

## FAITH IN THE WORKPLACE

As Christians, we must always remember that we are pilgrims and sojourners in this world (**Hebrews 11:13**). This world is not our home; we are just passing through. We are to set our mind on heavenly things, where Christ is (**Colossians 3:1-3**). We are longing for that city that God is preparing for His people (**Hebrews 11:16**).

We have obligations concerning our spiritual growth and development (**1 Peter 2:11**). We have obligations towards those who are still in this world (**1 Peter 2:12**). One area where we must fulfill our duty to those in the world is "the workplace." What are the relationships we must maintain with those with whom we work?

Paul gave instructions concerning Christian living in this world. We are to lead a quiet life. We are to mind our own business. We are to work with our hands. We are to walk properly towards those who are outside (**1 Thessalonians 4:11-12**).

The instructions Paul gave to servants can easily be applied to Christians in the workplace (**Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25; 1 Timothy 6:1-3; Titus 2:9-10**). So could the instructions from Peter (**1 Peter 2:18-20**).

Here are some spiritual guidelines for workers. Obey those who are over you (unless they ask you to do that which is unethical or illegal). Work with proper respect and good will toward your boss. Labor sincerely and heartily, as to the Lord and not to men. Do not work only when the boss is watching, or just to please those over you. Demonstrate that you can be trusted with responsibility. Offer such service, not just to good employers, but even to those who are unfair.

We are to follow these Scriptural guidelines. We are to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. Additional counsel for laborers can be found from the wisdom of Solomon (e.g., **Proverbs 12:24; 22:29**). Those who follow such guidelines will not only please the Lord, but likely be very successful in their work!

Consider the responsibilities of Christian as manager or employer (**Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1**). Look at the guidelines in the Old Testament (**Deuteronomy 24:14-15; Proverbs 22:16; Jeremiah 22:13-17; Malachi 3:5**). In both Testaments, there are principles to guide the Christian manager.

Here are some Scriptural guidelines for managers. Remember that you have a Master in heaven! Treat your employees with justice and fairness. Do not oppress or exploit those who are under you. Do not resort to threatening (seek positive motivation instead). Applying the golden rule will go a long way to managing properly (**Matthew 7:12**).

Managers who so govern will likely be highly esteemed, both by those they manage and those under whom they serve. Yet as Christians, our goal is not just to provide honorable service, but to encourage people to glorify God (cf. **1 Peter 2:12**). This raises the issue of doing evangelism in the workplace.

As Christians, we are to seek and save the lost (**Mark 16:15-16**). As workers, honorable service demands a proper day's work for a day's wage. The adorning the doctrine of Christ requires that we not pilfer (including time) (**Titus 2:10**). Of course, the challenge is to properly balance our efforts to save and our duty to work.

Here are some guidelines to govern the Christian at work. Do not forget the power of a good example (**1Peter 2:12; 3:1-2**). Do not let your speech betray your being a Christian (cf. **Ephesians 4:29; 5:4; Colossians 4:6**). Wisely consider the best use of one's time on the job (cf. **Colossians 4:5**).

Circumstances at work are rarely conducive to substantive spiritual discussions. Seek to turn casual conversations related to spiritual subjects into opportunities for future studies. Spiritual zeal is no excuse for cheating those who have hired us. What kind of laborers and managers are we? Do we encourage others to glorify God?

Something to think about!

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