

## DILIGENCE.

Text: Hebrews 11:6.

Delivered on: October 9, 2011. Streetsboro.

### I. WHAT IS DILIGENCE?

- A. English definition: diligence - careful and persistent work or effort.
- B. Two Greek words:
1. Spoude - "speed", that is, (by implication) despatch, eagerness, earnestness: - business, (earnest) care (-fulness), diligence forwardness, haste.
  2. Ekzeteo - to search out, that is, (figuratively) investigate, crave, demand, (by Hebraism) worship: - en- (re-) quire, seek after (carefully, diligently).
- C. One Hebrew word: mishmar - a guard (the man, the post, or the prison); figuratively a deposit; also (as observed) a usage (abstractly), or an example (concretely): - diligence, guard, office, prison, ward, watch.
- D. We demand diligence from...
1. Our doctors.
    - a) We expect them to have been diligent in their studies.
    - b) We expect them to be diligent in their treatment of us and our loved ones.
    - c) I recently heard someone saying that they were changing doctors because their doctor had prescribed a medicine to them and had not even bothered to see what other medicines they were taking. When this person read up on the new medicine he saw that it was never to be used with one of the medicines he was already taking. His doctor had not been careful (or diligent).
  2. Our bankers.
    - a) Would any of us ever dream of putting up with a sloppy banker?
    - b) We expect them to be thorough and persistent when they are dealing with our money.
  3. Our children's teachers.
    - a) We expect our children's teachers to be careful and persistent.
    - b) We expect them to give time and attention to making sure that our children are learning what they are supposed to learn.
  4. Our mechanics.
    - a) We pay them to fix problems.
    - b) We expect them to know how to fix the problems we are having.
  5. Basically, we expect (or at least desire) diligence from everyone with whom we deal on a daily basis.
- E. We demonstrate diligence...
1. With our finances.
    - a) Savings.
    - b) Taxes.
    - c) Retirement.
    - d) Credit, Loans, Mortgages.
  2. With our jobs (hopefully).
    - a) We train.
    - b) We go to work daily.
    - c) We work hard.
  3. With our homes and automobiles. (maintenance and upkeep)
  4. With our health. (hopefully)
  5. A lack of diligence in any of these areas can cause severe problems in our lives!

### II. DILIGENCE IN OUR SALVATION.

- A. Are we diligent in the one area that matters more than any other?
- B. Your salvation ought to be the most important thing in your life.
1. Matthew 16:26. **For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

2. Colossians 3:1-4. If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. **3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
- C. We are told to be diligent with our salvation.
1. 2 Timothy 2:15. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
    - a) Part of presenting ourselves approved to God requires us to rightly divide the word.
    - b) To know it, interpret it correctly.
    - c) This takes time and effort.
  2. 2 Peter 3:14. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, **without spot and blameless**;
    - a) Listen up!
    - b) Jesus is coming back some day! He is!!!
    - c) You be careful. You be persistent in His service.
    - d) Trust me. You want to be found without spot and blameless when He comes.
  3. Romans 12:10-11. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; **11** not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord
    - a) Where there is no fervency, diligence lags.
    - b) Fervency - heat, boiling.
    - c) Are you hot or cold?
  4. Hebrews 11:6. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those **who diligently seek Him**.
    - a) God is a rewarder of those who **diligently** seek Him.
    - b) Does "diligent" describe how you seek God?
    - c) If you were on trial for being a seeker of God, would there be sufficient evidence to convict you?

### III. DILIGENCE IN GUARDING OUR HEART.

- A. Proverbs 4:23. **Keep your heart** with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.
1. This passage says to guard your heart with the diligence of a prison guard.
  2. Prison guards we responsible for their prisoners.
  3. If one escaped, they had to take their place.
  4. They were very diligent in their duties.
  5. The Philippian Jailer was about to kill himself when he thought his prisoners had escaped. Acts 16:27. **And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.**
- B. But what does it mean to guard our heart?
1. The "heart" is not talking about our blood pump.
  2. It is referring to our mind.
  3. Guarding our heart is talking about controlling our passions and desires.
    - a) 1 Corinthians 9:27. **But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**
    - b) Proverbs 25:28. **Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.**
    - c) If we never allow sin to reign in our minds, it will not show itself in our actions.
  4. Matthew 5:27-28. **"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.**

### IV. DILIGENCE IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

- A. 2 Peter 1:10. **Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;**
1. Do what things?
  2. 2 Peter 1:5-7. **But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.**
  3. We are to **add** these qualities to our character.

4. This is talking about spiritual growth.
- B. We must be diligent in seeking spiritual growth.
1. All of us ought to be advancing to the place where we can teach others. Hebrews 5:12. *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*
    - a) Think about the diligence it requires to be a teacher in a secular school.
    - b) Those who want to be teachers must go through several years of instruction.
    - c) They are held accountable for learning the material. TESTS.
    - d) Do we put forth the same effort to become spiritual teachers?
      - (1) What if I gave you a test today?
      - (2) Tell what the Bible teaches in regard to the following: Give Bible references:
        - (a) The deity of Christ.
        - (b) The oneness of the church.
        - (c) Scriptural organization of the church.
        - (d) Christian worship.
          - (i) Acts of worship.
          - (ii) Time of worship.
        - (e) Sinfulness of denominationalism.
      - (3) These are not unreasonable questions.
      - (4) If you don't have all of the information off the top of your head, do you know where to find it?
  2. All of us must sanctify the Lord in our hearts and be ready to give an answer. 1 Peter 3:15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear*

## V. DILIGENCE IN PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE TO THOSE WHO WILL FOLLOW US.

- A. 2 Peter 1:15. *Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.*
1. Peter was writing because he knew that his life was near its end.
  2. He wanted to make sure that those who succeeded him would be adequately prepared face whatever life threw at them.
- B. I think we all understand that we have an obligation to the next generation to pass on those things that we have learned.
1. Deuteronomy 6:4-9. *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*
  2. Ephesians 6:4. *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*
  3. Are we diligent in this?
    - a) Do we take an active part in the spiritual education of our children or do we leave that to the Bible class teachers?
    - b) It is not the church's responsibility to bring your child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is your responsibility.
      - (1) One of the tools you can use is Bible Class.
      - (2) Are you using it?
    - c) You ought to be involved with the spiritual education of your children.
    - d) Home devotionals in the evening.

## VI. WHAT PRODUCES DILIGENCE?

- A. Godly sorrow. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11. *For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

1. Have you ever messed up and let someone down and then used that to motivate you to do better from that point on?
  2. Godly sorrow produced diligence in the Corinthians.
  3. Their sorrow over their sin and shortcomings led them to strive to do better.
- B. All of us have sinned. Romans 3:23. **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**
1. Those who are truly sorry (godly sorrow) use their past failures as a way of motivating their selves for the future.
  2. That does not mean that we “beat ourselves up” over these past failures. Philippians 3:13-14. **Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, **14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

## VII. DILIGENCE TO THE END.

- A. Our diligence must endure to the end. Hebrews 6:10-12. **For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. **11** And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope **until the end, 12** that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**
- B. Those who inherit the promises are the ones who have been found diligent at the time of their death. Ezekiel 18:21-24. **“But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. **22** None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. **23** Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?”** says the Lord GOD, **“and not that he should turn from his ways and live? **24** “But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.**