A sloth is a mammal, created by God to live its life in relative inactivity. The encyclopedia says it is known for its proverbial sluggishness.

Man was created by God to live an active life of service as king of God’s creation. God’s children are accountable stewards of all that God gives them — time-wise and talent-wise also. This is not an easy thing for a student in school to hold constantly in his consciousness as he does his assigned work in the allotted time.

And what a variety of natures and abilities there are in one classroom. There is the child who attacks his work with vigor as soon as an assignment is given, does it quickly and carefully, and is ready for the next assignment. But many times the element of pride preempts that of faithful stewardship. There is also the slow, methodical worker who needs those few extra minutes in order to turn in his best, and doesn’t always find them. Every classroom contains a few quick careless workers who just want to get the work done no matter how — who never check the assignment over, and more often than not omit important parts. Much like them is the person who begins slowly and carefully but soon tires of that laborious work and quickly finishes the assignment with answers that are completely irrelevant to the questions. If required to do the work over under the watchful eye of an insistent teacher, the previously “evasive” answers are found without too much difficulty, and the student at least feels a sense of accomplishment. The teacher worries about that type of student. Will that child ever realize that he must put forth that extra effort the first time he is given the task to do? Why must he always have to be forced to do that?

How can a parent and a teacher apply the yardstick of God’s Word to these few but time-demanding slothful workers? One must begin in the early formative years and never let up. The Bible (and especially the book of Proverbs) is replete with admonitions to unprofitable sluggards. Much of the philosophy and attitude of the world today is in direct contrast to this scriptural teaching. There is a definite and necessary place for
praise and encouragement, but it must be subservient to the demand of God for complete commitment to His service. As adults we also need this constant reminder. In our affluent age less and less work-time is required of children and of adults. More and more time is available for fun and recreation. This becomes an insidious enervating trend — and we can see the children following in the footsteps of their parents.

How quickly an older student becomes accustomed to doing much less than his best. When reproved, he has several excuses handy. He can't be expected to do as well as others because he was not given superior abilities; or he never has enough time to do better; or what difference does it really make anyway!

It makes all the difference in the world when one labors in gratitude to a loving Father, anticipating His response: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the rest of Thy Lord."

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