

# HOW TO DEVELOP DILIGENCE

Discover the true meaning of DILIGENCE

## I. What is DILIGENCE?

vs. Slothfulness

DILIGENCE is...

welcoming each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to accomplish it.



### The meaning of diligence:

*Diligence* is “the steady application of effort to accomplish a task.” It is “exerting oneself to fulfill what is undertaken without any unnecessary delay.”

The word *diligence* comes from the Latin word *diligo*, which means “to love earnestly.” This definition is significant because we are to do all our work out of love for the Lord. “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Colossians 3:23).

The definition of diligence also involves “choosing,” because in Latin “dis” and “lego” mean “to choose the best, ignoring the unimportant.” This aspect is also found in a Hebrew word for *diligence*, קָוָה (khaw-ROOTS), which comes from a root word meaning “to decide; to decree; to bestir oneself; to move.”

The Greek word for diligence, (spoo-DAY), emphasizes “speed, dispatch, and haste; to urge oneself on.” Thus, the full meaning of diligence is “demonstrating a willing haste and thoroughness in finishing a job.” The eagerness to complete a task is motivated by the valuable benefits that the doer knows will result when it is done.

The rewards of diligence are confirmed by God: “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before [insignificant] men” (Proverbs 22:29).

## II. To whom does God command us to show DILIGENCE?

### 1. Show diligence to God.

“Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee” (Deuteronomy 6:17).

### 2. Show diligence to parents.

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord ...” (Colossians 3:23).

### 3. Show diligence in obeying conscience.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

### 4. Show diligence to teachers and elders.

“... Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge ...” (II Peter 1:5).

### 5. Show diligence to civil authorities.

“... Observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites [civil authorities] shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do” (Deuteronomy 24:8).

### 6. Show diligence to employers.

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before [insignificant] men” (Proverbs 22:29).

### **III. How did Jesus demonstrate DILIGENCE?**

#### **1. He was diligent toward God.**

Jesus diligently kept all the commandments of His Heavenly Father with all His heart, soul, mind, and Strength. (See John 5:30.)

#### **2. He demonstrated diligence to His parents.**

The diligence in Christ’s early life is seen in His statement to His parents, “... I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:49).

#### **3. He displayed diligence in obeying His conscience.**

Pilate gave testimony of Christ’s diligence to His conscience when Pilate said, “. . . I find in him no fault at all” (John 18:38).

#### **4. He showed diligence to His elders.**

Jesus’ diligence in studying the Scriptures was made evident by His teaching the deeper truths of the Law.(See Matthew 5-7.)

#### **5. He encouraged diligence to rulers.**

When the tax collectors came, Jesus told Peter to go back to his former job and secure the needed money. (See Matthew 17:27.)

#### **6. He taught diligence to employers.**

Jesus’ parable of the talents given to workers is a powerful demonstration of the importance of diligence on the job. (See Matthew 25:14-29.)

“... He [God] is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

### **IV. Who in history showed DILIGENCE?**

#### **1. The Real Hero of the Spanish-American War**

On February 22,1899, the publisher of a small-town newspaper was discussing with a friend who the real hero of the Spanish-American war was. He wrote down his thoughts in an hour and put them in a leftover spot in his newspaper. Soon orders came for more copies, and eventually forty million reprints of that article were distributed around the world. This is a powerful testimony to the worldwide recognition of the importance of diligence.

#### **2. A Letter to Garcia**

“When war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was very necessary to communicate quickly with the leader of the insurgence. Garcia was somewhere in the mountain vastness of Cuba —no one knew where. No mail or telegraph message could reach him. The President must secure his cooperation, and quickly. What to do!

“Someone said to the President, ‘There is a fellow by the name of Rowan. He will find Garcia for you, if anybody can.’ Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia.

“How the ‘fellow by the name of Rowan’ took the letter, sealed it up in an oilskin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the island, having traversed a hostile country on foot and delivered his letter to Garcia —are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail.

“The point I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, ‘Where is he at?’ There is a man whose form should be cast in bronze and the statue placed in every college of the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, to concentrate their energies: do the thing—‘carry the message to Garcia.’

### 3. An Employer’s Plea for Diligence

“General Garcia is dead now, but there are other ‘Garcias.’ No man who has endeavored to carry out an enterprise in which many hands are needed has not been appalled by the inability or unwillingness of workers to concentrate on a task and do it.

“Slipshod assistance, foolish inattention, dowdy indifference, and halfhearted work seem to be the rule. Put this matter to a test: You are sitting now in your office —six clerks are within call. Summon any one and make this request:

“Please look in the encyclopedia and make a brief memorandum for me concerning the life of Correggio.’

“Will the clerk quietly say, ‘Yes, sir,’ and go do the task? He will not. He will look at you out of a fishy eye and ask one or more of the following questions:

“Who was he?’ ‘Which encyclopedia?’ ‘Was I hired for this?’ ‘Don’t you mean Bismark?’ ‘What’s the matter with Charlie doing it?’ ‘Is there any hurry?’ ‘Should I bring the book and let you look it up?’ ‘What do you want to know for?’

“After you answer his questions and explain how to find the information and why you want it, the clerk will no doubt go off and get one of the other clerks to help him try to find ‘Garcia’ —and then come back and tell you there’s no such man.

“This incapacity for independent action, this moral stupidity, this infirmity of the will, this unwillingness to cheerfully catch hold and lift—these are the things that drive employers to despair.

“We have recently been hearing much maudlin sympathy expressed for the ‘downtrodden denizens of the sweat shop’ and the ‘homeless wanderers in search of honest employment’ and often with it all go many hard words for the men in power.

“Nothing is said about the employer who grows old before his time in a vain attempt to get frowzy ne’er-do-wells to do intelligent work, and his long, patient striving after ‘help’ that does nothing but loaf when his back is turned.

“In every store and factory there is a constant weeding-out process going on. The employer is constantly sending away ‘help’ that have shown their incapacity to further the interests of the business.

“I know one man who has not the ability to manage a business of his own and yet who is absolutely worthless to anyone else because he constantly carries with him the suspicion that his employer is oppressing or intending to oppress him. He cannot give orders, and he will not receive them. Should a message be given him to take to Garcia? Tonight, this man walks the streets looking for work. No one who knows him dares hire him.

“In our pitying, let us drop a tear or two for the men who are striving to carry on a great enterprise, whose working hours are not limited by the whistle, whose hair is fast turning white through the struggle to hold in line indifference and the heartless ingratitude which, but for their enterprise, would be both hungry and homeless.

“My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the boss is away as well as when he is at home, and the man who, when given a letter to Garcia, quietly takes it without asking any idiotic questions and delivers it.

“The world cries out for such. He is needed, and needed badly —the man who can carry a letter to Garcia.”

Condensed and adapted from “A Letter to Garcia” by Elbert Hubbard

## V. How does the beaver demonstrate DILIGENCE?

- **A beaver is always busy.**

“Busy as a beaver” is not an empty phrase. A beaver works tirelessly at cutting down trees and gathering food, even after a dam is completed and its storage is full. Whole territories have been transformed by the diligent work of beavers.



Their dams are made with masterful architecture and precise engineering. Their work almost always improves the habitat for other animals by preventing erosion and providing shallow water ponds for ducks, moose, frogs, and other animals.

- **A beaver prepares for future generations.**

In one study by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, naturalists placed five unmated pairs of beavers in an area previously unpopulated by them. Within twelve months all the beavers had chosen mates, established territories, and constructed fifty-five dams! While only one dam was necessary for each pair, these beavers built ten extra dams per family. Further observation revealed that these “extra” dams had been prepared for their unborn offspring in which to raise their families.

- **A beaver maintains good grooming.**

A beaver is so diligent in grooming the oil on its fur that water never reaches its skin. During the grooming process, a beaver uses a comb-like structure on one of its front claws to spread oil to each individual hair. It gets the oil from a gland near the base of its tail. A beaver usually grooms itself every time it emerges from the water. This helps to smooth ruffled fur and redistribute the oil so that there are never any “leaks.” Diligent grooming also rids the beaver of irritating and dangerous parasites which threaten its life if ignored.

- **A beaver prepares for times of scarcity.**

A beaver works continuously through the fall to store food in its underwater “refrigerator.” Unlike many other animals, a beaver does not hibernate during the winter. If it did, it would find itself trapped without food when its pond froze over. However, in preparation, a beaver diligently anchors tree branches in the mud at the bottom of its pond. When hungry, it pulls one of these branches into its lodge for food.



- **A beaver keeps a functional home.**

The lodge that a beaver builds is very simple but extremely functional. It is constructed of sticks and mud, which harden into a concrete-like bunker. It is impenetrable to coyotes, wolves, bobcats, and other predators. Normally, the lodge is in the center of a pond, which surrounds it with water. The construction provides exceptional insulation so that, while inside, the beavers stay dry and warm, even though the outside temperature may drop to 40 degrees below zero. The beaver lodge contains two distinct areas: a lower area for eating and a higher area for sleeping. A beaver eats over the entrance to its lodge. “Crumbs” fall into the water and are washed away.

- **A beaver does its work with precision.**

A beaver can cut down a five-inch aspen tree in less than three minutes. It will also tackle a tree twelve feet in circumference which stands 110 feet tall. With painstaking diligence a beaver rarely leaves a tree standing once it begins to cut it. To fell a tree, a beaver makes two initial cuts: one high and one low. The cuts are close together on thin trees and far apart on large trees. The beaver continues by circling around the tree, cutting deep grooves between these marks.

- **A beaver warns its family of danger.**

The flat tail of the beaver serves not only as a rudder when swimming and a balance when cutting trees, but also as a warning instrument. When any member of a beaver family recognizes danger, it upends its body and slams its tail against the water. The impact when these two flat surfaces meet creates such a shock wave that the sound can be heard a half-mile away. The beavers then head for safety.

## VI. How does the sloth illustrate SLOTHFULNESS?

- **The sloth has an abundance of idle time.**

When the European explorers in the tropical rain forests of Central and South America discovered this creature, they gave it the name sloth, which comes from the Middle English word *slouthe*, meaning “slow.” This is similar to the Hebrew word **חולצט** (ahts-LOOTH), which comes from a root word meaning “to be idle.” The sloth is truly the embodiment of idleness. Its most striking characteristic is its extraordinary slowness.



- **The sloth majors in rest and sleep.**

The sloth typically sleeps fifteen or more hours a day. This includes all day and most of the night. God gives many warnings in the Bible about too much sleep: “Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger” (Proverbs 19:15). “As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed” (Proverbs 26:14). “How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?” (Proverbs 6:9).

- **The sloth is a slow mover.**

The slow-motion movements of the sloth give the impression that it has an abundance of time. It is the slowest of all mammals. In a sixty-second race, the sloth would cover only a few feet. It took one sloth forty-eight days to travel four miles.



- **The sloth neglects bodily care.**

Moths and algae take advantage of the motionless sloth with its long, coarse hair. Certain varieties of moths are able to move freely through the sloth's hair. Several species of algae can grow in the tiny grooves of each piece of hair. Algae may become so thick that the sloth takes on a blue-green appearance and gives off a musty odor. The sloth completely ignores the algae and the moths.

- **The sloth spends its waking hours eating.**

When the sloth is awake, it is primarily occupied with eating. Most sloths are plump and well-fed. A sloth will literally eat its way through the dense canopy of leaves in its treetop home. Not until the food runs out in the sloth's tree will the sloth exert enough energy to move on to the most convenient food source.

- **The sloth will starve rather than work.**

When food becomes scarce, the sloth will go hungry rather than exert energy to look for more. It is not accustomed to searching for food, thus, it is extremely vulnerable to droughts, fires, and insect invasions that destroy its food source. If food is not nearby, the sloth will die of starvation.

- **The sloth sees things upside down.**

The sloth spends 90 percent of its life hanging by its legs. Therefore, the sloth views everything upside down. Its perspective on life is just the opposite of the perspective of other mammals that hunt for their food.

- **The sloth adapts to its environment.**

Unlike most mammals, the sloth's body temperature varies with the surrounding temperature. Its temperature can fluctuate more than 25 degrees. If the outside temperature drops, the sloth curls itself up tightly to decrease the loss of body heat.

- **The sloth teaches its offspring by example.**

Each female sloth carries her baby for six to nine months, teaching it her unique food preferences. Because the baby sloth “inherits” these finicky eating habits, it will eat from only certain species of trees and vines

for the rest of its life. It becomes unable to digest other types of leaves, and if cut off from its particular food source, the sloth will die.

## **VII. What are seven symptoms of SLOTHFULNESS?**

### **1. Rationalizing Slothfulness**

A sluggard will deny that he is slothful. He will assure you that he would be very willing to work, if it were not for all the obstacles in his way, such as health problems, lack of work, and other responsibilities. "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit [eyes] than seven men that can render a reason" (Proverbs 26:16).

### **2. Making Soft Choices When It Comes to Exerting Effort**

Slothfulness develops gradually. It happens to normal people who begin making "little surrenders" in daily decisions. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (Proverbs 6:10-11).

### **3. Disregarding the Importance of Time and Seasons**

The sluggard is not self-motivated. Neither does he understand the value of time or the control of seasons. He lives for the moment and lets the future take care of itself. "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing" (Proverbs 20:4).

### **4. Failing to Finish Tasks**

A slothful person is lethargic when it comes to work. Home repairs become tasks that he will do "someday." "By much Slothfulness the building decay eth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through" (Ecclesiastes 10:18).

### **5. Living in a World of Wishful Thinking**

When the sluggard is not sleeping, he is daydreaming about things he wants to do. "The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. He coveteth greedily all the day long..." (Proverbs 21:25-26).

### **6. Bringing Painful Damage to Employers**

A slothful employee is unproductive and makes costly mistakes.. "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Proverbs 18:9).

### **7. Struggling With Self-Induced Fears**

Slothfulness brings irrational fears which produce more slothfulness. "The slothful man sayeth, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets" (Proverbs 22:13),

## **VIII. What are the steps to conquer SLOTHFULNESS?**

### **1. Be energized by the power of God.**

Slothfulness is a symptom of a fallen nature, which we received through Adam's transgression. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). God requires us to repent and receive the forgiveness and power of His Son. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God ..." (John 1:12). We receive Jesus Christ by asking Him to forgive our sins and become our living Lord and Savior.

### **2. Counteract slothfulness with hunger.**

God's primary cure for slothfulness is hunger. "... If any would not work, neither should he eat" (II Thessalonians 3:10). Experience a three-day fast for the purpose of studying God's principles of diligence. Study such passages as Proverbs 6, 12, and 18-24; Matthew 5-7; Romans 6-8; James 1; and Hebrews 12.

### 3. Learn the principles of diligence.

God advises a slothful person, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise” (Proverbs 6:6). The ant illustrates the basic characteristics that are lacking in a slothful person: initiative, self-direction, respect for time and seasons, the ability to finish jobs, and the foresight that is necessary in planning. Read the biographies of heroes of the faith who were diligent, such as John Wesley, Hudson Taylor, William Carey, John Knox, and George Mueller.

### 4. Begin the discipline of early rising.

There is much truth to the statement, “Early to bed and early to rise make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.” One Hebrew meaning of the word diligently is “to be up early at a task.” For forty years John Wesley got up at 4:00 in the morning. Historians agree that he was one of the most influential men in his century in England and America. Getting up at this hour of the morning strikes at the very heart of slothfulness. “How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?” (Proverbs 6:9).

### 5. Respect times and seasons.

Diligence is making the best use of each minute. “. . . The night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12). For one week keep a detailed record of what you do every fifteen minutes, then add up the time spent sleeping and eating, and in entertainment and conversation.

## IX. How to Be DILIGENT

### 1. How to Show Diligence to God

#### ***Diligently listen to His voice.***

“. . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee . . . for I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Exodus 15:26). To diligently listen to the voice of the Lord means to remove other competing voices and philosophies and to give full attention to the words of Scripture and the messages of Godly believers.



#### ***Diligently keep His commandments.***

“Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee” (Deuteronomy 6:17). To keep the commandments means to keep them before your eyes so that you can easily observe them day after day. Rulers were commanded to write out their own personal copy of God’s Law so they could read it daily— an excellent idea to follow.

#### ***Diligently love the Lord your God.***

“But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Joshua 22:5). Jesus taught us to demonstrate our love for the Lord by keeping God’s commandments and by helping believers grow spiritually. (See John 14:21 and 21:15.)

#### ***Diligently study the Bible.***

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not he ashamed, rightly dividing ‘the word of truth’ (II Timothy 2:15). In order to be diligent in our studies, we must learn how to use key reference books, such as concordances, Greek and Hebrew dictionaries, and lexicons, so we can search out the precise meanings of words in their original languages. Begin a journal for recording insights.

#### ***Diligently carry out good works.***

“[Christ] gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a [unique] people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). In the eyes of the Lord, a good work qualifies as such when it is done with the motivation of love — meeting a basic need in



such a way that leaders get the credit and God gets the glory. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

### ***Diligently seek the Lord.***

"But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Seeking the Lord requires that we learn about His attributes and names. He invites us: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

### ***Diligently grow in faith.***

". . . Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge" (II Peter 1:5). Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. (See Romans 10:17.) As we read it, we should prayerfully discern what God wants to accomplish in and through our lives, and then quickly obey any direction He gives from His Word.

## **2. How to Show Diligence to Your Parents**

### ***Get up early in the morning.***

God warns, "Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty ..." (Proverbs 20:13). When you wake up, get up. Further sleep constitutes slothfulness. "As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed" (Proverbs 26:14). Early rising requires that you go to bed early. Slothfulness is getting too many hours of sleep, "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?" (Proverbs 6:9).



### ***Make your bed as soon as you get up.***

This good habit avoids the temptation of crawling back into bed. It also gives you the immediate sense of a task accomplished for the day. Next, wake yourself up some more with exercise and water. Exercise will increase your blood circulation and your alertness. One of the best exercises is walking. Then take a quick shower.

### ***Adopt unpopular chores.***

In a home there are always things that need to be done that no one enjoys doing. Volunteer to do them regularly, and carry them out with enthusiasm and with your whole heart. Each time you do these chores, tell the Lord that this is a demonstration of your love for Him. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily [diligently], as to the Lord..." (Colossians 3:23).

### ***Complete your studies with enthusiasm.***

When you are excited about what you are learning, it causes others to be interested. This gives you an opportunity to establish in your mind what you have learned by sharing it with them.

### ***Finish every job you begin.***

Unfinished projects and chores tend to discourage you and frustrate those around you. Diligence is finishing the jobs you begin by first planning them out in your mind.



### ***Do projects with brothers and sisters.***

We are to watch diligently lest anyone around us resists God's grace and becomes bitter. When you see a brother or sister who is discouraged, bored, or offended, design a project that will help him or her see things from God's point of view. Carry it out with him and offer a reward for completion, if appropriate. Here are some ideas:

- List ten reasons why God let some disappointment come.
- Memorize specific verses of Scripture related to the problem.
- Work out a way to do good to those who have offended him.
- Provide a classic Christian biography to read and report on.

### ***Start your own home industry.***

Turn resources you have into a means of income, such as building a greenhouse and providing replacement plants for offices. Determine what things you currently buy that you could make and what services you could do yourself for which you now hire others.

### ***Let your neighbors observe your diligence.***

Make it your responsibility to keep your yard neat and attractive and your home in good repair on the outside. As you work, realize that your neighbors are watching to see the diligence and thoroughness in your work and the quality in the results.

***Look for people who need your help.***

Start with the widows in your neighborhood and church. Ask them for ways that you could serve them without expectation of any pay. First meet their needs for encouragement and friendship.

**3. How to Show Diligence to Conscience**

***Study the work of God's Spirit.***

It is the Holy Spirit Who activates our consciences when we become Christians and Who convicts us of the things we do which displease God. He is the One Who needs to be understood and obeyed when He points out things in our lives that must be changed. Find out in Scripture what grieves the Holy Spirit and quenches His power.

***Make a diligent evaluation of your thoughts.***

Scripture states, "The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness ..." (Proverbs 21:5). The Biblical word plenteousness means "profitable, beneficial, and worthwhile." On the other hand, the desires of the slothful result in inadequacy and discontentment. As believers, we are to take every thought captive to make sure that it is consistent with the character and truth of Christ.



***Be consistent in your prayers for others.***

The prophet Samuel stated, ". . . God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (I Samuel 12:23). The most diligent work that anyone could carry out is fervent, effectual prayer. Make a prayer list of those in your life for whom you should pray, and be faithful to pray for them on a regular basis. Find out what their needs are and periodically let them know how you are praying for them. Be accurate when you tell them you will pray for them and how much you pray for them.



**4. How to Show Diligence to Teachers**

***Go beyond the assignments you are given.***

When you are assigned a study project, do more than is required. Carry out thorough research and an in-depth analysis on the assignment. Give sincere thought to what is involved and come up with insights and ideas that others may overlook.

***Present your reports in an attractive form.***

When you hand in a report on what you have studied or researched, make sure that it is in the most attractive form possible. Add creative touches to it. It will cause the reader to want to pick it up and study it. Remember that the presentation you make gives others their first impression of the value of your work.

***Request extra projects to work on.***

The delight of teachers and elders is to have a student who sincerely wants to learn and who will expend the energy to do so. When you are given an extra project to work on, make sure that you do it quickly and thoroughly. Along with extra assignments, learn all you can from the personal study and experience of your teachers.

***Be fervent in spirit.***



Scripture commands us to be "... fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). A fervent spirit is the Biblical term for our word enthusiasm. In whatever we do, we should have an enthusiastic attitude, because we are doing it out of love for the Lord. When things go well, we tend to neglect serving the Lord, because we think we do not need Him. God gave stern warning about this: "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee ..." (Deuteronomy 28:47-48).



***Always be ready to edify a gathering.***

Whenever you meet together, be ready to give a verse of Scripture, a favorite song, an answer to prayer, a word of praise, or a Scriptural insight in order to strengthen the faith of those in the group. (See I Corinthians 14:26.) Be one of the first to share what you have to say. The ability to do this will require diligence ahead of time to prepare what you will share. "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips" (Proverbs 16:23).

***Adopt your elders' burdens as your own.***

Those who labor in instructing you in the ways of the Lord are often under special pressures in their families, health, or finances. Be aware of these pressures and accept them as your own burdens for prayer and offer any assistance you may be able to give. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you" (I Thessalonians 5:12).

***Tackle the cleaning job no one wants.***

One of the best ways to demonstrate diligence in your church is to offer to clean the washrooms. These are often in need of cleaning and, if neglected, present a poor testimony to members and visitors alike. Do a thorough job out of love for the Lord.

**5. How to Show Diligence to Government**

***Enlist prayer for officials.***

Praying for government leaders is a faithful fulfillment of the command of Scripture to pray for kings and rulers; however, enlisting others to pray with you is a valuable demonstration of diligence in this important matter. (See I Timothy 2:5.)



***Research your country's history.***

It is important to discover the foundations upon which your nation was built. You will often find that there were Godly leaders who called upon God for His blessing and wisdom for their nation. Then, as the nation prospered, people tended to forget the obligations they had to God. Consequently, His judgment would come upon that nation. Know the facts so that you can explain them to others and use them as a basis for praying.



***Offer to serve those in office.***

All government officials experience special pressures in their own personal lives, upon their families, and in their jobs. Ask God to direct you to an official whom you can serve in a practical and helpful way. Most officials suspect ulterior motives in those who offer to help, thus your sincerity and diligence will need to be demonstrated.

***Evaluate proposed laws by God's Law.***

Make it your responsibility to learn about the laws that are being proposed, and study them on the basis of whether they are consistent with the laws of God. Only laws that are in harmony with His Law will benefit the people of a nation. Be diligent to inform your lawmakers of how proposed laws measure up to the Law of God. Be brief, concise, and factual in your letters.

**6. How to Show Diligence to Employers**

### ***Understand the pressures on your boss.***

Your primary responsibility on the job is to make those you work for successful. Find out what their pressures are in their own lives and families, as well as in the managerial responsibilities which they have. Begin praying that God will give them wisdom, health, and protection in all areas of their lives.



### ***Clearly define your job responsibilities.***

Make sure you understand the functions and jurisdictions for which you are responsible. Find out all you can about your job, as well as your authority's goals for the business and your part in it. If appropriate, ask him what his goals are for the company. Also, learn how fellow workers relate to your job and in what ways they are depending on you.

#### ***Become an expert on your job.***

Whatever you are given to do, seek to become an authority in it. Learn how others do it. Be up to date on new techniques, equipment, and methods of operation. Rather than praising your own work, let others confirm its value by their recognition.

#### ***Find a more effective way to do your job.***

There is always a way to accomplish the job quicker and cheaper. This thinking is the basis for inventions. Make it your goal to discover new procedures that will cut down on time and materials so that more can be done with less work and money.



### ***Arrive early for work.***

Daily diligence on the job begins by getting there early so you are ready to start at the appointed time. As you come to work, put the cares of home behind you, and when you leave for home, put the cares of work behind you. Wherever you are, be all there.

### ***Keep socializing to a friendly greeting.***

Socializing during working hours is far more costly than you can imagine. First of all, it hinders you from fulfilling your responsibilities. Next, it stops the one whom you talk to from carrying out his jobs. Then, it distracts others who wonder why you are not doing your job. Finally, it takes time and attention from your employer, who wonders how to tactfully but clearly point out this unacceptable behavior on the job.

### ***Be productively busy all the time.***

Give all your energies to each task so you can fulfill it as quickly and inexpensively as possible. This requires thinking through a job before you start it and making sure you have all the information, equipment, and supplies to do it. If there is free time between jobs, find ways to profitably use it for the benefit of your employer.

### ***Write a manual about your job.***

When you become an expert on the work you are doing, you will probably be called upon for other responsibilities. Plan ahead for this by writing out a clear and concise manual for the work you do so the next person will have the benefit of all that you have learned. Also/look for ways to encourage fellow employees.

## **X. What qualities must balance DILIGENCE?**

### **1. Patience**

The person who is diligent will want to get things done as quickly as possible. He will strive for the wisest use of resources and the least amount of time. In many situations, however, he will need to depend upon other people who may not be as diligent and who will create delays. He must accept these difficult situations as opportunities from God to learn the quality of patience.

### **2. Gentleness**

A diligent person is hard on himself, but he must be gentle with others. Otherwise, both he and the work he is trying to accomplish will be reacted to by associates who will accuse him of being harsh and insensitive.

### 3. Humility

Humility is recognizing that everything I have and do is a result of investments God and others have made in my life. It is important for a diligent man to remember this, so that when he is praised for achievements, he can quickly deflect that praise to God and others for the part they have had in his achievements.

### 4. Love

Since the Latin definition of diligence is “to love earnestly,” it is very important for a diligent man to be motivated by love and to express love to all those around him. Love involves giving to other’s needs as an expression of my devotion to the Lord and realizing that I have already been repaid by the gift of eternal life that God has given, through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son, to those who receive Him. It is because of our love for God that we show diligence, in order to benefit His people and be a testimony to the world. In I Corinthians 13 we read about how an individual can be very diligent and give away all his money to feed the poor, but if he does not have love, it means nothing.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege upon completion of your practical assignment to use this lecture with others.

## *Practical assignment*

Completed

- Gather your family together and teach on diligence. Adjust the material to the age and attention span of your children. Interact with them, even at the teen level. Don’t make it a lecture! Write a short report on what you did, who was there and what interaction you had with different members.

Date:

Who:

How:

- Preach on diligence. Adapt to the audience. Use many illustrations. Write a brief report below.

Date:

Where:

Who:

What was the response: