

# THE CHRISTIAN AT WORK

*A Study of the Christian and His Work Related Responsibilities*

## Lesson Eighteen

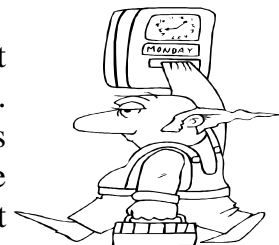
Memory Verse: *Romans 12:11*

Lesson Verse: *1 Corinthians 10:31*

*"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31*

### I. Introduction

A. The Bible has a great deal to say about how you are to conduct yourself on your job, either as an employee, or an employer. About one-fourth of a person's adult life is spent on a job. It is essential for the Christian to learn how the Lord would have you work, and fulfill your responsibilities there. Be careful not to restrict your Christian testimony to just church and home.



B. This lesson is intended to help you be the type of employee, or employer that God would have you to be.

### II. Basic Principles

#### A. All Christians are Supposed to Work - not be Lazy!

1. We were made *to work* (**Gen 2:15; 3:17-19**). We were not made to have the “easy life.” The easy life comes in heaven, and after hard work!
2. Primarily on a full-time job for a man (**2 Thes 3:10-12**).
  - a. If a man who is able to work, is not working, he ought not to eat! Nobody should pity that man, and that man ought to FAST and seek a job until he gets it – it is that important to his character!
  - b. If a man is not working, his health will only collapse! As will his family!
3. Primarily at home for a woman (**Titus 2:3-5; 1Tim 5:13,14**). And, don't tell me THAT is not work enough!
4. God hates laziness, idleness, and slothfulness (**Pr 6:6-11; Rom 12:11**).
5. If you are not working, and yet not dying in a hospital, then you are sinning against God, against your family, and against yourself! Get a job!

#### B. All Christians are Servants of the Lord. In other words: “Serve your Lord throughout your entire day at home, and at work”

1. **Romans 1:1** says that the Christian's primary job is to serve \_\_\_\_\_. So, when we labour at anything, we are to do it for HIM!
2. Serve the Lord mowing grass, building houses, making clocks, digging ditches, designing computers, standing guard – whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord!
3. Serving **God** is a *full-time job* - not just when you go to church (**1Pet 3:15; 2 Tim 4:2**). We need to SERVE the Lord Jesus by always doing things for others!
4. Serve the Lord especially at church! The Bible is very clear that every Christian is an integral part of a local church, and that each member's contribution is vital to that local fellowship of believers. God expects every Christian to be involved in doing the Lord's work by witnessing, and caring about the needs of others (**1 Cor 12:12,13; Eph 4:11-16**).

### C. A Job is What God Gives You so that you *Can* Serve

1. The world says your first responsibility is first to your self! But God says, your first ministry is to your \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim 3:1,4,5; 5:8).
2. Your second ministry is to your church family (Gal 6:10; Heb 10:25).
3. Your third ministry is to reach the lost (2 Cor 5:18,20).
4. By meeting those responsibilities, your own needs will be met!

Your job in life is meant by God to financially support all of the above ministries. But, without your job, you will be very limited in serving God in the above ministries. Don't let Satan trick you into laziness, and defeat.

### D. Your Attitude at Home or at Work is *Critical* to Your Testimony

1. Attitudes toward your job. You should view your job as a *ministry* opportunity, not just a job.
  - a. For most Christians, your fellow workers (or your neighbours) are the greatest exposure you have to unsaved people. Your life may be the only true witness of the Lord Jesus that they may ever see.
    - 1) You are a \_\_\_\_\_ representing Jesus Christ in a dark world (Matt 5:14-16)
    - 2) Your life should reflect and demonstrate the Bible in living colour (2 Cor 3:2)! An "epistle" is just another word for a letter. We are a living letter, written by God for all to read about HIM!
  - b. A mother has the greatest opportunity to present Christ to their children! Don't let anybody demean or mock motherhood!
  - c. You will have a much greater influence on those you spend the most time with. Although total strangers are an opportunity for a witness, those who can see a consistent testimony of a Christian's life are much easier to win.
2. Attitudes toward the company and management you work for:
  - a. Serve in your job as if \_\_\_\_\_ was your employer (Eph 6:5-8; Col 3:22-24).
  - b. Have a grateful attitude at work! Don't get caught up in the complaining that normally goes on! The same is true among women - don't get caught up complaining to other women about your family, and the work load! That brings a bitter spirit into both your life, into your home, and into the homes of the people you talk to!
  - c. Respect the authority of your employer's position.
    - 1) Obviously no employer will be correct on every point, and you certainly can disagree with them, but you are to submit to their leadership, using it as an opportunity to show them a testimony of the Lord (Titus 2:9,10). *Purloining* means to rob from your employer, as in "pinch", "pilfer", or "pocket" the change.
    - 2) This only goes until they cross clear Biblical lines of right and wrong (Example of being asked to sell liquor, etc.).
  - d. Respect your company's *property*. Care for it as if it was yours. It does not belong to you, so do not "partake" (Lev 19:11)!
  - e. Respect your company's time.
    - 1) Do eight hours of work for eight hours of pay (2 Cor 8:21; Col 3:22).

- 2) Be efficient! That means work hard, and at your best! The Biblical word is “diligence.”
  - 3) Also, you are getting paid to work, not witness. Use appropriate times to talk about the Lord (like on breaks, etc.).
- f. You are to do the very best that you can to help the company *succeed* and make your employer look good (Rom 12:11; 1 Cor 10:24; Prov 10:4). Joseph is the greatest example of this principle in the Bible. See Genesis 39:1,2,21,22 all the way through to chapter 50 as they record his labours for others, including:
- 1) For his father, Jacob
  - 2) For his master, Potiphar
  - 3) For the prison keeper
  - 4) For Pharaoh!
- g. Mind your own \_\_\_\_\_ - to a limit (1Thes 4:11)
- h. If you suffer wrongfully on the job, suffer it \_\_\_\_\_ (1Pet 2:20). This will usually be a testing of your resolve to live like Christ on the job – don’t fail here!
- i. And finally, don't let someone else's laziness affect your work; (2Thes 3:10-13).

#### E. What About Those Under Your Leadership?

1. Are you treating your people justly and equally? Do you set standards for them which you refuse to keep yourself? (See Col 4:1; Eph 6:8,9)
2. Are you consumed by your own self-interests without considering the needs of those employees around you (Philp 2:3,4)?
3. Are you *defrauding* your employees (taking unfair advantage of them) so that they suffer, and you don’t? See James 5:1-5.
4. Even in a position of leadership, you should always maintain the attitude of a \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 10:42-45). Remember that Jesus, the Lord of Lords, came to minister, and was a servant!

### III. Some Issues to Settle

#### A. "What if my job conflicts with spiritual things?"

1. There will always be some conflict of priorities between church activities and your work schedule. You cannot quit your job and take time off work because of a few minor conflicts. Remember, your job is a ministry opportunity. However, you must not use your job as an excuse to neglect your responsibilities to your church. Maintain a right balance in this area.
2. When your job responsibilities are contrary to Bible principles, then you must draw the line (Acts 5:27-29):
  - a. Refuse to lie or steal for your employer, or violate other clear commandments of God.
  - b. Guard against temptations on the job (flirting, loafing, complaining, losing your testimony, etc.).
  - c. Don't be influenced by sinful activities around you.
  - d. Refuse to do things that you know are contrary to the Bible
    - 1) Selling \_\_\_\_\_, or strong drink (Hab 2:15)
    - 2) Manufacturing and selling \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 19:24)

- 3) Selling Pornography, or even things doubtful (Rom 14:23)
  - 4) Working on Sunday just so you can get more money.
3. IDEA – if you just can't find a decent job, that allows you to be a Christian, then you ought to consider STARTING your OWN BUSINESS!
- B. "How do I find the right job that God wants me to have?"**
1. Have you taken the matter to God in prayer (James 1:5; Philp 4:6,7)?
  2. Will the new job destroy what God is trying to develop in your life? You may have an area in your life that God may be focusing on through a co-worker or employer, and if you change jobs, you may be escaping God's refining process.
  3. If you are having to move, or being asked to move to another city, is there a church there which can provide for your spiritual needs?
  4. If you have a job, but are looking for a job, ask yourself, "Am I running away from something I should be facing and trying to correct?"
- C. "Can a woman work outside the home?" (Titus 2:3-5) Yes and No.**
1. The godly home takes an immense amount of work! According to Proverbs 31:10-31, a godly woman works more than most people realize!
  2. The following conditions need to be met for a woman to work a job:
    - a. If she is not married. Obviously she needs to work if she has no other responsibilities. And, she needs to excel!
    - b. If married and not expecting children. However, this usually hinders the husband and wife from wanting children, which is wrong.
    - c. If absolutely necessary. There are times when the wife does need to work a job, but she needs to allow her husband to be the breadwinner, and be willing to step back home when bills are under control.
- D. "How do I handle persecution on the job?"**
1. Most "persecution" in our culture is a result of the Christian's own ignorance or lack of personal commitment to the Lord. If you are being "persecuted," it is probably for one of two reasons: your behavior is improper, or your testimony is offensive to someone (1Pet 3:16,17). If it is the latter, don't worry, that is how the Light of the gospel is perceived by the world - as an offense.
  2. Expect a certain amount of adversity from the world if you are truly serving Jesus Christ (2Tim 3:12).
  3. Learn how to commit that adversity to the Lord, and leave it in His hands to resolve (1Pet 2:18-23).
- E. "Don't I always deserve a promotion, or a better job?"**
1. Are you trying to be a leader over too many things? Consider the following, whenever a promotion or transfer opportunity presents itself:
    - a. A great Bible principle is, "*He that is faithful in that which is \_\_\_\_\_ is faithful also in \_\_\_\_\_*..." (Luke 16:10). Be sure that you can handle what you have now well. And then go further.
    - b. The more responsibility that you have, the more potential there is for problems to arise (James 3:1; Eccl 8:9).
    - c. The more responsibilities you have, the more time and energy is demanded. Be sure your new responsibilities will not hinder your service for God (not having adequate time for family, church, and your primary ministries; 2 Tim 2:4). Keep a balance in your life.

2. Ambition is: “A strong desire to achieve (accomplish) something.” Like *aspiration*. Ambition is the drive behind human effort. Without ambition, human effort has no goal, or purpose. Effort becomes only tasks, and requires task-masters to complete. The book of Proverbs gives God’s best advice on ambition and life goals.
- a. Wrong Ambitions
- 1) To only provide for self, and your own happiness (Gen 3:5,6)
  - 2) To **dominate** (3 John 1:9,10; Mark 9:33,34; Luke 20:46)
  - 3) To love \_\_\_\_\_, instead of labour (1 Tim 6:10; Eccl 5:12)
- b. Right Ambitions (1Tim 6:5-7). People should have right ambition
- 1) To provide for your \_\_\_\_\_, and the future (1Tim 5:8; 2Thes 3:10). There is nothing wrong with planning, and preparing financially for the future. There is no faith in relying on others when you could have prepared for bad times yourself!
  - 2) To do one’s best (1 Kings 3:7-14), with God’s help.
  - 3) To please \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Tim 2:3-5)
  - 4) To store up \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven (Matt 6:19,20)

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