

Lesson 14: Spirit-Controlled Workplaces: Honoring Christ from Nine to Five

Text: Ephesians 6:5-9

Theme: In this lesson we discover that the workplace can be a sacred place when workers and masters are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Introduction: Workplaces have too often become places of dysfunctional relationships and little productivity. Some bumper stickers would give a humorous look at the workplace environment. *In case of fire, flee the building with the same reckless abandon that occurs each day at quitting time.* Another one says, *If you don't believe in the resurrection from the dead, you ought to be here five minutes before quitting time.* The workplace should be different when employees and employers are operating under the control of the Holy Spirit. The Bible has instructions for the workplace:

I. Principles for the Employee

- ✓ This is instruction for anyone who is under authority in the workplace (cf. v. 8 – Paul addresses the slave man or free man.)
- A. The Action that is **Required** – v. 5a
 - 1. Obedience is necessary to prevent blasphemy – I Tim 6:1
 - 2. Obedience is necessary to preserve our testimony – Tit 2:9-10
- B. The Assignment that is Reviewed – v. 5a
 - 1. This is a temporal assignment (“according to the flesh”) that lasts only in this life and not in all moral or spiritual areas or under any circumstances. (see MacArthur, *Ephesians* 326)
 - 2. This is a universal assignment – to an unbelieving boss or a Christian boss – I Tim 6:2
- C. The Attitude that is Recommended – v. 5a
 - 1. Foremost a desire to please God in my workplace relationships – I Cor 10:31
 - 2. Also a desire to honor & respect my boss
- D. The Ambition that is Rewarded – vv. 5b-7
 - 1. Give your best on the job – Col 3:23
 - 2. The martyred missionary Jim Elliot said, “Wherever you are, be **all** there. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God.”
 - 3. Definition – a good understanding of “in sincerity of heart” would be “in singleness of heart.”
 - a) Work with a **purpose** – Neh 4:6
 - b) Don't be easily distracted by even good things that would keep you from doing your job well.

- 4. Work hard now because this is the time to work hard not after death – Ecc 9:10
- 5. Work hard even for a tough boss – I Pet 2:18-20
- 6. Remember who you are working for – **God!**
 - a) Don't just work for the boss who can see you sometimes.
 - b) Your true Boss is always watching – work to please Him.
- E. The Appreciation that is Received – v. 8
 - 1. Don't focus on how the boss is recognizing your work.
 - 2. Focus on the One Who sees all you do and will reward you appropriately.
- II. The Practice of the Employer – v. 9
 - A. He will **Respect** his Employees.
 - 1. Give them the same things you expect from them – understanding, respect, honest pay for honest work, etc.
 - 2. Col. 4:1
 - B. He will Realize that he is Under Authority.
 - 1. Remember the One Who is Your Boss.
 - 2. God will hold you accountable for the way you treat your employees.
 - C. He will Refrain from Abusive Treatment.
 - 1. Don't let the pressures of the job make you “snap” at those around you.
 - 2. Be the biggest **servant** in the office – Mt 20:26
 - D. He will Remember that he Must Give an Account to God – Col 4:1.

Application

- 1. Is work a result of the fall or just made more difficult because of the fall? What job did God give Adam to do before the fall?
- 2. What lessons can you learn from the slothful man in Prov. 24:30-34?
- 3. How important does God view a strong work ethic according to II Thessalonians 3:6-14?
- 4. What can you learn from Paul's example in Acts 18:1-4? Cf. I Cor. 9:6-11.

Don't miss the next lesson: *When the Holy Spirit Controls Your Life – Walking into Your Future with Confidence.*