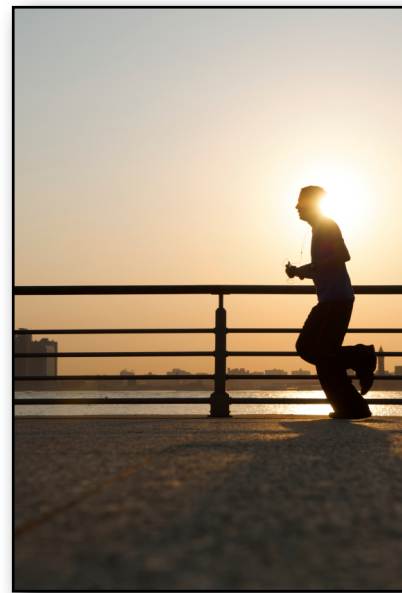


The Diligence Factor

1 Tim. 4:15-16 “Be diligent in these matters, give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them because if you do, you will save both yourselves and your hearers.”

The apostle Paul was encouraging Timothy in his calling as a young minister. In the verses prior to these verses, Paul tells Timothy not to let anyone look down on him because he was young or inexperienced. Paul exhorted him on all the ways to be successful. He told him the importance of being a Godly example in his speech, his love walk, and his life. He encouraged him to continue to use the gift God gave him and not neglect it. Paul said that if Timothy was diligent in all these areas that it would keep himself, as well as others, on track.



Diligence in living our lives in front of others is an important thing for us to learn. That is the first way that living a diligent life brings us blessings: it keeps us doing the right thing and then we are able to influence those around us for the good.

There are many factors in life that cause us to be successful, or not so successful in life. One factor that brings blessings is diligence. Here's the definition:

Diligent- characterized by steady, earnest, and energetic efforts.

marked by persevering painstaking effort.

Synonym: busy, productive

It's the opposite of being idle, lazy, slack or neglectful. This can apply to our being busy for God, our families, school or our jobs.

Eccl. 10:18 says, "If a man is lazy, the rafters sag; if his hands are idle the house leaks."

If things are not going right over and over again then maybe we should check the condition of our roof! Is the diligence factor operating in our life?

The diligence factor brings other blessings into our lives. We have already discussed that diligence in the things of God keeps our lives on the right path. However, there's more!

The diligent person's plans become successful realities! Do you have a dream? Maybe you have a dream you have desired to see come to pass for years. Some of you may be focusing on short term or long term goals in your spiritual life or on the job.

Prov. 21:5: "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."

When I was a child, I spent a lot of time at my Grandma Smith's house. My Grandma had a lot of sayings that have stuck with me and I seem to carry on her traditions that way (including her recipe for macaroni and cheese which my kids and I love). One of her most common sayings was, "Haste makes waste." I always thought that was good advice. I understood her to mean that if you try to rush around and do a quick job of something you end up making more mistakes along the way. If we just slow down, do things calmly and carefully, things turn out a whole lot better. I still believe that was a good interpretation, but when I read this verse in Proverbs, I realized that the meaning goes even a little deeper.

A diligent person's plans lead to profit or success, not just because he does everything slowly and methodically. His plans come to pass because he is diligent in all his ways to plan for a successful outcome. He doesn't live his entire life by the seat of his pants or just "in the moment." He prays and seeks God for wisdom and direction, weighs all the choices before him, and

educates himself of all the consequences of each action. Then he moves purposely, aggressively and consistently toward his goal.

The person who does things in haste is unwise because they don't stop to pray or even get godly council from others. He doesn't spend time planning, organizing or weighing. It's like a "Qué sera, sera" way of living. They will never be as successful as they could be.

We know so many great people who we desire to see succeed, but the diligence factor has to be working in their lives first. Still there are many of us who have been working toward our dreams and have not seen them come to pass yet; don't give up! Keep on being diligent and you will see!

Prov. 20:4, "A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time , he looks but finds nothing."

A diligent person has a promise that his dreams and desires, which line up with God's word, will eventually come to pass.

Prov.13:4 "The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied."

It's connected to the principle of sowing and reaping. **Galatians 6:7: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap."** That's not just talking about money!

There are other passages that tell of how the diligent will get the blessings, promotions, and material blessings as well.

Proverbs 12:24: "Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor."

Proverbs: 10:4: "Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth."

Let's keep putting the diligence factor to work in our lives and see what God will do. Can you bear just one more scripture? Great, here's a good one to close out today:

Galatians 6:9: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season

we shall reap, if we faint not.”