“There are four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: The ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer; The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; The lizard taketh hold with her hands, yet is she in kings’ palaces.”
Consider the Ant

Soloman Instructs the Slothful

Prov. 6:6-8 (ASV) –

“Go to the ant, thou sluggard. Consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no chief, overseer, or ruler, provideth her bread in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”

Presentation Outline

• Background Information About Ants
• Four Characteristics of Ants and Their Colonies
• Four Spiritual Lessons for Us
• Summarize

Consider the Ant

Background Information

• Insects (Formicidae Fam.)
• 12,500 Species Classified
• Native to Almost Every Landmass on Earth
• Thrive in All Different Living Conditions
• 15% - 20% of “Total Terrestrial Animal Biomass”
Consider the Ant

Background Information
• Ants Form Colonies
  • Small – Few Dozen Ants
  • Huge – Millions of Ants
• Supercolonies
  • West Coast of Japan
  • America – California Coast (560 miles)
  • Europe – Mediterranean Coast (3,700 miles)

Consider the Ant

Background Information
• Food Consumption
  • Herbivores
  • Predators
  • Most Omnivores
Consider the Ant

Background Information
- Long Respected for Their Work Ethic
- The Ant and the Grasshopper
  - Aesop’s Fables
  - Grasshopper’s Idleness
  - Ant’s Industriousness
  - Virtues of Hard Work

Consider the Ant

Background Information
- Social Insects (Eusocial)
- Communicate
  - Sounds
  - Touch
  - Chemical Scents
- Divisions of Labor
Consider the Ant

Ants Work While They Have Opportunity

Prov. 6:8 (ASV) –
“Provideth her bread in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”

Typical Yearly Cycle for Ants

• Wake up in Spring
• Summer and Fall
  • Collect Food
  • Work on Nest
  • Care for Colony
• Enter Diapause in Winter

Consider the Ant

A Lesson from Our Lord

John 9:4-5 –
“I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

The Work to be Done is God’s Work

• Our Lord Jesus:
  • Being Made Flesh – Phil. 2:5-8
  • Healing/Miracles – Luke 7:22
  • Ministry – John 17:6-8
  • Providing the Ransom – Phil. 2:7-8; I Tim. 2:5-6; I Cor. 15:21-22
Consider the Ant

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The Work to be Done is God’s Work
• Our Work:
  • Fulfilling Our Consecration Vows – Rom. 12:1-2
  • Sanctifying Ourselves – John 17:17; I Thess. 4:3-4
  • Developing Our Characters – II Pet. 1:4-8
  • Being Faithful Unto Death – Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:10

Consider the Ant

A Lesson from Our Lord
John 9:4-5 –
“I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

The Hour of Opportunity Won’t Last Forever
• Our Time is Limited Collectively
  • Wise and Foolish Virgins – Matt. 25:10
• Our Time is Limited Individually
Consider the Ant

We Must Work During Our Time of Opportunity
Diligence
II Tim. 2:15 (ASV) –
“Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.”

Singleness of Focus
Matt. 6:22 –
“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

Do Not Be Discouraged
Gal. 6:9 –
“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

Every Ant has a Role to Play
- Divisions of Labor
  - Queen
  - Workers
  - Winged Ants
- Workers
  - Caring for Queen and the Young
  - Maintaining the Nest
  - Foraging for Food
  - Defending the Nest
Consider the Ant

Body of Christ – Many Members, Each with a Role
I Cor. 12:14-18; 21-22 –

“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him.”

“And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.”

• All Members are Necessary and Have a Role
  • Don’t Discourage Yourself
  • Don’t Discourage Others

Consider the Ant

Body of Christ – Many Members, Each with a Role
Eph. 4:15-16 –

“But speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.”

• Christ is the Head, the Pattern
• All Members Contribute
• Building Up One Another in Love
Consider the Ant

Ways We Can Contribute to the Health of the Ecclesia
• Take Care of the Young
• Build/Maintain the Ecclesia
• Find/Share Spiritual Food
• Defending the Ecclesia

Consider the Ant

Ants Learn from Each Other
• The Ant Trail
• Tandem Running
  • Temnothorax Albipennis Species
• Overlapping Generations
Consider the Ant

We Learn from Each Other
• A Basic Objectives of Our Meeting Together
  • Help Each Other Understand God’s Plan
  • Encourage One Another Along the Narrow Way
Heb. 10:24-25 –
  “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Consider the Ant

Transition from Generation to Generation
• Truth Heritage has Been Passed Down Generation to Generation for Past 100+ Years
• Truth Heritage
  • Knowledge
  • Experience
  • Responsibility
• Methods Used
  • Study Classes
  • Seminars/Camps
Consider the Ant

Transition from Generation to Generation

• Mentoring – Example of Paul and Timothy
  • Paul made a connection with Timothy
    1 Tim. 1:2 – “Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith…”
  • Paul encouraged him
    1 Tim. 4:12 –
    “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
  • Paul gave Timothy responsibility
    1 Tim. 4:13 –
    “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

Consider the Ant

Ants are Unified and Selfless

• Ant Colony
  • Superorganism
• Example of the Weaver Ant
Consider the Ant

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Work for Unity and Selflessness

Eph. 4:1-3 –
“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

• Qualities of Selflessness
  • Meekness, Longsuffering, Forbearance, Love

• Selflessness Helps Facilitate Unity

Consider the Ant

Work for Unity and Selflessness

John 17:11 –
“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me that they may be one, as we are.”

John 17:21-22 –
“That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”
Consider the Ant

Work for Unity and Selflessness

• Oneness of Jesus and the Father is Our Example
• We Accomplish More Unified than Divided

Consider the Ant

Summary

• Work While There is Opportunity
  • Be Diligent and Focused, not Discouraged
• Look for Spiritual Roles to Fill and Try Them
  • Avoid Comparisons in How Brethren Serve
• Be a Spiritual Mentor
  • Make a Connection/Encourage/Give Responsibility
• Work Towards Selflessness and Unity
  • Selflessness Helps Facilitate Unity