

Discipleship Lesson 17

My Job and Employer

Key Memory Verse:

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.

Matthew 5:16



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As you study this lesson you will understand why the following statements are not true.

1. Your job is just a paycheck.
2. Your job status is the most important measure of your success.
3. Your employer must always take a back seat to church activities.

What Should Be My Attitude toward My Job and My Employer?

The Bible has a great deal to say about how you are to conduct yourself on your job. Since we spend about one-fourth of our adult life on the job, it is essential to learn how the Lord Jesus Christ would have us look at this area of our responsibilities. If you intend to be an effective servant of God, you must do so with all your life and not just three-fourths of it.

Purpose

Every Christian that works in the world needs this lesson. Your job is not just a place to make a living for your family; it is your mission field. You may be the only Christian who some people ever meet. Your responsibility is to let the light of God's love shine through you so that they can see the Savior. This lesson will help you do a better job of preparing yourself for your mission field. If you don't work out in the world, this lesson will help you to understand what others face and be equipped to pray for and encourage them.

I. All Christians are Called to “Full-time” Christian Service

- A. Most Christians want to **compartmentalize** their Christian walk. For example: Sunday morning we go to church; on Monday we go to work. The two become separated by the way we behave. Once we give our tithe to God, we think that the rest of our money can be spent any way we choose.

The Bible never allows for that kind of thinking. Every Christian is to live for Christ whenever and wherever he or she goes.

- B. When you become a Christian, you join the Lord’s army. People in military service understand that when they are not on duty, they are still to represent their country with honor. Every Christian must learn to embrace the high calling they have from God, to be a full-time Christian.

According to 1 Peter 3:15, when are we to be ready to serve the Lord?

- C. This attitude begins to take effect when I realize what God’s purpose is for me at my job.

II. The Primary Purposes of Your Job

- A. Your first responsibility is to be the very best employee you can.
- B. Second, your job is a means of providing the best income you can for your family.
- C. Third, the purpose of your job is to be a clear witness for Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:16). In order to accomplish this, you must develop a strategy or game plan to win your lost coworkers.

Paul’s strategy to win the lost was to find common ground. (1 Corinthians 9:19-22) What do you think he meant in vs. 22b?

- D. Here is a suggested game plan to help you win your lost coworkers.
1. Be friendly and positive. Show the joy of the Lord. This alone will cause many people to ask you questions.



Notes and Questions:

2. Show personal interest in their lives by asking questions about their family. **Think of two questions you could ask.**
3. When sudden, adverse circumstances take place in their life, for example surgery, tell them you will pray for them or their family member. Chances are no one has ever told them this, and it will have a great impact on their life.
4. One week after praying, ask them how things are going.
5. Invite them out for dinner. Don't use this as a time to preach to them but simply share your salvation testimony.
6. Invite them to a special service at church.
7. Throughout this process, pray for them each day that God will open their hearts to the Gospel.

III. What Should Be My Attitude toward My Job?

- A. We have seen that you should view your job as a ministry opportunity, not only as a job. This is true because for most Christians, your fellow workers are the greatest exposure you have to unsaved people, bringing with it the greatest opportunity to witness to others of the saving power of Jesus Christ.
- B. Your life may be the **only true witness** of the Lord Jesus Christ your coworkers ever see. In the following passages, how are we described as representatives of Jesus Christ?
 1. Matthew 5:13–16
 2. 2 Corinthians 3:2
- C. You will have the greatest influence on those with whom you spend the most time. Although total strangers are surely an opportunity for a witness, you will have a much greater influence on those who can see you demonstrate the consistent testimony of a Christian's life each and every day.
 1. On a scale of 1–10, how would you evaluate what type of a witness you have been in the workplace? (10 being the best.)
 2. In which areas do you need to change or improve? (Your attitudes, speech, work habits, effort, being late, witnessing, praying, not compromising, or other areas.)

IV. What Attitude Should I Have toward My Supervisor and the Company for Which I Work?

- A. According to Ephesians 6:5–8 and Colossians 3:22–24, what should my attitude be as I perform my responsibilities at work?

Name two ways that this should affect you at work.

1. _____
2. _____

- B. Obviously, no employer will be correct in every point. You certainly can disagree with them in the right spirit; however, you are to submit to their authority, using it as an opportunity to show them a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:9—What one thing stands out to you from this verse?

- C. Respect your company's property. It does not belong to you.

Titus 2:10—What one thing stands out to you in this verse?

- D. Respect your company's time. Do eight hours of work for eight hours of pay (Proverbs 10:4, 18:9, 21:25).

What two ways can you practice this biblical principle?

1. _____
2. _____

- E. You are to do the very best you can to help the company succeed and make your employer look good. According to Philippians 1:9–10 and Colossians 3:22, what should be your work standard?

Joseph is the greatest example of this in the Bible (Genesis 39:1–6). Why was the Lord with Joseph?



Notes and Questions:

- F. Explain the very simple, yet important principles found in the following verses: 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:10–13.
- G. Christians should outwork and outshine their coworkers. If you want to get a promotion, just practice the following principles:
- Arrive five minutes early every day.
 - Stay a little late to help get important jobs done.
 - Have a positive attitude. Don't join in when others complain or criticize your boss or company.
 - Do the little things well (Luke 16:10, Luke 19:17, 1 Corinthians 5:6).

V. The Bible Also Shows the Employer or Supervisor How to Relate to Those under His Leadership

- A. Do I treat my people justly and equally? Do I set standards for them, which I refuse to keep myself? See Colossians 4:1; Ephesians 6:9.
- B. Am I consumed by my own self-interests without considering the needs of those around me? See Philippians 2:2–3.
- C. Am I trying to be a leader over too many things? Remember to consider the following points when a promotion or transfer opportunity presents itself:
1. A great Bible principle is “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much” (Luke 16:10). Are you sure you can handle what you have now?
 2. Realize the more responsibility you have, the more potential there is for problems to arise (Ecclesiastes 8:9; James 3:1).

3. Realize the more responsibilities you have, the more time and energy is demanded. Be sure your new responsibilities will not hinder your service for God (2 Timothy 2:4).
- D. What type of attitude should we maintain, even in a position of leadership? See Mark 10:42–45.
- E. Are you willing to ask forgiveness of your employees if you have failed or made a mistake? Are you willing to say you were wrong and ask, “Will you forgive me?”

VI. Basic Questions

- A. What if my job conflicts with spiritual matters?
 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. You should try to maintain a balance in this area.
 2. When your job responsibilities are contrary to biblical principles, then you must draw the line:
 - a. Refuse to lie or steal for your employer or violate other clear commandments of God.
 - b. Guard against temptations on your job.
 - c. Don't be influenced by sinful activities around you.
- B. How do I handle *persecution* on the job?
 1. Understand that a lot of *persecution* in our culture is a result of a Christian's own ignorance or lack of personal commitment to the Lord. If you are being *persecuted*, it may be that your behavior is improper, causing you to be seen as a hypocrite, or your testimony is an offense to someone.

What does 1 Peter 3:16–17 say it is better to suffer for what is it not good to suffer?



Notes and Questions:

2. Should we have to expect a certain amount of adversity from the world if we are truly serving Jesus Christ? Explain. See John 3:19–20; 2 Timothy 3:12.
3. How should I face a difficult situation or some type of adversity at work? See 1 Peter 2:18–20.

C. What should I consider when looking for employment?

1. Have you taken the matter to God in prayer? Note Philippians 4:6–7; James 1:5.
2. Will the new responsibility destroy what God is trying to build in your life? This is a complex question. Don't be afraid to seek wise counsel in this area from a church leader whom you respect.
3. If you are being asked to move to another city, is there a church there that can continue to provide for your spiritual needs? This is an extremely crucial point. Don't assume there will be a good church. Take the time to find out first.
4. In looking for a job change, are you running away from a situation you should be facing and trying to correct?
5. Try your best never to quit one job before you secure another. If you do, what should you begin doing as you look for another job?

VII. Practical Application

- A. What behaviors or attitudes are present in your life that you need to change as a result of studying this lesson?
- B. Will you begin praying for your coworkers by name?
- C. Name two important truths or principles that stood out to you from this lesson.

1 _____

2 _____