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The Demeanour of the Christian Worker in the Marketplace

We live in a fallen and perverse world and Matt 5:16 says we are to shine as light for Christ. It is sometimes heard among some believers that work is a necessary evil, rather than a blessing from God. This is theologically incorrect. Remember that work was given to Adam before the fall of man in his perfect state and not after (Gen 2:15). There is no denying that work is an integral part of life. Paul had said in 2Thess 3:3 if a person will not work, he should not eat. Let us consider the following principle for the Christian testimony in the workplace:

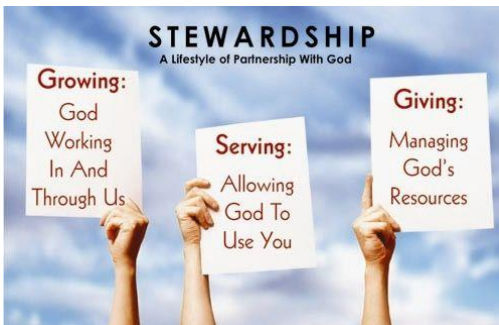


CHRISTIANS in the MARKETPLACE

Responsible Stewards

In the Old Testament, work was highly honoured especially skilled labour. People who had the ability to make things such as the silversmith, stonecutters, carpenters, clothmakers were especially respected in the Jewish community. Working hard with our hands is satisfying and glorifying to God (Exo 31:4-6, 35:32-35). Paul in Col 3:23 says, *'And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men'*. Some of wisdom literature authors

condemn laziness and commend honest, hard work and so must every believer practise that too. King Solomon in Prov 18:9 says, *'He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster'* and Prov 19:15 says, *'Slothfulness casteth into a deep steep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger'*. Solomon advises in Prov 6:6-8, *'Go to the ant, thou sluggard, - consider her*



ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest'. Diligence and work excellence should be the motto of the elect of God in the marketplace in life and not indolence.

As Christians, we are expected to be responsible stewards to provide for our family (1 Tim 5:8). A Christian must be responsible to provide for the spiritual and physical well-being of the members of his family and be a good testimony of his Christian beliefs. God is sovereign and He provides for our needs and our family through His blessing of our honest hard work in the workplace daily. We are to be light and salt and effectual witnesses and testimonies in the workplace. Paul in 2Cor 3:2-3 says, 'Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart'. We could possibly be the only epistle that our non-Christian colleagues will read. How well are you written?

“ You are writing a Gospel,
A chapter each day,
By deeds that you do,
By words that you say.

Men read what you write,
Whether faithless or true;
Say, what is the Gospel
According to you?

Paul B. Gilbert

Heart-work in religion is as important as hard-work in the office.

Glorify God

There is honour and blessing in labour. Exo 34:21 says, 'Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest'. It is a joy and privilege to labour with our hands for the glory of Lord. The emphasis is normally placed on resting one day out of 7 but note that we are commended to work 6 days as much as we are commanded to rest on one. **The 17th century English Puritans do not see dichotomy between spiritual and secular work and consider both as glorifying to God and contributing to the good of society. Work in a secular sense is to be done as if we are serving and glorifying God in the end.**

In Col 3:23-24, the Apostle Paul reminds us to do all things to the glory of God without fear and favour of men. We are to do the best in our daily work and be accountable to God and man; and be submissive, not rebellious and not as indolent employees. Good demeanour and speech go a long way toward our effective witness for Christ, and that includes our attire, our contentment, productive labour and a cordial relationship with fellow colleagues, superiors and



subordinates. We need to beware of worldly temptations and influences and not to be affected or conformed to the fallen standards of the world. Paul said in Rom 12:1-2, *'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.'*

Fairness and Equity

If we are employers (or have a domestic help at home), we are to be fair and just ones. Paul advises in Col 4:1 says, *'Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven'*. We are to pay our staff their wages promptly and fairly.



We are to be reasonable, equitable and tactful in dealing with our staff, motivating them to work hard for the company. Keep away from unnecessary office politics, unedifying pep-talk and bad-mouthing of others which are unedifying. God is sovereign, therefore let us leave all things to Him. We are to be hardworking as a good testimony as what Paul says in 1Thess 4:11-12 says, *'And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing'*. Rebellion and slothfulness shall never be the marks of a born-again believer in the workplace.

Integrity and Competence



To be a good witness for Christ, we are to be a good example in the marketplace with integrity and professional competence and excel in our work. We are to do our jobs well and to be a pleasant and edifying influence in the office. We can also prayerfully invite our colleagues to attend fellowship meetings and gospel rallies and other services (i.e. missions, Chinese ministry, outreaches and Bible Study)

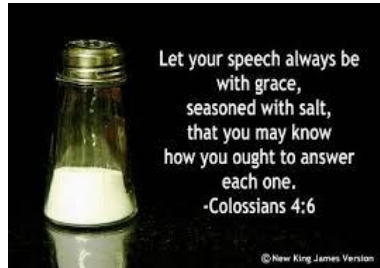
whenever possible. Do not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Paul said in Rom 1:16 *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek'*.

If there are opportunities of gospel witness, we should not miss it and be ready to share the blessing of everlasting life to our colleagues as the Lord enables us (i.e. outreach with gospel tracts in evangelism to our loved ones and friends). Paul lives this out in his own testimony as given in Acts 28:23, *'And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his*

lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening'. Paul effectively shared the gospel to some Jews, and some believed as the Lord leads.

Speech and Deportment

Be careful of your speech, gait and dressing as well. You are being watched all the time. The Christian should walk worthy of the vocation wherein he is called (Eph 4:1). Your godly deportment and demeanour can lead someone to want to know Christ by the inner workings of the Holy Spirit. Remember Dan 1:8 records, *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."* Do not compromise your spiritual values and convictions and they will respect you for that one day.



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Be known for your ethical integrity and stay clear of worldly temptation and immorality. Beware of diabolical temptation and worldly seduction and remember what Joseph says in Gen 39:9, *'There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?'* Be upright and reasonable that people would praise God and peradventure come to faith in Christ one day. In Matt 5:16 Jesus says, *'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven'*. Finally, there are intrinsic blessings and reward for honest hard work. Prov 22:29 says, *'Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.'* We will sow what we reap, and our labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58, Gal 6:7-9).

Conclusion

We are called by the Lord to be faithful stewards and effective witness for Him till He comes in the home and the marketplace as well. Finally, as Christians, let us know our primary calling and vocation as Christian witnesses and workers wherever the Lord has placed us and ask God to help us to be that light and salt to those around us for the advancement of the gospel. Set our priorities right first with Christ as our Lord and King. We are reminded to be ready to give an account of our lives to God (2 Cor 5:10); be it our ministry, secular work, family life, let it be to the edification of the saints in the local church or to the others in society and the world.

Jack Sin

(NB. For a deeper study of the subject, read Doug Sherman & William Hendricks, Your Work Matters to God, 2000.)

Missions Updates



CALM Church Children's Outreach by Pastor John Caleb and Suzanna, Kothagudem Village, India (near Hyderabad).



Calvary Reformed Church new outreach by Ps Lazarus at Bidarahalli village, Bangalore, India.



A Blessed Lunch Fellowship last Sunday, especially with Bro Samuel Wong. Do continue to uphold him in prayer.



Thank God that Emily (from Shanghai) could come to church last Sunday and heard the Word of God on "*Discipline of Contentment*" which she said is relevant to her. Pray for her salvation in Christ and as she looks for another job that would give her time to come to church.





Dedicated to the Afflicted

**A POEM OF
SPIRITUAL COMFORT AND STRENGTH**

When a Christian is taken ill,
He is to pray and obey Gods will,
Not murmuring nor complaining,
But by faith, waiting and trusting.

When a Christian experience pain,
And his body and spirit grow faint,
Yet, he knows that there is spiritual gain,
When his soul is richly trained.

When a Christian is distressed,
And he struggles to find real rest,
God will be with him through the test,
To trust Him for His will is the best.

As a Christian reflects on the demanding race,
He recognise that God is his Dwelling Place
And not forgetting His sufficient grace,
With assuring hearts to God we praise.

Jack Sin

**“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,
whose mind is stayed on thee:
because he trusteth in thee”
(Isaiah 26:3)**

Memory Verse

Col 3:23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "***Discipline of Christian Witness in the Workplace [Dan 1:1-21]***", the quarterly series on "***Christian Disciplines in the Lord***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "***Discipline of the Sound Mind [Phil 4:6-8, 2Cor 10:4,5]***".
4. Sunday School classes after the worship service continue as follows:
 - How to Interpret the Bible (Pastor)
 - Studies in 2 Chronicles (Dr Kwong Leen)
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Old Testament Foundations and the 10 Commandments. Join us for a time of profitable learning. [**Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178**].
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. [**Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551**].
7. Pray for:
 - Singapore's New Prime Minister, Cabinet and "for all that are in authority". (1Tim 2:1&2)
 - Camp Committee, Camp Speaker and Devotion Speakers and all Campers at our Annual Church Camp (Jun 11-14), Lotus Desaru Beach Resort on the theme "*Biblical Pathway for Church Growth & Health*".
 - Travels: Perry (17/4-5/6)
 - Auntie Chwee Lian's rehabilitation at St Andrews Community Hospital and complete recovery from hip fracture.
 - Daniel's medical diagnosis of high blood pressure condition.
 - Kin Hoong's management of heart and lungs condition.
 - Anthony's lung cancer condition.
8. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.