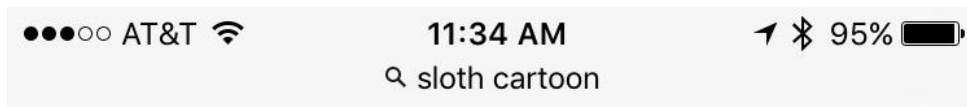


*Proverbs 19:15, "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger."*



Thank You Natalie Bradley for this cartoon!

On January 8, 2016, God was convicting me concerning my walk with him. I wrote down this question: What is it that I am not willing to give to God?

I had two answers: my time and my food choices & food quantities. I love to have fun and I enjoy eating.

Each one of us may answer this question differently. Our answers may also change or other answers may be added after a close self-evaluation.

I am still in the process of "cutting away" the fleshly desires that lead me astray or make me slothful or idle.

I have been working on a Bible study on both of these topics to help me overcome these weaknesses.

Here is what I have learned concerning 'my time':

- 1) 1 Cor. 3:13 says I will be held accountable for my day. Each day counts in God's eyes. So my excuses of "I'll do it tomorrow" are simply that, an excuse. Proverbs 20:4 & 22:13 says that excuses are red flags telling me I am already wading in the mud hole of slothfulness.
- 2) Matthew 20:3-6 states that those not working in the day were idle.
- 3) John 11:9, Jesus gives us the amount of time we should work each day, 12 hours. If we work during those 12 hours and are not idle, we will not stumble.
- 4) Nehemiah 9:3, there were two 3 hour sessions during the day spent with God.
- 5) Nehemiah 8:1-3, the Bible was read to the people in the public square from morning (6am) to midday (12noon).
- 6) Psalm 55:17, they prayed three times a day.
- 7) I desire to use the Bible as my measuring stick when I compare my time with God. I want to know how He views my time. Do I please Him?

#### The Math test

How many hours a day are you awake? I am up at 6 and go to bed around 10 = 16 hours total. I then began counting how many hours a day I spent with God. I was embarrassed.

We tithe 10% of our income to God. If 10% of my time was the standard to follow, I was far from "hitting the mark." On Sundays, I gave more than 10% of my daily time. I tried to rationalize my time deficiency, by comparing the time spent with God on a weekly basis instead of daily. This did improve my results. Yet when I looked at the verses that talk about daily time with God, I was convicted.

I now have written in my daily prayer book, this verse and quote.

Luke 9:23, "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

I wrote below that: If Sandra will come after me, let her deny herself, and take up her cross daily, and follow me.

Then below that, I have written: Matthew 10:38, "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

I want to be worthy. I read these verses each day begging God for His help.

Here is the schedule I try to follow each day:

**6-12 am is God's time** = 6 hours like the example in Nehemiah.

I spend this time studying God's Word, praying and doing service for Him, including meeting the spiritual needs of my family. I have to be careful trying to multi-task, doing my work time with God time. I have found that my fellowship with Him lacks luster when I don't give Him my full attention. Many times when I am doing this, I am only focused on "getting my required time in" and I forfeit the sweet daily fellowship He wants to have with me.

Now everyone is different and you may not be able to do all six hours in one setting. There are times when I can't. When those days occur, I split them up like Nehemiah did.

**12-6 pm is work time** = 6 hours

Between God's time and work time, there are 12 hours (John 11:9).

God's Word is very clear about how we must be diligent in our business or work. No work, no food.

There was a time when I used the excuse that I needed more hours in the day to get my work done. But I have found a hidden truth: if I give God His time, He makes my work time more productive. I can get more done in those six hours than I used to be able to get done in eight or more hours!

I must also be careful that I do not use the excuse of desiring more God time and neglecting my six hours of work time.

Our work time includes our jobs, cleaning our homes, taking care of our families physical needs, etc. Many of us work more than six hours in a day, your minimum is easily met.

So what is left over? Is our day only supposed to be dedicated to work and time with God? 'All work and no play' is difficult. Notice that in our example there are four hours in a day left over. God wants us to have pleasurable time having fun with our families and friends. But this time is not as important as our God time and our work time. We must live a balanced life.

For those of us that work more than six hours a day, which many days I fall into this category, we must be careful that we do not steal time away from God's time. We simply understand that our pleasure time is cut short during those days.

I have written a quote from Warren Wiersbe that I read every day.

Help me not to be hurried or rushed, for my schedule is in Your hands. Help me not leave a trail of tension and apprehension. Help me to leave tracks of peace and stability everywhere I go.