

# WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING IN WISDOM / SERIES: PROVERBS

## BIG TRUTH: WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

Proverbs 13:4; Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Peter 1:10; 3:14; 2 Timothy 2:15; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:23

## BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 10:4-5

*“A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich, He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.”*

## BIG IDEAS

- Diligence pursues what is good without being told what to do.
- Diligence is willing to work hard and labor for what is good.
- The end of laziness is lack and loss.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: PROVERBS 6:6-11, 8:17, 12:24, 13:4, 21:5

## KNEEL: LIVING IN WISDOM

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know...

- What wisdom is.
- Why wisdom is worthy to be pursued.
- How to grow in wisdom.



### Every student should feel...

- Love for God who gives all wisdom.
- Satisfied and secure in the wisdom of God.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



### Every student should strive to...

- Read through the book of Proverbs one time each month.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Repent of the ways they have not pursued God and His wisdom.



### Every student should want...

- To fear the Lord and keep His commandments.
- To live their lives in pursuit of true wisdom.
- To guard their heart from all impurity.

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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# WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

## BIBLE VERSE: PROVERBS 10:4-5

*“A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich, He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.”*

### **Laziness leads to a lack of needed things.**

*“A slack hand causes poverty...”*

- God provides for His people by giving us the things we need. He does this by giving us actual provision and by also giving us the ability to gather and provide for ourselves. We can work and earn money to buy the things we need.
- He has created a world and an order to the world that enables us to have what we need, but we must follow His plan. Part of this is not living a lazy lifestyle. Laziness does not produce what we need. When we are lazy, we won't gather what we need. We won't use our abilities to get the things we need. Instead, we will waste them and be without.

### **Diligence is necessary to pursue good.**

*“...but the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a prudent son...”*

- Diligence is a persistence and consistency. It's sticking with something and not giving up or stopping. Diligence is the act of continuing to do something even when we aren't seeing the results we want right away.
- Without diligence, we will not pursue good always. Pursuing good requires a consistency and a willingness to do so even when it's challenging and hard. When we're diligent, we will do this because we will have a disciplined and consistent life.

### **Slothfulness ends in poverty and shame.**

*“...but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.”*

- The end of slothfulness is poverty and shame. It ends in shame because it didn't have to happen. For some, poverty is the result of someone else's actions. They didn't do anything or plan to end up in the situation they are in, but when a person is slothful and they experience poverty, it is to their shame that they do so.
- Slothfulness never leads to a productive life. When our lives are characterized by laziness, we will end in poverty, and we will lack the things we need.

# WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

## BIG IDEA #1: DILIGENCE PURSUES WHAT IS GOOD WITHOUT BEING TOLD WHAT TO DO.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

One of the definitions of the word diligence is a devoted and painstaking work and application to accomplish an undertaking. From this definition we get a good picture of what Proverbs 6:6-8 is describing when it describes the ant who is diligent to gather and prepare food in the summer to prepare for the winter. Most people know how ants are persistent in their pursuit of a crumb or any morsel of food. The ant prepares for the time when there will not be plenty of food. Many animals are instinctively this way—they prepare in times of plenty for when there will be times of want. Diligence is continuing to pursue the goodness of God even when times are good because we know that the hard times are coming, and we'll need the knowledge that we gain in the good times to help us through the difficult times. Diligence involves a devotion to what is good and enduring the painstaking work of remaining faithful, even when we don't feel like it or it means we stand out in our culture. Wisdom understands that the fruit of diligence is greater than the pleasure of slothfulness.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Proverbs 6:6-11. How does your life compare to that of the ant? What are examples of what a diligent life looks like?**

These verses teach us that the ant pursues preparation. The ant prepares for times when it will not have, and it does so without needing a leader or chief. A diligent life is one lived in full pursuit of God and the expansion of His kingdom. It is one that exhibits the daily habit of seeking to know Him and to obey Him.

### [ THIS ]

Living a life of diligence means pursuing what is good without being told to do it. People who are diligent do not need a master ruling over them telling them to diligently pursue the good things. Diligent people pursue the goodness of God because they are wise and know that the goodness of God is the worthiest thing to pursue in life. Often, we use the excuse that we didn't know, or no one told us to do or not to do something, but those who are truly wise and diligent do not need someone to tell them. They have learned and know that the pursuit of righteousness is what their lives should be about. Proverbs 8:17 tells us that those who diligently seek God will find Him. The diligent have discovered this and continue to pursue Him with devotion and painstaking work because they have tasted and seen that He is good, and they are not satisfied until they are filled with Him every day.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Diligence is not needing someone to tell you to do what is right. What are some examples from your own life of diligence?**

Proverbs 13:4 tells us that the soul of the diligent is richly supplied. When we pursue something with diligence, we see results. When we pursue something and practice it, we will see results. When we stick with something, we will see the fruit of what we are pursuing. The same is true for our spiritual lives.

**Would you say your spiritual life reveals that you are diligent in your pursuit of righteousness? Why or why not?**

Proverbs 8:17 tells us that those who seek God diligently find Him. When we pursue righteousness, we will find it. 2 Timothy 2:27 also tells us to flee youthful passions and to pursue righteousness. When we flee youthful passions, we will flee a lack of discipline.

1. Proverbs 6:7: A wise person is diligent and diligence does what is right without needing to be told to do it.

# WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

## BIG IDEA #2: DILIGENCE IS WILLING TO WORK HARD AND LABOR FOR WHAT IS GOOD.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Some things in life come easily. Some people achieve great things with ease, but most things and most people must work very hard to achieve anything worth having or doing. Throughout Scripture, the idea of perseverance in this world is taught by Jesus and His disciples. Paul writes of the need to persevere in his letters to the early churches. Jesus taught His earthly followers to persevere amid persecution. Diligence is being willing to do what is hard because we know the result is good. Living for Jesus in this life is not easy, especially if we truly live radical lives sold out to Him. We will stand out and we will look different from the world. Pursuing the good things of the Lord is not easy when the things of the world come so easily. Diligence is the willingness to put in the hard work for the goodness of the Lord. This means that we are willing to set aside the pleasures of the world to study God's Word. We choose to grow in our knowledge of Scripture rather than watching television or hanging out with friends as much. We choose to persevere in learning Scripture or other Biblical truths even though they are difficult because we know they are good and worth knowing.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### Why is it challenging to work hard for God's truth in this world?

Romans 12:2 and Ephesians 5:11 tell us that the things of this world are ungodly and sinful. It is these temptations that keep us from wanting to work hard for God's truth. It's challenging because we can easily partake in sinful things but pursuing God can require work and sacrifice.

### [ THIS ]

Prior to the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, work was a good thing and not hard. Labor was good. After the sin of Adam and Eve, labor became part of the curse of sinning against God. Now, we find labor hard and difficult. Even when we challenge our minds in pursuing the goodness of God, we find it difficult. Laboring for the righteousness of Christ can be difficult. Diligence pursues this goodness and righteousness even when it requires great labor. Choosing to do the right thing and the good thing is the wisest thing we can do. Choosing to seek after God's righteousness and to put on holiness requires labor on our part. We must do the work of putting to death our sin nature. We must do the daily work of taking up our cross and dying to ourselves. We must do the work of turning away from worldly things and pursuing eternal things. This labor is work worth doing.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### What part of pursuing the goodness of God has seemed like hard labor to you? How has this kept you from pursuing His goodness?

Psalm 34:8 and 31:19 teach us that God is good and a worthy pursuit. This pursuit requires work and labor on our part, but often, we want the reward without the effort. We will begin pursuing, but not continue pursuing when it doesn't come as easily as we'd like.

#### How can you set your heart to pursue God more diligently this week?

Proverbs 6:6-7 teach us that the ant pursues provision in the good times and the bad. We can discipline ourselves to pursue God every day by establishing the habit of seeking Him during some part of our day.

2. Proverbs 6:9-11: Those who are lazy do not pursue what is good and they aren't willing to work hard for what is good.

# WISDOM PURSUES DILIGENCE AND REJECTS LAZINESS

## BIG IDEA #3: THE END OF LAZINESS IS LACK AND LOSS.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

We all are lazy at times. We have days we don't feel like working or completing our tasks. There are days we get less accomplished than we'd like. Proverbs 6:10-11 tells us that a life that is characterized by laziness will result in lack. This lack isn't something that the person will notice really. According to the Proverb, the poverty will come upon the person like a robber or an armed man. What this means is that laziness steals time from us. It steals productivity. This productivity isn't a productivity for the world so that we are successful citizens of this world, but it steals the disciples we could have made, the lost people we could have shared the gospel with, the poor we could have helped, and the local church we could have participated with, using our spiritual gifts for the glory of God. When this Proverbs speaks of lack or poverty, it is not necessarily speaking material lack. It is speaking of a wasted life. A life spent doing nothing of eternal significance.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### What is the danger in living a life characterized by laziness?

Proverbs 13:4 tells us that the soul of the lazy person craves nothing. This person doesn't desire to accomplish eternal things. This person doesn't desire to grow spiritually, and this person will not achieve eternal things.

### [ THIS ]

The greatest tragedy for a person is live their whole lives and never really accomplish anything of eternal significance or to miss the point and purpose of their lives. God created each person to live for His glory and to enjoy Him forever. Laziness robs this from a person. Slothfulness steals this from a person. Wisdom rejects this type of living. Instead, wisdom chooses to turn to God and choose a life of eternal significance. When we live lives that are marked by spiritual laziness, the result will be the loss of an eternity with Christ. Instead, we will spend eternity separated from Him. Wisdom chooses to pursue the goodness of Christ and diligently seek righteousness. Wisdom rejects laziness and slothfulness.

### [ THEREFORE ]

#### How does laziness rob us of the pursuit of eternal things?

Proverbs 20:13 and 21:25 teach us that the person who is lazy reaps a life of fruitlessness. This type of life robs us of doing anything of eternal significance. When we are lazy and slothful, we do not pursue the Lord or do anything of eternal significance.

#### What are some practical ways to identify any areas in your life where you are lazy or slothful?

James 4:17 tells us that when we know the right thing to do and we don't do it, it is sin for us. When we know that we are wasting time or allowing ourselves to give into slothfulness, we should diligently turn away from this behavior. 2 Timothy 2:15 tells us to present ourselves as workers who are approved and ready. To do this, we cannot be lazy or slothful. We must be hard workers and prepared.

3. Proverbs 6:11: Slothfulness leads to poverty and lack.