

Are lazy bones teachable? (26:16)

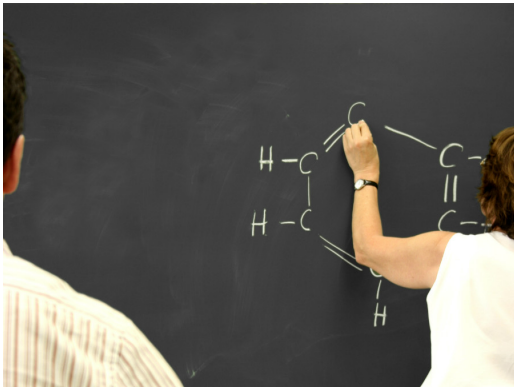
The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

THE TEXT (NASB)

The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason. KJV - Proverbs 26:16

INTRODUCTION



Slackers don't learn well. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to teach them since they think they know it all already.

Teaching a know-it-all is a waste of time. Even if they learn something new, most likely, they will not apply their new learnings. Pride and laziness walk together

Some claim to be "stupid" when they are just lazy. Not stupid—just lazy. How should we handle this attitude with its accompanying financial baggage?



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COMMENTARY

Those who resist being taught will also resist working hard. The know-it-all will avoid work whenever possible. On the other hand, those who are eager to learn *and* willing to be taught, become the best workers.

Translation: *wiser in his own eyes*



The expression “*wiser in his own eyes*” refers to extreme arrogance. This expression is used only once in Proverbs. Note a very similar expression “wise [rather than ‘wiser’] in his own eyes” is used just a few verses earlier in Proverbs 26:12. I believe the close repetition of these two expressions serves like brackets, before and after, to identify and highlight three key characteristics:

1. A lazy person has senseless fears (Proverbs 26:13).
2. A lazy person sleeps too long (Proverbs 26:14).
- 3 A lazy person is a slow picky eater (Proverbs 26:15).

Worst of all, a lazy person is a know-it-all. It’s a serious fault to be “wise in our own eyes,” but to be “wiser” in our own eyes than those who are trained and skilled, is very serious. Pride and arrogance result in financial disaster, sooner or later. Ed Siloso, a renowned preacher from Argentina, described pride as bad breath; others notice it but you don’t. This implies that **sluggards** may have a willingness to learn but a reluctance to being taught. Thus those who are lazy will not seek counsel. They will not ask questions.

Classic Comments

Adam Clarke wrote the following about the phrase “**than seven men who can give a discreet answer.**”

Seven, here only means perfection, abundance, or multitude. He is wiser in his own eyes than a multitude of the wisest men; “than seven men that sit and teach.” - Coverdale; i.e., than seven doctors of the law, or heads of the schools of the prophets, who always sat while they taught.



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Charles Bridges noted that the text describes someone who:

...pronounces himself a genius, prides himself upon his wisdom, and looks down with contempt those his more industrious companions - generally superior in attainment....He has found the road to learning without any inconvenient exertion.

Working Smarter

The sluggard's favourite saying is "work smarter not harder." Here's the problem: Often we must first work harder and while working harder, if we stop and think, we usually learn to work smarter. Even better, if we ask for and follow the advice from those who are more experienced, we will improve our productivity. Those who are eager to learn and willing to be taught, become the best workers.

Exxon Mobil - Esso Example



Exxon Mobil is one of the leaders in the global oil industry. Safety is paramount. Haste is always dangerous. In Exxon's multi-billion dollar oil sands project all employees and contractors were issued with a card to be attached to their personal identification as a continual reminder to stop and think—FIRST. Note the card is task specific... "Before and during a task." Thinking learning from other's experience is a sign of humility and teach-ability, which eventually leads to profitability.

Arrogance and Self-Induced Poverty

I believe that prideful arrogance is the greatest cause of self-induced poverty. Not all poverty comes from the same source; sometimes we become poor because of a calamity or natural disaster—something beyond our control. When we are faced with someone who thinks he knows it all, then the best school is not verbal, but the school of hard knocks. Painful experiences are not cheap, but they are usually effective teachers.



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OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus speaks of a moral sewer inside all human beings. It is filled with all kinds of filth (Mark 7:21-23).

One of the worst types of dirt is pride—prideful arrogance. To make matters worse, it doesn't see itself as dirt but as virtue.

In sharp contrast to the lazy know-it-all, Jesus worked very hard. He was voluntarily crucified in the line of duty (John 10:18).

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Become teachable and stay teachable.
- Don't waste your time trying to teach those who are lazy. When interviewing workers, look for those who ask many questions, that is, questions to gain a better understanding of their potential responsibilities. Don't give them money to reduce the pain from their poor decisions.
- Work diligently! One way to deal with prideful arrogance is through hard work—especially the kind of work that draws little public recognition. Working at these tasks will decrease the arrogance factor in your own life.

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



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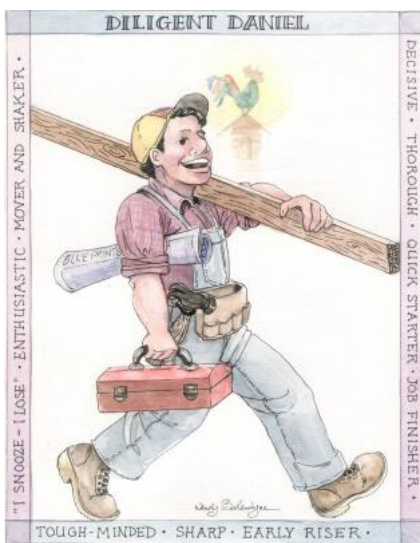
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KEY WORDS

arrogance, diligence, education, laziness, less assets (quantity), pride, haste, bf serving others

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).

