding about the experience?*
- *Would you agree or disagree that doing something kind for another person produces joy? Why?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Working hard produces a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. And people who work hard to serve others can experience greater freedom than people who lead selfish, self-centered lives. When we serve God by serving others, we bring joy to God and to ourselves and to the people being served.*

## 3. WORKING HARD GROWS AND REVEALS YOUR FAITH

### ASK:

- *How can laziness draw you away from Jesus?*
- *How does hard work honor Jesus?*
- *Read James 2:14-20 and summarize the main message of that passage.*
- *How can you know if your true motivation is to work hard to honor God or to work hard in an attempt to earn God's love?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Many people go out and do good things, but Jesus isn't in it. Doing good deeds is fine, but to really change things, it needs to be fueled by a love for Jesus and for people. And there are other people who work hard and do lots of good deeds because they're trying to earn God's love or make God love them more. That isn't the right path either because God's love is unconditional—we can't earn it, and God can't love us more than he does because his love is so deep already. We can do good deeds as a reflection of our faith in Jesus—our faithfulness can replace our laziness.*

### EXTRA DISCUSSION [OPTIONAL]

Ask students to form groups of two or three to discuss these questions.



#### ASK:

- Read Hebrews 13:15-16. What does it look like to offer a “continual sacrifice of praise to God”?
- How have you recently shared with someone in need?
- Why do sacrificial acts of giving and serving please God?
- Look at verse 16—when are you most likely to “forget to do good and to share with those in need”?

Bring everyone back together, and ask for volunteers to share answers to the previous questions, as time permits.

### LIVING IT OUT

#### ASK:

- What might it look like in your life to move from laziness to faithfulness? How can that help you be more faithful with the time, gifts, and opportunities that God has given you?
- How do you need Jesus' help in placing him at the center of your life more faithfully and consistently?
- What is one sacrificial thing you can do this week to help another person?

Ask students to each find a quiet spot in your meeting area for a few minutes of prayer and reflection. Consider praying together as a group or asking if any students would like prayer from the rest of the group.

### SUMMARY



Provide a quick summary or take-home challenge based on (1) this lesson's content, (2) the dialogue that took place today, (3) your understanding of the issues and struggles your teenagers are facing, and (4) the big picture of your youth ministry and what your leadership team wants accomplished with the teaching and discussion time.

**FOR KEEPS [MEMORY VERSE]**

Encourage and/or challenge your teenagers to memorize the Scripture below.

*“Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).*