

# Work Like the Lord Watches

For teens ages **12–14** · about **45–60 minutes** · Moral Issues for Teens · Culture, Life & Christian Witness · game **Diligent or Sluggard?** · built on **Ephesians 4:28, Proverbs 6:6–11, and Colossians 3:23**

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Your students are entering the world of chores, babysitting, lawn mowing, fast-food shifts, and someday full-time jobs. Culture hands them two bad scripts: either **work is a curse to avoid** until someone bails you out, or **work is everything** and church, rest, and soul-care can wait. This session is not a career fair. It is a biblical look at work as God's gift — done with honesty, energy, and worship in mind — while refusing laziness, compromise, and the love of money.

## Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students already feel like the family ATM or the only responsible one at home. Some have parents who model either burnout or chronic laziness. Ask the Spirit for clarity without contempt. You are teaching stewardship of time and character — not shaming a kid who is tired or broke.

## The heart of the lesson

Work did not begin at the fall. Before sin entered the world, God put Adam in the garden to **work it and keep it** (Genesis 2:15). Sweat and thorns came later (Genesis 3:19), but labor itself is good. Scripture condemns the **sluggard** — the person who expects handouts, drifts through the day, and leaves burdens on everyone else (Proverbs 6:6–11; 2 Thessalonians 3:10–12). Young people need to grow up learning to work, not to wait for rescue.

*God gave work — do yours with honesty, energy, and worship in mind.*

Whatever your hands find to do, do it **with your might** (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Paul pushes further: slaves and masters alike serve **as unto the Lord** — not with eye-service when the boss is watching, but from the heart (Ephesians 6:5–9; Colossians 3:23). That means the Christian on the job is salt and light even when nobody thanks you. It also means you do not choose work that forces you to lie, cheat, steal, or skip assembling with the church (Deuteronomy 25:13–16; Hebrews 10:25). And you do not let paycheck obsession bury your soul (Luke 12:15–21; 1 Timothy 6:10).

# *Work hard — but don't worship the paycheck.*

## **COLOSSIANS 3:23**

"Whatever you do, work heartily, **as for the Lord and not for men**, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."

## **PROVERBS 6:6-8**

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest."

## **How the session flows**

- 1 Work reality hook.** Name chores, side jobs, and cultural laziness myths. ~7 min
- 2 Gift vs. sluggard.** Teach God's design, diligence, and Christian witness on the job. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Diligent or Sluggard?" two-team showdown. ~12-15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home reinforcement. ~15 min
- 6 Close with faithfulness.** Prayer and a clear work standard for the week. ~8 min

Screen for the game, printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, and a leader ready to connect students to help if home pressure or exploitation is surfacing — without forcing public disclosure.

# Leading it, part by part

## Work reality hook

Ask what "work" looks like in their week — not as a confession round, but as cultural awareness. Chores, homework, caring for siblings, mowing lawns, retail shifts, volunteering. Let them list it. Then name the two myths: **"Someone will bail me out"** (Acts 20:35; 1 Timothy 5:8) and **"Grind until you forget God."** Land the biblical middle: God gave work; you steward it faithfully.

## Gift vs. sluggard

Teach three contrasts. **Worldly view:** work is punishment or only about money and status. **Biblical view:** God assigns meaningful labor; we work heartily as unto Him (Genesis 2:15; Colossians 3:23). **Root issue:** laziness is a heart problem that breeds need, resentment, and sometimes theft (Proverbs 6:6–11; Ephesians 4:28). Symptoms in teen life: unfinished chores, phone scrolling instead of homework, showing up late, expecting parents to cover every bill, bragging about doing the minimum.

Read Ephesians 6:5–9 and Ecclesiastes 9:10 aloud. Hold up the ant in Proverbs 6 and the rich fool in Luke 12:15–21 as warnings — one refused diligence, the other worshiped wealth. God's way out: honest effort, Sabbath rest, church priority, and jobs that do not force you to sin.

## Play the game

Run "Diligent or Sluggard?" twelve to fifteen minutes. Round 1 sorts diligent habits from sluggard thinking; Round 2 names Scripture on work and laziness; Round 3 handles chores, bosses, Sunday shifts, and compromise; Round 4 drills the key verses. Bridge back: every card asked whether you will live as diligent or sluggard.

## Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Promise plainly that nobody is collecting it. Give five quiet minutes for students to circle whether work tempts them through laziness, burnout, or compromise pressure. Keep the room calm — shame pushes secrets; clarity invites change.

## Worksheet

Structured practice — verse lookups, truth checks, one scenario response, and one diligence action for the week. Good for pairs or take-home. The reference card addressed the heart; the worksheet reinforces Scripture.

## Close with faithfulness

Pray for energy, integrity, and balance. Invite students to finish one chore without complaining, speak honestly at work, or talk to a leader if a job is pulling them from church or into sin. Offer hope: Christ redeems lazy hearts and workaholic hearts alike — but wisdom says **work like the Lord watches**, not like nobody owns your Monday.

## Take it further

Discussion questions for small groups or a follow-up week:

- What do young people need to grow up learning to do? (Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11–12)
- Who gives man his work? (Genesis 2:15; Ecclesiastes 3:13)
- What does Scripture condemn, and what should the church do with those who refuse to work? (Proverbs 6:6–11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6–14)
- What effort belongs in our work, and what belongs after work? (Ecclesiastes 9:10; Exodus 20:8–11)
- What must a young Christian remember on the job? (Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 6:5–9; Colossians 3:23)
- What kind of job must we refuse? (Deuteronomy 25:13–16; Titus 3:14)
- What must work never keep us from? (Hebrews 10:25)
- How can the love of money trap a worker? (Luke 12:15–21; 1 Timothy 6:10)

## A final word

Teach the standard without mocking kids who are exhausted and without glamorizing hustle culture. Your students will face a specific choice soon — the skipped chore, the shady shortcut, the Sunday shift, the overtime that eats church. Give them Scripture, give them the game, give them the card, and trust the Spirit to make "work like the Lord watches" sound like the road that actually keeps integrity, rest, and faith intact.