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**How To Be a Christian In the Workplace**

**By Richard Joseph Krejcir**

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Employment: Blood, Sweat, and Tears!

Mel Brooks, the movie producer, said it best, "Life stinks!"

If you have spent any time in the workplace, you will have observed many different kinds of attitudes, personalities, and ways of approaching the job there. We all have different personalities, habits, desires, experiences, and expectations, all converging and conflicting, and the water cooler area becomes a gathering place for hearing the latest gossip, a hotbed of conflict and chaos. Somehow, in the midst of all this, we, as Christians, are called to distinction. This rubs us against the grain of our coworkers and employers, who have conflicting ideas. The Christian enters into a struggle with identity, values, attitudes, and feelings, all producing stress and fatigue.

We are Christians, yet we are also human, and we work with Christians as well as non-Christians. We are material beings who need a livelihood to provide for the daily substance of life. From food and shelter to leisure and entertainment, work becomes a necessary means for us to live and function in society. Work can also be a potential for so much more. A call, a vocation, or a job, whatever you call what you do in between your day of worship and church, whether it be a priest or a fry cook, we all have a purpose. We all have a job. Sometimes, it is the same, sometimes not, as we may be in the wrong place and job. Nevertheless, we have a call to be employed, to function in society, and to behave in that call.

We are also social beings, not just tools or devices, slaves or machines. We are spiritual beings who have been saved by our God and Creator and given the call to be virtuous and righteous. All our experiences, expectations, aptitudes, and attitudes come together in the workplace. And, all of these distinctions converge into our mindset and attitudes at work. So, what is the right attitude and approach with which to do our work? How do we get along with coworkers, bosses, and our God?

Work, Job or vocation is a word we use to start to describe what we do in life, vocation has its root from the Latin verb "to call;" thus, our vocation and job is actually a call, similar to a minister. So we need to

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understand its role and significance in our life and how we are to be in our vocation as well as what it means in our walk with our Lord. Let us venture into God's Word and see what He has to say about what we do during the week. What and why we have work and what we are to do in that vocation and how we respond to others around us. The following passages are arranged so you can spend some time in the Word, which will help you to develop a Biblical attitude of work. Also, several thoughts based on Scriptural insights are provided for you to pray about to nudge yourself into being a better person at work. You may discover what we do is not as important as how we do it!

God's Call For the Employee: Ephesians 6:5–8

You may feel like a slave at work. Or, perhaps you treat others in that way thinking, I am in command. They work for me, and they have to do what I say! But, the key to this passage is the attitude we are to

have, that of looking to Christ as our employer so we do our work for Him. Therefore, we are to be our best for His glory, regardless of our circumstances (Rom. 8:17; Phil. 2:1–11).

We may have a paycheck from McDonald's and a boss who may need some acne treatments, but our ultimate authority and manager is Christ Himself! We show our value—that Christ paid a price for us—so, we in turn can respond with a good work ethic (1 Cor. 7:23). We must adjust our mindset to see work as an opportunity to please Him, and in so doing, be a blessing to those around us.

As an employee we are called to Diligence! This allows us to operate with our best for Christ's highest with excitement and passion in order to complete our work and call from the Lord. It is practical obedience, which is the loving of our call and the pursuing of our work so we are doing our best for His glory. (Prov. 10:4; Rom. 12:11; Colossians 3:23)

Here are some more Scriptures about being an employee: Exodus 23:12; 35:2; Proverbs 10:26; 25:13; Ecclesiastes 2:4; 5:12; Colossians 3:17,22–25; 2 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Timothy 6:2; Titus 2:9,10; 1 Peter 2: 18–20

God's Call For the Employer

God honors diligence and fairness. As an employer you are called to Diligence and to Fairness! These are the two characteristics we are to have in the workplace, and are especially essential for the manager. God hates the exploitation of people and will judge with severity those who do exploit others. So, why bother with the rotten characters of dishonesty and exploitation when we can have a much more efficient and happy workplace, where the workers are cared for and encouraged to produce instead of being forced and made to condescend.

Here are some more Scriptures about being an employer: Leviticus 19: 13; Deuteronomy 24:4,14; Proverbs 27: 18; Malachi 3:5; Luke 10:7; 1 Corinthians 9: 6–12; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:17; 4:1; 1 Timothy 5:17,18

After reading the above selected Scriptures, ask yourself these questions:

Q: What attitudes, desires, and habits do you have that need to be changed?

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Q: How can you be encouraged by God's truths and encourage those who are in the workplace?

Q: What warning is God giving you?

Q: How can you lead a distinctive lifestyle in the workplace?

Q: Have you considered the eternal results of a healthy work attitude, even in the face of strife and chaos?

### God's Call For the Workplace

As a worker, or an employer, God has a lot to say to us regarding our virtue at work.

We are called to work with respect and honor to God and others: Genesis 2: 15; 3: 15; Proverbs 6:6–8; 10:4,5,26; 12:9; 13:4; 14:23; 18:9; 22:29; 31:11–31; Ecclesiastes 3:22; 5:12; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5: 8!

We are called to work with integrity: Proverbs 10:2; 15:27; Jeremiah 22: 13; Ephesians 4:28!

We are warned about laziness: Exodus 20:9–11; 23:12; 34:21; Proverbs 16:27; 18:9; 19: 15; 22:13; 24:30–34; 1 Thessalonians 4: 11,12; 2 Thessalonians 3:7–15!

We are called to honor just remuneration: Proverbs 3:27,28; 27:18; Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5: 18; James 5:1–5!

Here are some thoughts for your consideration.

Remember what God calls us to do:

·Our work is not to define us! Even though this may be the first question we ask someone new to us, or is asked of us, our work is what we do, not who we are! Work is not our identity or our worth!

·Our worth as a Christian is who we are in Christ!

·Work, in society, is center stage for our social classification and the search for identity, and can even be an addiction to fulfill our deeper needs!

·Our worth as a Christian is who we are in Christ!

·Ecclesiastes 2:4; 4:7–8 asks, What benefit do we gain? This passage gives us the impression that our toil and work are merely temporary. We may find work necessary in order to live, but it is not permanent or eternal.

·It is not what we do that matters, but how we are!

·Colossians 3:22–25. Our work may not define us, but it will either mature or devalue us. How we respond and model character will be the eternal value of our true selves. Work can even be a means

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through which to worship our Lord!

·People will see Christ through us in the workplace—either as a God to come to, or, one from whom to be repelled. How do people at work see Christ through you?

### The Dangers and Concerns In the Workplace.

How do you handle Anger? Anger is one of the biggest enemies for the employee as well as the employer! We are to be known by our love; yet, it is anger that most often communicates who we are. Thus, we must beware of its vicious and destructive ways!

·Our inner feelings of inadequacy can be the fuel to the negative reaction to anger from a boss or coworker. Thus, we have to see ourselves as God sees us, redeemed, and as His child. Then we can have a healthier self-image that gives us confidence but does not allow pride.

·Do not try to just ignore your anger. Walking away from, or stopping the anger, will not solve the problem, and often, even prolongs it. Put an end to the anger by seeking to solve the root of the conflict. Let the anger give you the fuel to react quickly and confidently, but do not let it control you!

·Gossiping, name-calling, and/or trying to get even will only escalate the problem and give others a very wrong impression of our Lord! Remember, our essential self worth is not our job; it is who we are in Him!

·Do not take anger personally! View your work as a service to Christ, not a personal, esteem-building venture!

·Do not be defensive. Rather, let integrity be your guide. Virtue will build actions, even if you are under attack by an angry employer or fellow-employee. Show Christ-like character, and, in the long run, you will win out. If not, shake the dust off your feet and move on, because in God's eyes, you are the winner!

·If the employer or fellow-employee is angry, do not let it influence you! Do not acknowledge the anger, and refuse to accept the tone, because that gives it more fuel and you will lose control.

·Separate the emotion of the anger from the words and content of what a person is saying. Do not respond to their anger with your own! Let them vent, then get to the root of the problem. Listen, and ask, How do you want me to resolve this? Find a solution, especially if it is your fault. And, if that be the case, take responsibility; do not blame others; deal and act!

·Restate the content of their complaint in your own words without the emotion. Use phrases such as, I didn't know you disagreed with that policy. Or, I'm glad to know how you feel. Let us find a solution about that.

·Let the person know you are glad they came to you (even if they acted inappropriately, because, we all do so at some point). When you are positive and looking to help them, you will be able to defuse the

anger faster than anything else you could do. Also, be in prayer, asking God to give you the strength and the appropriate words. Remember, He is there too!

·Remember Christ–like attitude, and the "Fruits of the Spirit," as well as sensibleness, self–control, and cooperation. (Romans 12:1–2; 2 Peter 1:4) Seek to emulate His character and you will excel.

Q: Do a word study on excellence by looking it up in a concordance, and see what you find. Notice how these principles affected not only the people in the Bible, but also how they could affect you. Then take those precepts and attitudes and ask yourself, How can I apply them in my workplace?

We will continue with "How To Deal With Co–workers" in Part II

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### **How To Choose A Christian Counselor**

**By Dave Lloyd**

Christian therapy as a profession is relatively new, having been practiced only over the last few decades. While many in the Christian community adhere to a strict code of Bible–based, scriptural, prayer–focused means of helping individuals, additional methods have proven beneficial. The fear many have who are consider Christian counseling is that they would jeopardize their faith or somehow be disobedient to God or contradict the Bible. Yet through the wise choosing of a Christian therapist, one can find the help they need while still maintaining a Biblical basis for faith and incorporating Scripture and prayer into their personal growth process.

Christian counseling is best done by someone with an advanced (Master's) degree trained in the principles of psychotherapy and grounded in the essentials of Christian teaching. Through this combination, they will be able to discern behavioral or relational patterns that are both consistent with the Bible and lead to healthy spiritual and emotional growth. What many Christian counselors have come to believe over time is that emotional and spiritual growth are not mutually exclusive. In other words, one cannot be spiritual growing while emotionally bankrupt or relationally out of integrity. So while much of the time spent in the therapy room discussing your particular issue will focus on how to solve the primary issue you're facing, the ultimate goal of most Christian therapists is to lead you to a greater aware of tools you can develop to increase both your spiritual and emotional health.

In order to choose the right Christian therapy professional for you, it's best to focus on:

– their education and training – the role they believe therapy plays in the lives of their clients – the

way they plan to integrate biblical and relational truths into therapy – their personal Statement of Faith or statement of a relationship with Christ – whether you feel a connection with them – how much you believe their expertise and personal character will help them in the practice of therapy

Choosing the right Christian counselor is an important consideration on your way to continued emotional and spiritual growth.

Dave Lloyd has created the online guide to Christian therapy and counseling at



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