

Imagine, for a moment, a young child sitting at a piano, staring at a difficult piece of music. The black notes seem to run together, forming an endless parade of black streaks and dots, overwhelming the child. Now, suppose that the mentioned musical piece is not beyond the child's ability to play; it is only newly introduced. The child has two choices. One, he can continue to sit on the bench and watch the notes swim in and out of his vision, or two, he can correct his slumped posture and begin to work slowly through the piece, measure by measure, line by line, until he has successfully untangled the torrent of black lines. Which course do you suppose he will take?

Too often in today's world is the first course chosen. Too often is the saying "nothing is so difficult that diligence cannot master it" regarded with a negative mindset. Today, the word "diligence" immediately generates thoughts along the lines of "you expect me to be *what?* That is too hard!" Diligence, today, is associated with misery, grueling work, and not a hint of profit. No one can possibly hope to achieve diligence! It is simply too hard. However, this is why I choose to argue *in favor* of diligence.

Despite the negative outlook on diligence, many people have pursued it and benefitted greatly from their efforts. Yes, diligence requires hard work, and no, it is not an overnight accomplishment. The definition of diligence states that clearly enough. Diligence, as defined in the dictionary, is the *persistent* and *hardworking effort* in doing something. Regardless of these seeming negativities, diligence pays off in the end.

One finds an application of diligence and its benefits in the historical figure of Girolamo Savonarola. Savonarola was determined to turn the hearts of Florence to God. However, when he first started preaching in Florence, his words fell upon deafened ears

and hardened hearts. Humbled and a bit dejected, Savonarola retreated. Even so, instead of succumbing to defeat, Savonarola returned to Florence, more determined than ever. This time his words reached the people of Florence. Diligence prevailed.

Educational learning is another application of diligence. From adding “2 + 2” to working through a difficult algebra problem, from underlining the simple subject and simple predicate to diagramming a compound-complex sentence, from identifying a bird feather to mastering the mazes of cellular respiration; all these things and more require studious diligence from the beginning. Under no circumstances are these things mastered with little effort; under all circumstances are they mastered with diligence. Because diligence demands so much, it is reasonable to assume that the proverb “nothing is so difficult that diligence cannot master it” is true.

With this thought in mind, return to the child on the piano bench. It is several weeks later, and the musical piece is no longer overwhelming. The torrent of black dots and dashes is now a comprehensible language, forming a charming melody that pleases the ear and paints pictures in the mind. The once-bewildered child now considers the piece one of his best. He can sit down and confidently play the difficult piece with nary a second thought. Which course do you think he took?

*“The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.”*

*-Proverbs 21:5-*

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*“All hard work brings a profit.”*

*-Proverbs 14:23a-*