



Blackfoot Church of Christ

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The Diligence of Jesus

By Heath Rogers

Christians are not saved to sit. We are not to put our spiritual lives on “autopilot” and expect any favorable results. The Bible contains repeated admonitions for us to be diligent in our efforts to grow spiritually and to serve the Lord.

We often learn best with the reinforcement of a good example. If we need an example of diligence, we need look no further than our Lord.

Jesus showed diligence in His youth. The Lord’s family traveled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover when He was twelve years old. The family began to travel back home, but Jesus stayed behind. When He was found in the Temple, Jesus told Joseph and Mary, “I must be about My Father’s business” (Luke 2:49).

Jesus showed diligence in His ministry. He was motivated with a defined purpose. “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth” (Mark 1:38).

Jesus accomplished the greatest work the world will ever know in three short years. He was able to do this because He showed devotion in His work ethic. “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34). “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4).

Not only was Jesus motivated by a devotion to His Father’s will, He was also motivated by His love for the souls of men. Jesus spoke of the diligence of a shepherd who would leave the ninety-nine sheep in safety “and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying” (Matt. 18:11-14). He also spoke of the diligence of a woman who “if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it” (Luke 15:8). Jesus is the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep (John 10:11). He is the One who has “come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

We can see the diligence Jesus put into His effort to save our souls. If we benefit from His efforts, it is only fitting that we strive to match His efforts by showing the same diligence. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12). We are to labor for the food that endures to everlasting life (John 6:27). We are to cleanse ourselves and perfect holiness (2 Cor. 7:1). We are to exercise ourselves toward godliness (1 Tim. 4:7-8). We are to show diligence in inheriting God's promises (Heb. 6:11-12).

Diligence is an admirable and necessary trait in many walks of life. The student must be diligent in his studies, the athlete must be diligent in his training, and the businessman must be diligent in his enterprises. So also, the Christian must be diligent in his growth and service to the Lord. Let us give all diligence in adding the necessary characteristics to our faith, and let us be even more diligent to make our call and election sure (2 Peter 1:5, 10).

Contentment

By Phil Arnold

"Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:6-10).

One of the most desired and yet elusive goals in life is this matter of contentment. Truly, contentment is one of great treasures of life and he who has contentment is truly rich. The word Paul uses here in 1 Timothy 6:6 for contentment is "autarkeia." This was one of the great watchwords of the Stoic philosophers of Greece. By "autarkeia" they meant a complete "self-sufficiency." they meant a frame of mind that was completely independent of all outward things and which carried the secret of happiness within itself. He who had "autarkeia" (contentment) needed nothing else. The thought being that true contentment never comes from the possession of external things (material wealth) but from an inward attitude in life. A Greek philosopher named Epicurus was asked for the secret to happiness and reportedly replied, "add not to a man's possessions but take away from his desires." It is not what a man possesses but what truly possesses him that produces contentment.

God has provided all that man needs to be happy. Yet, God brought us into the world without any possessions. Thus, possessions cannot be the root of

happiness. They are transitory. "There are no pockets in a shroud" and "you can't take it with you." "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Timothy 6:7). All we can take to God is ourselves and the history of the lives we have lived whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). It is not that Christianity pleads for poverty. There is no special virtue for poverty. There is no special virtue in being poor or in having a constant struggle to make ends meet. In this same sixth chapter in fact, Paul speaks of Christians who are rich and does not condemn them for their wealth. He does warn about trusting in "uncertain riches" and encourages them to be "rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share" (1 Timothy 6:17-19). It is not sinful to be rich nor righteous to be poor. But we must realize that it is never in the power of things to bring lasting happiness. Paul pleads instead for concentration upon the spiritual things which are permanent. For contentment can only come when we escape the servitude of things. "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15). Contentment will be ours when we find that our wealth is in the love and fellowship of God which has been made possible through Jesus Christ. Truly, having God we have all things.

"But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare.... For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:9-10). Again, money in itself is neither good nor bad; but the love of it – the "desire to be rich" – leads to evil and "many foolish and harmful lusts." With money a man may selfishly serve his own desires or answer the needs of a fellow human being. With money a man may facilitate the path of wrongdoing or he can make it easier for someone else to serve God. No, money is not in itself an evil, but it is a great responsibility. It is a powerful tool that may be used for good or evil, and it brings with it special dangers if it is loved. If it is loved: 1) It tends to be a desire which is never satisfied (Ecclesiastes 5:10). 2) It makes for a life founded upon an illusion that security is found in possessions (Luke 12:16-21). 3) It tends to make us selfish and proud (Luke 16:19f). 4) It promises security but tends to produce anxiety (Ecclesiastes 5:12). 5) It may even lead to dishonesty (Proverbs 30:9).

To seek to be independent of financial reliance upon others and prudently provide for the future is a Christian duty (Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10), but to make the love of money the driving force of life cannot ever be anything other than the most perilous of sins and will rob us of the "great gain" – the contentment that is found only in Christ.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Brenda's aunt is recovering from a head injury from a fall.
- Shirley Torres, Seattle WA (Torres' have visited our congregation) is fighting cancer. Chemo treatments have not been successful. They have decided to stop the Chemo and pursue other treatments to help enhance her quality of life.
- Kass' Grandmother has been diagnosed with Lung Cancer.
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class tomorrow night 7:00pm at Chad and Kass' on evangelism
- Plan for a men's meeting after services next Sunday

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Lord's Table – Tom Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward
<u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Ross Ward Lord's Table – Chad Mitchell Sermon – David Porter	<u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Invitation – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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