

The dictionary is the only place where success comes before work. Show me a man of God who you admire – I guarantee they will be a hard worker.

**Proverbs 12:24 NKJV** <sup>24</sup>The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.

**Proverbs 12:24 NLT** <sup>24</sup>Work hard and become a leader; be lazy and become a slave.

### I. THE LAZINESS TRAP

A. This text speaks about lazy men: **V24** But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.

1. Lack of desire/unwillingness to work

a. Bowstring that is slack/no tension; Not being strained – but not useful

2. **Lazy men lack understanding:** **Proverbs 24:30** <sup>30</sup>I walked by the field of a lazy person, the vineyard of one with no common sense.

a. They fail to understand what it takes to succeed at anything: *Hard work!*

b. They fail to gain understanding of how to do what they need to do

3. **Lazy men live by their feelings:** Hard work can be unenjoyable...I don't feel like working

B. Laziness ruins the future! **V24** But the lazy man will be put to forced labor. be lazy and become a slave.

1. A lazy man cannot determine what happens in the future: People or circumstances determine it

a. In ministry: Disciples who do not get where they want to be. b. Pastors who don't grow

### II. THE NEED FOR HARD WORK

A. Anything good in life requires hard work

1. Man was placed in a garden to work: *Great potential could be released through labor*

a. Many parables: Fields/farms/dirt; Work was required to release blessing

2. The things of God require hard work: **V24** The hand of the diligent...Work hard...

a. **Matthew 9:37** <sup>37</sup>Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

b. **Colossians 1:29** To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

B. The process:

1. Decide what you want: Diligent means 'to decide'

2. Work to understand what is needed: Asking questions requires work

3. Work hard at it – every day: When you feel like it/don't. When rewarding/not. When exciting/boring

*Jerry Seinfeld: "When I was starting out, I used to sit down and write a couple of times a week. Then, I watched construction workers go back to work, trudging down the street. It was like a revelation to me: these guys don't want to go back to work after lunch, but they're goin'. That's their job. If they can exhibit that level of dedication for that job, I should be able to do the same for mine.*

*Learn to accept your mediocrity. No one's really that great. You know who's great? The people that just put tremendous amount of hours into it. It's a game of tonnage. Net worth \$1 billion.*

4. There are things you can't choose in life: Intelligence/talent; **But you can choose to work hard!**

### III. DILIGENCE RULES

A. Our text says that hard work determines your future: **V24** The hand of the diligent will rule...

1. You rule or determine your own future: Successful/effective – or not

2. You rule others – meaning you can lead them

a. Hard work will give you influence with others

3. God blesses hard work

a. God watches workers – to reward & promote them

1. *Rachel/camels: Watching how she works to choose a bride for the wealthy son*

2. *Ruth/gleaning in the heat: Rewarding/marrying the wealthy owner – line of Christ!*

2. This is why we should work as hard as we can & do the best we can!

a. We do the best we can – and God adds His blessing; *He does what He can do!*