

How to Be a Wise Guy

Studies in Proverbs

We Have Seen the Enemy

Introduction to “Becoming Diligent” from Proverbs

We can probably all relate to what the comic strip character, Pogo, once said, “We have seen the enemy, and he is us”. As we know we are often our own worst enemies—we know what to do, but just can’t seem to make ourselves do it. That’s what this week’s study in diligence is all about—making ourselves habitually do what is really best for us. Those who are diligent think about what they want to do, they plan well for it, they begin to carry out their plan as soon as the opportunity presents itself, and then they enjoy the fruit of their labor. In contrast, the “sluggard” (our term would be “slacker”) is impulsive—they refuse to plan, they indulge the flesh, they play now, and pay later—and they come to ruin because of it. In all of this the slacker sees no wrong—he

makes excuses for not working, and has all the answers. His poverty is never his fault; he is a victim. The motivation for becoming diligent, therefore, seems obvious: we will achieve what we really need, rather than settling for short-term gratification. Those who are diligent experience material blessings, as a rule, but even more they enjoy satisfaction in their hearts. They have achieved what they set their hearts to do, overcome the difficulties, and are able to see the outcome of their consistent effort. In addition, their relationships are blessed because they carry out their commitments. Everyone in their lives, including work associates, know that the diligent will fulfill their promise and give it their best effort.



Using God’s Wisdom to Make Life Work

Also, because of their manner of life, they are able to give to those in need. So, how does one become diligent? The first step is to decisively commit to this approach in every aspect of life. They must allow others to support them in this journey, they must be willing to plan before they act, and decide to pay now, and play later. When a person becomes diligent, he is no longer his own worst enemy, but his own best friend.

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- Worship—You were planned for God’s pleasure
- Fellowship—You were formed for God’s family
- Discipleship—You were created to become like Christ
- Ministry—You were shaped for serving God
- Evangelism—You were made for a mission

Daily Questions for Becoming Diligent

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader resources)

1. Read 12:27. How does a diligent person act with regard to their possessions? What does this reveal about the meaning of diligence?

2. Look at 20:13 and 21:5. Describe two more patterns of life of the diligent person.

3. From 12:27, 21:5, 21:17 and 26:13-16 explain the behaviors that are the opposite of diligence. Using your answers from these first 3 questions write a definition of diligence.

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Becoming Diligent—Proverbs, Part 3, Study Questions (cont)

4. Based on 10:4-5 what can the diligent person expect?	
5. From 10:26 how does a lazy person affect those he works for? Conversely, how do you think bosses feel about diligent workers?	
6. Read 13:4. What is the result of being diligent, in contrast to being a sluggard, or slacker? Why?	
7. Looking at 21:25-26, what is another outcome of diligence?	
8. What help does 13:1 provide for developing diligence, or discipline?	
9. According to 21:5 and 24:27, in what 2 practices should we engage that will enable us to become more diligent or disciplined?	
10. The word “diligent” means to “cut sharply”. How does this apply to the decision to become diligent—when do we start becoming diligent?	
11. Summarize the meaning of diligence, and write down some steps you can take to start becoming that way.	

Scripture to Remember

“Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor.”

Proverbs 12:24 (NIV)

Celebration Fellowship

*Reaching—
Restoring—Raising Up*

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Life Group Questions—How to Be Wise about Anger

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. What form does your anger usually take—a powder keg, or a slow burn? What makes you angry most often?
2. Why do you think it is difficult for most people to admit that they are angry? Why is it so important to admit it?
3. How have you seen anger affect you physically, relationally, emotionally and/or spiritually? Why is unaddressed anger an invitation to Satan to destroy you?
4. In what ways are hurt, fear, and frustration the root sources of anger? In your opinion, which one of these causes your anger?
5. How do people avoid accepting responsibility for their anger? Do you ever do this? Talk about the best ways for us to address our anger.
6. Discuss anything else that impressed you from the message today if you have time.