

May 19, 2024

Proverbs 11; 19; 20; 24; 26

## Dishonesty and Laziness

What do the following three stories have in common?

The manager of a local grocery store secretly adjusts all of his produce scales, so that they indicate a greater weight of produce than the customers actually selected. The difference isn't much – each scale reads two ounces more than the actual weight – but the produce profits have increased significantly.

Sam has been with his company for four years and is considered a good employee. In truth, though, Sam spends as much as two hours out of each workday surfing the Internet, checking social media, and visiting with other employees while they are trying to work.

Natasha's parents are proud of the recent improvement in her school grades. She enjoys her parents' praise and the extra privileges they give her. They have no idea that Natasha is cheating on tests and paying other students to write her term papers.

These three people are lazy, so they resort to dishonesty to get ahead. The Proverbs we will study this week teach us three important truths about honesty and laziness.

### God Hates Dishonesty

**Prov. 11:1** “A \_\_\_\_\_ balance is \_\_\_\_\_ to the LORD: but a just \_\_\_\_\_ is His \_\_\_\_\_.”

In ancient times, merchants weighed their products on balance scales. The scale had two pans; if you wanted to buy one pound of grain, the merchant placed a one-pound counterweight in one pan, and put grain in the other pan until the scale balanced perfectly. A dishonest merchant would use counterweights that weighed less than they were supposed to, to cheat his customers. The word **abomination** means that it is disgusting, detestable, and revolting to God. **God hates dishonesty** (a “*false balance*”), but He delights in an honest (“*just*”) weight (see also Prov. 20:10).

**Prov. 20:23** “Divers \_\_\_\_\_ are an \_\_\_\_\_ unto the LORD; and a false \_\_\_\_\_ is not \_\_\_\_\_.”

God hates dishonesty. Will liars get away with their deceit?

### Liars Will Be Punished

**Prov. 19:5** A **false witness** is a liar. What will eventually happen to liars?

**Prov. 19:9** What does this verse say will happen to liars?

**Prov. 20:17** **Bread of deceit** refers to that which is gained by dishonest means. How does it taste at first?

What will it be like later?

God hates dishonesty and liars will be punished. What does the Bible say about laziness?

## God's People Shouldn't Be Lazy

- Prov. 20:4** The **sluggard** is a lazy, slothful person who uses any available excuse to get out of working. What excuse will he use for not plowing?  
What will he do when harvest time comes?
- Prov. 24:30** Whose field and vineyard did Solomon describe?
- Prov. 24:31** What was the condition of the lazy man's property?
- Prov. 24:32** "Then I \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ it well: I \_\_\_\_\_ upon it, and received \_\_\_\_\_." Solomon learned from what he saw.
- Prov. 24:33** The lazy man would rather sleep than work.
- Prov. 24:34** What will come upon the lazy person?
- Prov. 26:13** What excuse does the lazy man use to avoid work?
- Prov. 26:14** How is a slothful person like a door?
- Prov. 26:15** What is he too lazy to do?
- Prov. 26:16** What does the sluggard think about himself?

**Concluding Thoughts:** God hates dishonesty, liars will certainly be punished, and God's people shouldn't be lazy.

Honesty is a quickly-disappearing character trait in our modern world. Most people think nothing of lying if it will help them. People lie to themselves, their spouses, their employers, the government, and even to God. God hates such dishonesty. Go ahead and lie if you want, but eventually you will be punished.

Laziness is common today. Most people do as little work as they can get by with. Our ancestors worked from dawn to dusk to carve a living out of the American wilderness, but modern Americans love their leisure and free time. Many workers are lazy, and they cheat their employers by not working 8 hours for 8 hours pay.

**Are you dishonest?** Confess your sin to God, and promise Him to be honest in what you say and what you do. Return anything you've gained through dishonesty to its rightful owner.

**Are you lazy?** Confess your sin to God, and make a commitment to Him to be a diligent worker. Your employer will be glad you did.

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**Project:** Be honest in your dealings with others this week. Don't be lazy or cheat your employer. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** each day, and be sure to come to Sunday School this Sunday.