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2 **BRINGING THE WONDERFUL LIFE TO THE WORKPLACE**

Where your real spirituality shows

3 **Workplace rules from the 1800s**

1. Office employees will daily sweep the floors, dust the furniture, and showcases. Each day they must fill lamps, clean chimneys, & turn wicks
2. Windows must be washed once a week.
3. Each clerk will bring in a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's business.

4 **Workplace rules (2)**

4. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle your nibs to your individual taste.
5. This office will open at 7:00 am and close at 9:00 p.m. daily, except on Sunday, on which day it will remain closed. Each employee is expected to spend Sunday by attending church and contributing liberally to the cause of the Lord.

5 **Workplace rules (3)**

6. Men employees will be given an evening off each week for courting purposes, or 2 evenings a week if they go regularly to church.
7. After an employee has spent 13 hours of labor in the office, he should spend the rest of his time reading the Bible any other good books while contemplating the glories and building up of the kingdom.

6 **Workplace rules (4)**

8. Every employee should lay aside, from each pay, a goodly sum of his earning, so that he will not become a burden upon the charity of his betters.

7 **Workplace rules (5)**

9. The employee who has performed his labors faithfully and without fault for a period of 5 years in my service, and who had been thrifty and attentive to his religious duties, is looked upon by his fellowmen as a substantial and law-abiding citizen, will be given an increase of 5 cents per day in his pay providing a just return in profits from the business permits it.

8 **Review – Positive intentional Christian living**

- Remember your position in Christ
- Reflect the grace of Christ (put on the graces)
- Rely on the peace of Christ (to umpire)
- Ruminant in the Word of Christ
 - in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
 - avoid worldly substitutes for God's music
 - sing with grace
- Remember to glorify Christ
 - in speech, in actions, with gratitude

9 **Now Paul gets personal....**

- Our Christianity should show first in the places where we are seen the most:
 - The marriage should reflect Christ's love
 - Fathers should gently nurture obedient children
- And it should affect the workplace:
 - We should work at our jobs as though we served the Lord.

– Employers should treat their employees remembering that Jesus is their boss.

10 **Zinger**

- We do not preach a social gospel.
- But we do preach a Gospel that has social implications!

11 **Colossians 3:22-4:1**

- *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:*
- *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*
- *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*
- *But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.*
- *Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.*

12 **Can you relate?**

- Fill in the blank....
"My boss is a real _____ - driver."

13 **"Bondslaves"**

- At least ½ of the workforce in Colossae
 - Including doctors, teachers, and other professionals.
 - They were "owned" by others.
 - They could obey or lose their only source of livelihood.
 - They had no control over their future or destiny.
- Some workers today feel like slaves.
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14 **How were slaves treated?**

- Greek and Roman cultures classified slaves as:
 - Possessions or things
 - Living tools
 - A Roman by the name of Varro once wrote: "*a slave is no better than a beast of the field who just happens to talk.*"
 - Gaius, a Roman lawyer said, "*We may note that it is universally accepted that the master possesses the power of life and death over a slave.*"

15 **Job history**

- Yard maintenance and handyman for apartment complex and trailer park
- Stock boy at Wal-mart
- Wood-chopper
- Flatbed driver
- Forklift driver
- Sporting goods and automotive parts at Wal-mart
- Psychiatric technician and nurse's aid

16 **Job history (2)**

- Chaplain in mental hospital for criminally insane
- Christmas tree farmer
- Phone wiring technician

- Salesman
- Stand-up comic
- Computer technician
- Network cable installer
- Laser printer technician

17 **Job history (3)**

- Computer consultant
- Network engineer
- Manager of ISO 9001 computer manufacturing facility
- Director of computer hardware distribution with 1300 dealers
- Software engineer
- Writer, teacher, pastor (the toughest job of all)

18 **In that time I have had:**

- Good bosses, great bosses, and inconsiderate tyrants
- Beans and rice pay, adequate pay, good pay
- Time off with no pay, paid vacation
- Great health insurance, no health insurance
- And even one great severance package...
- So I'm not speaking from the ivory tower!

19 **Conflict in the workplace**

- Employees want smaller work loads, fewer hours, more vacation, and more pay and benefits.
- Employers want more productivity and more profits.
- As a Christian employer or employee (or perhaps both), how do you reconcile these issues?

20 **For the employee**

- God speaks first to those under authority.
- "If you were working in your present job and Jesus Christ was your boss, would you work any differently?"
 - Serve your employer as you would serve Christ.
 - Work is not separate from worship; it becomes part of your worship. It is a sacrifice of obedience to Christ.

21 **Then to the employer**

- 4:1 specifically written to employer
- But all of the principles in this passage really apply to both employer and employee.
- It could be aptly entitled, "How to make work work for you!"

22 **1. View yourself as a servant**

- Focus on responsibility rather than rights.
- Focus on serving rather than getting ahead.
 - No matter where we are or what role we have
 - Our attitude should not depend on our treatment
 - Have the spirit of Christ (Matthew 20:25-28)
 - Smile, even when you do not feel like it
- Secret: It is hard to criticize one who is serving you

23 **Matthew 20:25-28**

- *But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise*

dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

- *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

24  **The Psalm 75:6 Secret**

- *For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.*
 - Why is the north not mentioned?
 - The sacrifice was killed on the north side of the altar (Leviticus 1:11). -- *And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.*

25  **Christian employees should be in demand**

- William McDonald wrote that Christian slaves brought a higher price in the market than others.
- Others are always watching, like my friend Chris.
 - Your work becomes your credentials for sharing the Gospel.
 - You are God's representative in that office, classroom, or assembly line!

26  **2. Work for the Lord**

- Obey in all things
 - "All" means all that does not contradict God's Word.
- Not with eyeservice
 - Not just to be seen (or when someone is watching)
 - Outwardly correct service which is rendered without dedication and with no sense of inner obligation to the master for the sake of God and of Christ

27  **2. Work for the Lord (2)**

- Not as menpleasers
 - "one who reckons only with men and their power and who therefore seeks to please men and does not take God into account"
- In singleness of heart
 - No ulterior motives; sincere
 - First and foremost as act of worship to the Lord

28  **What if my boss is a jerk?**

- Harsh ungodly men and women need Jesus.
 - Your testimony may be the only one they see in the workplace.
 - You could be the only real Christian they will ever meet.
- God may have you in your job to build your character.
 - Don't walk away from a job until God clearly indicates you should.

29  **What if I have a dead-end job?**

- Every job is an opportunity to glorify Christ.
 - Joseph went from slave to prisoner before becoming 2nd in command!
 - Change jobs only if God is really leading you to do so.
 - Job-hopping can damage your resume and your testimony.
 - Do your best where you are and let God bring along new opportunities.
 - Similarly, ministers should not "church-hop."

30  **3. Work diligently**

- Heartily = with your whole heart
 - Proverbs 4:23 *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*
 - Proverbs 10:4 *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*
 - Proverbs 12:24 *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.*
 - Proverbs 22:29 *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*

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31  **How to demonstrate diligence**

- to God
 - Listening to His Word (Exodus 15:26; Isaiah 55:2)
 - Keeping His commandments (Deuteronomy 6:17; 11:13)
 - Studying the Bible (2 Tim 2:15)
 - Guarding against defilement (Hebrews 12:15)
 - Seeking to be found spotless (2 Peter 3:14)
 - Discovering our life calling (2 Peter 1:10)
 - Teaching our children (Deuteronomy 11:19)

32  **How to demonstrate diligence (2)**

- to Parents
 - Rising early in the morning (Proverbs 20:13)
 - Taking the initiative in helping with chores before you're asked
 - Going beyond the assignments you are given
 - Investing in the lives of your brothers and sisters
 - Honoring them and speaking well of them in front of others
 - Do the jobs no one else wants to do

33  **How to demonstrate diligence (3)**

- to your Civil Authorities
 - Pray for your civil authorities (1 Timothy 2:2)
 - Offer to serve your civil authorities
- to your Employers
 - Arrive early for work
 - Avoid wasting time on the job
 - Make sure you understand your responsibilities
 - Seek to master your trade

34  **Diligence will be rewarded**

- Mr. Peters' shop
 - John Simmons
 - Crawford Hill
 - Long, deep box in attic filled with cobwebs
 - "Please sort out the contents and see what should be saved."

35  **Change in the workplace**

- Our society is shifting
 - Employers used to offer great pension programs

- Moved to 401(k) programs
- Now eliminating many benefits
- Next 20 years: Moving to a “consulting society”
 - People will work as contractors for others.
 - Diligence and servanthood will be more in demand than ever!

36  **4. View Christ as our authority**

- Verse 22 – Obey your masters
 - Unless they ask you to do something immoral, corrupt, or violates God’s Word
 - Change your attitude first before you change your job
- Verse 24 – *For you serve the Lord Christ*
- He is Lord over all
 - No difference between secular and religious
 - Everything in our life is to be done for His glory
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37  **5. Treat others with respect**

- Don’t take advantage of people.
 - Employer once asked me, “What is the least you will work for?”
 - Colossians 4:1 – Give what is just and equal
 - Just = right
 - Equal = of appropriate value
- People or things:
 - Many people today love things and use people. God wants us to love people and use things.

38  **6. Remember that rewards come from the Redeemer**

- Colossians 3:24-25 – *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.*
- God ultimately determines retribution
 - In this life (Present)
 - In eternity (Future)

39  **2 Corinthians 5:10**

- *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*
 - No distinction between secular and religious, between work and ministry
 - Those who work full time spend more time working than they spend in church or even with family. Most of your rewards in heaven may come from the time you spent at work.

40  **The dichotomy disappears**

- Christians should not have a division between
 - Work
 - Home life
 - Worship
 - Ministry
- All are part of our relationship to Christ and our obedience to Him.

41  **We are not home yet**

- Couple served 40 years as missionaries to Africa and returned home aboard the same ship as Theodore Roosevelt, who had just completed a highly successful big game hunt. As the ship docked in New York harbor, thousands of well-wishers and dozens of reporters lined the pier to welcome Roosevelt home. But not a single person was there to welcome the missionaries.

42  **We are not home yet (2)**

- As the couple rode home in a taxi, the man complained to his wife, "It just doesn't seem right. We give forty years of our lives to Jesus Christ to win souls in Africa, and nobody knows or cares when we return. Yet the president goes over there for a few weeks to kill some animals and the whole world takes notice."
- The wife wisely replied, "But we are not home yet."

43  **7. Do what is just and right**

- A special word of caution to the masters (employers):
 - Pay what is just (right) and equal (giving an appropriate value).
 - Could have brought ridicule from other slave owners.
 - Deal fairly with employees because that is God's will for you.
 - If every employer did this, there would not be a single labor union in the country!
 - Be as free with praise as you are criticism.

44  **WORK IS WORSHIP**

A new perspective

45  **Brother Lawrence**

- The Practice of the Presence of God
- *So, likewise, in his business in the kitchen (to which he had naturally a great aversion), having accustomed himself to do everything there for the love of GOD, and with prayer, upon all occasions, for His grace to do his work well, he had found everything easy, during the fifteen years that he had been employed there.*

46  **Brother Lawrence (2)**


- *That he was very well pleased with the post he was now in; but that he was as ready to quit that as the former, since he was always pleasing himself in every condition, by doing little things for the love of GOD.*

47  **Brother Lawrence (3)**

- *That with him the set times of prayer were not different from other times: that he retired to pray, according to the directions of his Superior, but that he did not want such retirement. nor ask for it, because his greatest business did not divert him from GOD.*

48  **APPLYING THE WORD TO OUR WALK**

Let's be real!

49  **Bringing Christ to work...**

1. We should view ourselves as servants.
2. We should remember that our true boss is Christ.
3. We should work diligently and with integrity, knowing that our reward is from Him.

50  **Bringing Christ to work (2)**

4. Since all authority on earth is God-given (John 19:11), we should obey our superiors gladly—unless, of course, our boss tells us to do something that goes against Scripture.
5. Since all those with whom we work have worth from the Creator, we should treat them with respect.

51  **Bringing Christ to work (3)**

6. Even when jobs or coworkers are hard to like, we are to work with joy, a servant attitude, respect for others, diligence, and obedience to those in authority.
 - Recommended reading: *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence

52  **Justin Martyr (2nd century)**

- *"Our Lord urged us by patience and meekness to lead all from shame and the lusts of evil, and this we have to show in the case of many who have come in contact with us, who were overcome and changed from violent and tyrannical characters, either from having watched the constancy of their Christian neighbors, or having observed the wonderful patience of Christian travelers when overcharged, or from doing business with Christians."*
- People became Christians after witnessing the conduct of Christians in business! Think about it.