

# FAMILY FAITH BUILDER

## Character Lessons for Practical Application of Faith

# Diligence v. Slothfulness



### Investing all my energy to complete the tasks assigned to me

Diligence for people of faith means putting your heart and soul into your tasks, embracing each with forethought, consideration, energy and attention to detail. It means being in the moment and not distracted by worldly pleasures.

Diligence also requires that we be selective of the tasks that deserve that type of attention. Are the tasks we choose to do, the ones that God has chosen for us? When we are doing the work God wants us to do, we can tap into the Joy of His mission to motivate and energize us. When we labor with His love, our work is life-giving.

Many times, the effort we spend to do a job correctly and completely goes unnoticed or unappreciated by those around us. Be assured, that God sees our diligence and will gift us with his grace to continue our diligence. Sometimes diligence requires that we suffer through hardships to see a task completed. This suffering, too, is a source of grace.

This month, let cheerful diligence accompany the work you do.

### To Practice Diligence I Will:

- finish my projects
- do a job right
- follow instructions
- concentrate on my work
- not be lazy

Any others appropriate to your family?

### God's Word on Diligence

*"A slack hand brings poverty, but the hand of the diligent brings wealth." Proverbs 10:4*

*"Instead of this, brothers, never allow your choice or calling to waver; then there will be no danger of your stumbling." 2 Peter 1:10*

*"The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied." Proverbs 13:4*

*"Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace." 2 Peter 3:14*

*"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12*

*"Jesus said: "We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work." John 9:4*

### Nehemiah Teaches Us about Diligence

Nehemiah was a cup bearer in court of King Artaxerxes when he heard the news that the land of his ancestors, Jerusalem, was in disrepair. The walls surrounding the city were crumbling and the gates had been burned. This greatly distressed Nehemiah. The first thing he did was to pray to God about what he should do about it. Nehemiah then approached the King about going to Jerusalem to rebuild it. The King granted him his request.

Upon arriving in Jerusalem, the first thing he did was to inspect the damage to the city walls and the gates. Next, he built enthusiasm for the project and recruited families to become engaged in the task of rebuilding. His diligent leadership helped the workers overcome the constant ridicule and threats from the neighboring enemies.

Nehemiah understood that to be a diligent worker for Christ that you sometimes have to be a warrior, too. Despite all of the hardships of the project, he stayed focused on his goal until he had the walls rebuilt and new gates in place. He knew that it was with God's help that the work had been completed.



## Bounce Back



For this activity you will need foil (or anything to protect the surface), 2 hard-boiled eggs (or raw if you are daring), and a superball – any high bouncing ball will do. You can do this demonstration yourself, or you can ask someone to do it while you narrate. First spread the foil out on the floor. Show everyone the egg and the ball. Ask them to predict what will happen if you drop the egg. Then, drop the egg onto the foil. The shell will crack, at the very least. Next show the second egg and ask what will happen if the egg is thrown with great force at the foil. Then do it. Now do the same with the ball (but not on the foil), first dropping and then throwing it down. The ball will bounce back.

Discuss the difference by explaining that when “egg people” hit an obstacle, they splatter. The harder they hit, the harder they splatter, giving up on their goal. When “super ball people” hit an obstacle, they bounce back. The harder they hit, the harder they bounce back. When the going gets tough, the tough get going! Use the image of a trampoline to further explain the image of diligently bouncing back from adversity.

As Christians, we are a Resurrection people. Jesus gives us the example of the ultimate “bounce back” when he rose from the dead. His Resurrection is the source of our hope and the power that fuels our own diligence in our tasks of the Kingdom.

*“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” 2 Timothy 1:7*

### POSTER IDEA:

**Diligence**  
**Investing all my energy**  
**to complete the tasks**  
**assigned to me**



**“Whatever you do, work**  
**heartily, as for the Lord and**  
**not for men.”**  
Colossians 3:23

**Do you fully focus on**  
**your tasks?**

Dear Jesus,

We praise you for your goodness and mercy and thank you for the example of Diligence in your life. We remember how you stayed focused on doing your Father’s will. Remind us to concentrate on our own work and do the job right. May we learn, with your help, to cheerfully follow directions. Guide us to finish our projects and not be lazy. Help us to act in all things in harmony with the will of the Father. Amen.

#### **Other ways to teach character in the home:**

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit [www.charactercincinnati.org/faith.php](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/faith.php)

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For more activities that can be adapted for family use, visit

[www.charactercincinnati.org/quality\\_resource.php?q=diligence](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/quality_resource.php?q=diligence)