

# Are you taking the right risks? (22:13)

The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside; I shall be slain in the streets."

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## THE TEXT (NASB)

The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside; I shall be slain in the streets."

*The slothful man saith, there is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets. KJV - Proverbs 22:13*

## INTRODUCTION



Risk can never be avoided entirely, but what risks do you take?

Some people are cautious to a fault, using their timidity as a mask for their laziness. They invent ridiculous excuses to justify inaction, amplifying any and all dangers. If there are no dangers, they'll make some up.

The lazy love to stay at home and do nothing. This truth also appears in Proverbs 26:13. [How can you identify laziness?](#) It's repeated for emphasis. Cowards are lazy and the lazy are cowards. Read on.



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## COMMENTARY

### Translation



The Hebrew word for “slain,” רשע (rā•šā), pronounced “rah-sha”), refers to “an accident, manslaughter, premeditation, or governmental execution,” says James Swanson in the Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Hebrew (e-edition; Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). The sluggard imagines all of these terrible possibilities. It’s not only that he might have an accident in the street or perhaps be bitten by a dog. No. He imagines even more dangerous possibilities. There’s a lion out there just waiting to pounce and savagely devour him. It’s best to stay inside, safe and secure.

The sluggard doesn’t speak of minor nuisances such as bad weather or a barking dog, but manufactures ridiculous reasons to justify inactivity. He sees trouble everywhere and rejects any risk. He convinces himself there’s a lion outside. And who could fault him for avoiding a lion? He’s just being safety conscious. After all, it’s safety first! As one wit said, “No one works, no one gets hurt.”

### Slow Death



The sluggard doesn’t recognize the cost of his inactivity—its slow poison. As he hides in his comfort zone, his world shrinks, and his life passes. It’s like the lesson about boiling a frog. If the frog is dropped quickly into boiling water, it immediately jumps out. If the frog is placed in a pot of cool water on a stove, and the heat then turned up, it just sits there. Unaware, it gets accustomed to the rising temperature, until it’s slowly cooked to death. Similarly a sluggard loves his own comfort way too much for his own good, cooking himself in comfort.



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There are always risks in every effort. Every business endeavor must be tested eventually in the marketplace. This is true about books, technology, music, works of art: Anything worth doing must be able to withstand public scrutiny. We can imagine great things, but until they are publicly tested and vetted in “the real world,” they remain only our secret scheme, and perhaps, sadly, a deluded sedative!

## Is Home Always “Home Sweet Home?”



The sluggard likes to remain at home, maybe even alone in his room. He loves computer games, exercising his imagination, but he's reluctant to do the real work to get his dreams out into the public forum. He's unwilling to engage with others—whether in sport or in trade. So if a sluggard is afraid of going out into the street, imagine how reluctant he would be of going into the jungle, where real lions live.

Laziness is closely linked to cowardice and selfishness. Entrepreneurs are usually hard working risk-takers. Courage and industry go together, as do laziness and stinginess. The real danger lurks within the sluggard's comfort zone. It will hurt him more than the lion outside. Refer to the dangers of excessive sleep, using the keyword “sleep.” Laziness impoverishes and suffocates him in his own little world.

## OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus was not afraid to take risks.

Even before His crucifixion, Jesus knew danger. The Pharisees warned Him to flee, because King Herod wanted to kill Him. Jesus held His ground (Luke 13:31). Yet on other occasions, He escaped out of desperate situations (Luke 4:28-30). Jesus moved not by calculating his danger or safety, but as He was led by the invisible Holy Spirit. Any who are led by the Spirit are not timid but bold (2 Timothy 1:7).

Jesus once spoke of three servants who were entrusted with some capital by their master. Two servants invested it and did well, but the third did nothing, afraid of any possible loss. His unwillingness to work cost him dearly when the master returned (Matthew 25:14-30).



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## APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Check your business dealings and see if there are any areas where you are avoiding the marketplace because of fear. How realistic is that fear?
- Test the reality of your fears with others who have more experience than you. Beware of being too cautious.
- Be prepared to make phone calls, walk streets, and knock on doors for business.

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



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## KEY WORDS

courage, diligence, excuses, fear, home, initiative, laziness, less assets (quantity), prison, risk, safety, sleep, bf serving others

## ILLUSTRATION

### Who is Self-Centered Sam?



Self-Centered Sam looks out for number one. Who's that? It's Sam, of course! Sam doesn't consider himself to be self-centered. One of his favourite books is ["The Richest Man in Babylon."](#)

What does Sam do with his income? The cream, the very best goes to his own long-term growth fund. His motto is 'pay yourself first.' Some call him Stingy Sam. But he's not stingy; he's just making careful preparation for his own future, comfort, and well-being. He is part of the "me" generation. He typifies the Maslow's hierarchy of needs with self-actualization as apex of all values. Sam is a dedicated humanist. He doesn't recognize any higher power than himself. He's a tough negotiator.

Sam doesn't ignore charity. But how could he possibly help anyone one else unless there was something in it for him? Therefore any and all charitable donations must have full and public credit given to the donor. The more people are aware of his generosity the better. After all, a little bit of advertising is good for business. When his corporation gives a gift it comes as a percentage of profits, not revenues.

His financial hero is the multi-millionaire, whose assets once exceeded the entire US treasury:

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The great Railroad and Steamship Baron [Cornelius Vanderbilt](#).

