

WISDOM UNIVERSITY

PROVERBS 6:6-11

PROFESSOR ANT



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

DAVID MURRAY
JUNE 7, 2020 (PM)

INTRODUCTION

Most Americans are not prepared for the end of their working lives. Americans in their 50's have an average of \$117,000 in retirement savings. It should be closer to \$400,000. Those in their 60's have \$172,000. It should be closer to \$700,000. Nearly 48% of Americans age 55 and older don't have any retirement nest egg or a traditional pension plan.

The government is not prepared either. *Forbes* magazine reported that "Many government pension schemes haven't set aside the assets needed to pay the benefits they've promised to current and future retirees. They can delay the inevitable for a long time but not forever. And "forever" is just around the corner."

Many are going to be shocked at how unprepared they were for the end of their working lives and will spend their later years in financial pain.

If preparation for the end of our working lives is seriously lacking, preparation for the end of

our lives is even more seriously lacking. This impacts the young as well as the old because our lives can end at any age. The majority are not prepared for their end and their eternal future.

- Most don't think about it
- Most don't think it will be soon
- Most don't treat it as urgent

Yet, "forever may be just around the corner." How many will be shocked at how unprepared they were for the end of their lives? How many will spend their eternal years in pain?

Solution?

How can we fix this? Let's visit the ant hill to learn titanic lessons from a tiny creature. It teaches us a general lesson about the wisdom of preparing for the future in every area of life, but we will focus on the wisdom of preparing for the eternal future. We'll also look at the steps of preparation.

CONTEXT

Proverbs 6:1-5 prescribes urgent deliverance from foolish financial commitments in the past. Proverbs 6:6-11 prescribes urgent preparation by making financial provision for the future. Foolish commitments and foolish laziness store up big problems.



**How does Professor ant teach us to prepare for the future?
He starts by comparing brains.**




1. THE ANT IS BUSY WITHOUT A BRAIN (6)


“Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise” (6).


The “sluggard” is mentioned fourteen times in Proverbs and nowhere else. Solomon points to this lazy person, then points to an ant, and says, “Go and learn from her.” Sit at her feet and think. As you do so, the ant will teach you and you will become wise.


Professor Ant’s first lesson is “Let’s compare our brains. I have a tiny brain with limited abilities. You have a big brain with massive abilities. My brain has about 250,000 brain cells whereas the human brain has 100 billion (1,000,000,000,000). I’d need to gather 4 million ants to end up with a brain as big as your brain. Yet, look how busy I am compared to you! I’m actually wiser than you in some areas, especially in preparing for the future. I’ve got a PhD in preparing for the future whereas some of you are still in kindergarten!”

APPLICATION

 **Worship.** Creator God, I praise you for Professor Ant. And for Professor Deer (Ps. 42:1, Professor Sparrow (Matt. 6:26; 10:29), Professor Sheep (John 10:1-16), Professor Fish (Job 12:8), Professor Lion (1 Pet. 5:8), Professor Camel (Matt. 19:24), and so on. Thank you, God, for so many teachers of so many truths.

 **Humility.** The highest of God’s creatures is sent to the lowest of God’s creatures. Are you humble enough to listen to and learn from Professor Ant and other animals (Prov. 30:24-28)?

 **Activity.** Given the number of times Solomon condemns the sluggard, laziness is not only a sin, it is stupid. It is the opposite of wisdom in every area of life.

 **Prepare.** Given that your brain is 4 million times bigger than an ant’s, shouldn’t you be 4 million times more prepared for the future, especially your eternal future?

BETTER BE AN ACTIVE ANT
THAN A SLOTHFUL SLUG.



OK, Professor Ant, if you’re so clever, why do you think you’re better than me?
Well look at our bosses.



2. THE ANT IS BUSY WITHOUT A BOSS (7-8)


“Which, having no captain [guide], overseer or ruler, provides [prepares] her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest” (7-8).


“Having compared brains, let’s now compare bosses. I don’t have one, but you’ve got lots!

- I don’t have a guide but you have your conscience, a Bible, and ministers to guide you.
- I don’t have an overseer but you live before the all-seeing God who sees you constantly.
- I don’t have a ruler, but you must give an account of yourself to God.
- I don’t have an earthly boss or a heavenly boss, but you have both.
- I only have instinct, but you have instruction.

And yet let’s compare our summers! Look at me laboring and sweating throughout the summer months as I prepare for the winter.

APPLICATION

 **Thanks:** Lord, I thank you for all the guides, overseers, and rulers you have given me. You’ve given me parents, grandparents, pastors, elders, deacons, school teachers, catechism teachers, writers, podcasters, and employers. Thank you for the many times you have reminded me of your all-seeing eye and future judgment. You’ve put healthy fear in my heart to move me to action. You’ve given me sermons, lessons, Bible studies, books, articles, family and friends to instruct me on how to prepare for the future. Thank you!

 **Confession:** I confess that despite all these bosses, all these authorities, all this instruction, that Professor Ant puts me to shame. He only has instinct; I have instruction. He has no one to tell him what to do and yet look at his doing. He is far more prepared than me. He’s prepared to work hard at preparation even in the difficult seasons of life. Forgive me for being such a sluggard. I have no excuse.

DESPISING ACCOUNTABILITY
ONLY DELAYS ACCOUNTABILITY.



“So, Professor Ant, you’re brainier and better than me. Is there anything you lack?”
“Oh, yes, I lack a reason to live.”



3. THE ANT IS BUSY WITHOUT A BASIS (9-11)

"How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep—So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler [robber], and your need like an armed man" (9-11).

Professor Ant now follows the sluggard to his home and enters his bedroom, where he starts remonstrating with him. "How much longer are you going to sleep? Do you have any time limit? Any plans to actually get up?"

The sluggard turns over in his bed and pleads, "Just a little longer please. I don't want lots of time, just a little time, just a little nap, just a little snooze."

Professor Ant is now warning him, "Don't you realize the consequences? If you don't get up and get going soon, you are going to suffer poverty and punishment. All these five minute snoozes are going to end in a long disaster. Look at me, I am preparing for a future I won't even have! I'm only going to live for a few days or weeks and then I die and am annihilated. I have no basis for preparing for the future. I have no personal reason to do so. But you may have many years to live here, and after you die, you will exist forever. You will never cease to exist. And if you're not ready for that, you will not only be punished with poverty in this life but with eternal poverty in the world to come. You have every reason in the world to think about more than the present and get ready for the future."

APPLICATION

♥ **Prepare by urgent waking:** Another day is another day of deeper sleep. It gets harder and harder to wake up. Ask for God's alarm to wake you up. Use multiple alarms. Never, ever, ever press "Snooze". If God's woken you up, thank him. Thank him for his patience, for his pleadings, his urgency, his repetition.

♥ **Prepare by urgent repenting.** This book has many warnings about laziness (e.g. 26:13-16; 24:33-34). Repent of living only for today.

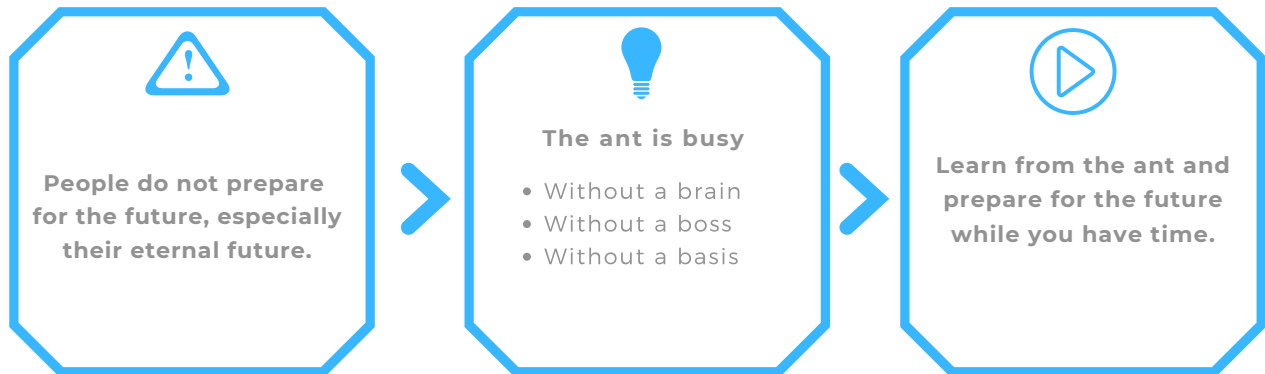
♥ **Prepare by urgent believing.** Believe the warnings of sudden, silent, surprising and unstoppable poverty and pain. Believe the promises of the Gospel.

♥ **Prepare by urgent gathering.** Gather spiritual resources for spiritual winters. Gather verses, truths, graces, fruits, so that you will be ready for times of weakness, trial, and death.

THE SNOOZE BUTTON IS NOT YOUR BEST FRIEND
BUT YOUR MORTAL ENEMY.



CONCLUSION



PRAYER: Eternal God, give me the humility to learn from the ant so that I use my time to prepare well for my eternity.

FURTHER STUDY

Online Articles

- [Brief Thoughts on Time](#) by Ben Stevens
- [Life in Twenty Year Stages](#) by James Faris.
- [Don't Waste your Commute](#) by Nick Batzig
- [How to Stop Procrastinating](#). (Free YouTube course)

Books

- [Don't Waste Your Life](#) by John Piper.
- [Crazy Lazy: A Warning Against Laziness](#) by Alastair Begg.
- [The Now Habit](#) (not a Christian book but very helpful for procrastinators)

Discussion Questions

1. Why don't people use time to prepare for eternity?
2. What other animal professors are in the Bible and what do they teach us?
3. What guides, overseers, or rulers has God given you in your lives?
4. If someone asked you "How do I prepare for eternity?" what would you say?
5. Which areas your spiritual life suffer from procrastination and how can you move from "Later" to "Now."
6. How can you use your time better for spiritual gain?
7. In what ways does busy-ness cause spiritual laziness?

First Byron Christian Reformed Church
8541 Byron Center Ave SW, Byron Center, MI 49315
Phone: (616) 878-9768
www.firstbyroncrc.org

David Murray
www.HeadHeartHand.org
www.prts.edu

PROFESSOR ANT

ETERNAL GOD, GIVE ME THE HUMILITY TO LEARN FROM THE ANT SO THAT I USE MY TIME TO PREPARE WELL FOR MY ETERNITY.



People do not prepare for the future, especially their eternal future.

Biblical answer?



Ant is busy without a brain

- Look at the sluggard's brain
- Look at the ant's brain

BETTER BE AN ACTIVE ANT THAN A SLOTHFUL SLUG

How are you better?



Learn from the ant and prepare for the future while you have time.



Ant is busy without a basis

- Sluggard exists forever
- Ant lives for a few days

SNOOZE IS NOT YOUR FRIEND BUT YOUR MORTAL ENEMY

Action?



Ant is busy without a boss

- No guide
- No overseer
- No ruler
- No boss
- No instruction

DESPISING ACCOUNTABILITY ONLY DELAYS ACCOUNTABILITY

Do you lack anything?