

# What do eating styles reveal about working styles? (26:15)

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## THE TEXT (NASB)

**The sluggard buries his hand in the dish. He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.**

*A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth. KJV - Proverbs 26:15*

## INTRODUCTION



It's a bad sign when *everything* is wearisome—even eating.

Those who eat heartily usually work heartily.

Our attitude affects all our activities.



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## COMMENTARY

This caution must be important, since the text is repeated almost verbatim in Proverbs 19:24, “The sluggard buries his hand in the dish, but will not bring it back to his mouth.” Check the question: [Laziness: How does it grow?](#)

### The Free Lunch Test



My dad often told this story about his experience as a boy in Zabrze, Poland, in the 1920s. When his parents wanted to hire farm hands, they first gave them a free lunch. The men loved the free food, but didn't know they were being tested by their host and potential employer. My grandparents had discovered a pattern. In German, “Wie zum essen, so zum arbeiten”—“as a man eats, so he works.” Those who ate with gusto worked with gusto. Hired! Slow and picky eaters were usually slow and picky workers. They got one free meal, but no job.

### Laziness Spreads

This is not, of course, a foolproof hiring technique for a Human Resources Department, but eating habits are at least one sign of a person's work ethic. We all know that lounging at the table and grazing is a waste of time and food, but sometimes it's okay to linger over a meal. Sometimes we sit at the table just to keep company with others. Sometimes we are ill and don't want any food. But are these the exceptions or the norm?

It may seem silly to imagine anyone so lazy that they can't be bothered to feed themselves. But this proverb shows that sloth is a failure to love life; one long choice that less life is better than more. When the dying Moses takes leave of his Israelites at the border of the Promised Land, he warns them, “Today I set before you the choice between life and death... Choose life!” (Deut 30:19). We might not think that we need to be told this, but in a thousand little ways, day after day, the sluggard is choosing that life simply isn't worth the effort. Tragic.

### Classic Comments

Matthew Henry (d. 1714) observes that the sluggard...



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...dreads, as if it were a mighty toil, to lift his hand to his head. It is an elegant hyperbole, aggravating his sin, that he cannot endure to take the least pains, no, not for the greatest profit [although eating is not the “greatest profit,” it is probably the most basic], and showing how his sin is his punishment.

Matthew Poole (d. 1679) says likewise: “He will not take the least pains for the most necessary things.”

John Gill (d. 1771) comments: “The sluggard hides his hand not caring to make use of it for labour; or covers it out of sight in his bosom, pretending some weakness or ailment in it, which hinders him from working.”

Matthew Henry amplifies his earlier warning, that the sin is its own punishment, by warning that one’s whole life can be infected by the lie, “It is common for those who will not do their duty, to pretend they cannot.”

## Wealthy At Risk



The wealthy have a higher risk of sloth than the poor, since wealth gives them convenient access to food and frees them from effort. It’s hard enough to free the lazy from their habits, so easy feeding only enables their inertia. The privileged have a narrow comfort zone, and any effort beyond their ingrained habits seems impossible. It’s tragic when they don’t make an effort to feed themselves. Children of wealthy parents, if not deliberately disciplined, are often lazy. Their sloth loosens their grip on life so much, they can barely be bothered to live.



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## OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND



Jesus enjoyed eating, but He was not controlled by it. He was no ordinary man. His enemies called Him a “gluttonous man and a drunkard,” (Matthew 11:19), implying that they saw Him eat heartily. Obviously, He enjoyed food and drink, but He was not mastered by them. Consider the following.

After fasting for forty days and nights He *became* hungry. Hunger is strongest at the beginning of an extended fast, then remains largely dormant until the point of starvation. If the body is not nourished when hunger reawakens, death is near. Precisely at the brink of death, the devil tempted Jesus to use His divine power and turn stones into bread. He could have done it, but refused to do anything not willed by His Father in heaven (Matthew 4:2-4).

As the Devil departed, the Father sent angels to minister to the dying Jesus. Jesus loved food, but He loved and trusted His Heavenly Father much, much more.

## APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Participate in your meals. Prepare it, clean up, help pay, or (as a minimum) say “thank you!”
- Watch your eating habits.
- Watch how others eat. Slow eaters tend to be lazy. Wasteful eaters tend to overspend.

Which of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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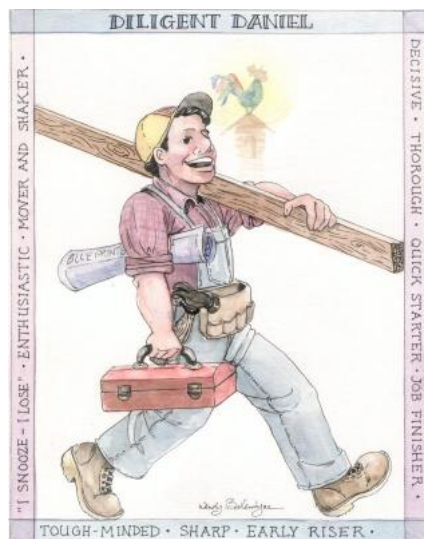
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## KEY WORDS

diligence, hand, Human Resources, hunger, initiative, laziness, less assets (quantity), work, bf spending

## ILLUSTRATION

### Who is Diligent Daniel?



Diligent Daniel is a friend of Steady Eddie. Whereas Steady Eddie is known for his staying power, Diligent Daniel is known for his decisiveness and thoroughness. He is an early riser, a quick starter, and a job finisher. There's no room for procrastination here.

Daniel is tough-minded and sharp. He tells himself each day, "I snooze- I lose." He pushes himself and calls himself lazy. He is tough on himself—not rough.

He's the one Benjamin Franklin was thinking about two hundred years ago when he came up with the maxim, "Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, WEALTHY, and wise." Daniel's also the one the author Oswald Chambers described with the words, "The heights by great men reached and kept, were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night."

Daniel is more of a thinker than Steady Eddie, but is known for his enthusiastic work capacity, not his brilliance. He's a mover and a shaker. He's not afraid to get his hands dirty and is in good physical condition. He's a builder. He starts the job right away and gets it DONE. He doesn't flip-flop in this thinking. He is not double-minded. He remains humble while exuding confidence.



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One of his favourite financial tools is the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP).

