

Sunday, January 15, 2023 pm

India – Saturday, February 25, 2023 – 10:45 am (lectures)

Practical Christianity At Our Work!

It is certainly no secret that being a Christian is a full-time commitment. In every area of our life we must realize that we are to be examples. Jesus Himself taught in Matthew 5:14-16 that we are the light of the world. We are not to hide that light, but to live in such a way that we bring glory to God. Paul told the Philippians that we shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. (Philippians 2:15) When we fully understand the Christian's life, we realize that it has an impact on everything we are. It is going to affect every relationship we are in, everywhere we go, our attitudes, our conversations and everything we do. I have been asked to address some things we must consider as Christians when we go to work.

I. We have a responsibility to work to provide for ourselves.

- a. From the beginning God commended work – even before the fall of man, Adam was called upon to work – Genesis 2:15, 19 – he was to tend and keep the garden, name the animals.
And even after their sinful fall, man was expected to work – in fact, things would be more difficult – Genesis 3:17-19 – life is filled with toil.
- b. Solomon also realized the value of work – Ecclesiastes 5:12 says the sleep of a laboring man is sweet.
- c. Proverbs 14:23, *“In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty.”*
- d. Proverbs 12:14 – *“A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, And the recompense of a man's hands will be rendered to him.”*
- e. In the New Testament work is also commanded:
 - i. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 – lead a quiet life, mind your own business, work with your own hands.
 - ii. 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 – if anyone will not work...
 - iii. Ephesians 4:28 – don't steal, rather labor, working with your hands...
 - iv. 1 Timothy 5:8 – the warning. If anyone does not provide for his own household...

II. Employee Responsibilities

- a. The Bible regulates the responsibilities of both employers and employees. We ought to be reminded of these things. As Christians, if we are being examples in this area, we need to be the best possible employees. Consider some of the following verses.
 - i. Ecclesiastes 9:10, whatever your hands find to do, do it with your might.
 - ii. Colossians 3:22-24 – addressing bondservants (and their masters). This could easily be applied to the worker/employer relationship.
 1. Obey in all things – do your job.
 2. Not with eyeservice, as men pleasers - even when no one is looking.
 3. Do it heartily, as to the Lord – do your job properly and completely, Know that God IS watching and expects you to do all things and at all times for Him.
God will reward you in this, AND often times so will your employer! Typically, they know who the good workers are, and if they have integrity (next point) they will act accordingly.
- b. Display proper and Christian attitudes
 - i. Be content – Luke 3:14, 1 Timothy 6:6-10 – the warning.
 - ii. Be thankful – Ecclesiastes 3:13, *and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.*
 - iii. Be honest - Titus 2:9-10 – don't pilfer, show good fidelity, etc. In these times, where many work from home, still remember what your job is!
 - iv. Be pleasant – you can control your disposition in whatever environment you are in. Ephesians 4:31-32, etc. Kindness is a universal language that all appreciate.

- v. Be fair with everyone – Matthew 7:12 – never forget “the golden rule”, *Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*
- c. If you are in an environment where you are around other employees, you likely know what is right and good and what is not. You know how you would want to be treated in a given circumstance. You KNOW what is expected of you from your employer and ought to treat him as you would want to be treated if you were the boss. The bottom line is do your job and do it to the best of your ability.

III. Employer Responsibilities

- a. Just as the Bible speaks of the servant and his disposition, it also speaks of the master (employer) and his disposition, OFTEN in the same context.
- b. Be a good employer – care about your workers and treat them with dignity. They are people and EVERYTHING the Bible says about how we treat each other applies! Apply Matthew 7:12 – the golden rule. How would you want to be treated if the circumstances were reversed?
- c. Give them their fair wages – don’t take unfair advantage of them – Luke 10:7 – the laborer is worthy of his wages; James 5:4 – the rich condemned for exploiting those working for them; Colossians 4:1 – give them what is just and fair, knowing you have a Master in heaven.
- d. Don’t be harsh and unreasonable – Ephesians 6:9 – give up threatening...
- e. NEVER forget, you have a “boss” in heaven – Colossians 4:1, Ephesians 6:9 – and with Him there is no partiality.

IV. Using our workplace to reach others

- a. Workers can become a great source of prospects.
- b. Always remember the power of a good example – even when it is not appreciated by some. There are places where fellow workers complain about those who “make us look bad”, but that doesn’t excuse you from being your best. NEVER forget who you work for FIRST.
- c. In the workplace you can:
 - i. Show what integrity means – including complete honesty. So desperately needed today.
 - ii. Control your language – don’t let your speech betray you or God. Ephesians 4:29, Colossians 4:6 – seasoned speech, etc. This includes complaining, gossip and other sins of the tongue.
 - iii. Show how important the Lord is to you – IF you can accommodate it (and be honest), do you show your fellow-workers that your brethren are important? Will you forego overtime or adjust your flexible schedule so that you can assemble with the saints RATHER than put work first? ESPECIALLY consider this if you have control over your own hours – such as a business owner – do you put profits ahead of serving God? Cf. Matthew 16:26.
 - iv. If allowed, will you take time to establish a public study (perhaps for a limited time) during lunch break once a week? Or take time to invite coworkers to studies and services (such as Gospel meetings)?
 - v. Give evidence that show the Lord is important – a Bible on your desk (which you read when you can), sayings with scriptures on your wall, nothing contrary to godliness, etc. NOTE: It is a sad reality that many places of business no longer allow such displays, especially government facilities such as schools, courts, govt. offices, etc. BUT, if it is allowed...
 - vi. Seek opportunities for home studies and after work influence – casual conversations and after work activities can lead to further opportunities.
 - vii. Don’t let your spiritual zeal lead to cheating your employer. When you have a job, that is what you are hired to do – DO IT! Don’t use “but I’m studying God’s word with someone” as an excuse to not work or neglect your job. Also, I am not saying in any of these things to “break the law”, including those of your employers, but IF you can, do what you can! A part of being a good example IS to follow the rules (as long as they do not violate God’s laws – e.g. lying, dishonest practices, etc.).

We are blessed to be in a country where most of us can find gainful employment. And truthfully, compared to so many in the world, we have so much. Do we praise God for that? Am I applying my faith where I work? Think about it!