



# Light from the Word

## Choosing a Career

*“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men”<sup>1</sup>*

Perhaps it seems a little out of the ordinary to think of offering deeds of service through the work we choose to do. But for the typical American adult working a full time job, it is likely that a minimum of 35% of waking hours are spent at work. With a willing heart, that many hours can be an outstanding opportunity to show the love of Christ through service to others.

Attitudes about work differ from culture to culture. Some view work as a necessary evil and attempt to diminish it as much as possible. Others honor work as a noble endeavor and build their life around it. Typical hours worked vary by nation from a low of less than 1400 hours per year to a high of over 2200 hours per year. The U.S. falls roughly in the middle at just under 1800 hours per year. If one's attitude is that work is a joy and therefore to be performed with energy and passion, it will likely feel natural to work with an attitude of service towards others. However, if one believes that work is a necessary evil and not to be enjoyed, it will seem difficult to have an attitude of service. In similar fashion, if one's God-given gifts match well with his career, it will be easy to serve others. If, however, one's work does not mesh well with the talents and abilities that God has given them, it will likely be no small task to cheerfully serve others.

What does the Bible say about work? First and foremost, as is often the case with God's instructions to men, there is a balance in the Bible that directs us away from extremes. We are taught by Jesus to, *“Take no thought for the morrow,”*<sup>2</sup> as He encouraged the disciples to trust God to provide food and raiment.<sup>3</sup> Jesus also made God's work a priority in His life—even when He was just 12 years old.<sup>4</sup> In Proverbs we are taught to observe how the ants work and to be

diligent when it is a time of plenty so that we will have in time of need.<sup>5</sup> We are also encouraged in Proverbs to first build a barn and prepare for winter and afterward build a house<sup>6</sup>—prioritizing preparation for the future over comfort. Paul the Apostle made it clear to the Thessalonian church that working was a duty of each one and if one would not work, neither should he eat.<sup>7</sup> He exhorts all to work so that we can walk honestly before the unbelievers and that we would lack nothing.<sup>8</sup> He notes that he labored and travailed (worked) night and day so that he would not have to depend on anyone<sup>9</sup> and that while fulfilling his God-given mission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. (Note: Paul also made it clear that he took a stipend of other churches in order to avoid being a burden on the Corinthian church.<sup>10</sup>)

In assessing the whole counsel of God, we find that it is: appropriate to work, to be diligent in that work, but not to worry and fret about the future. Beyond that, we find that we are to serve in our work with the mind of Christ.

*“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.”<sup>11</sup>*

Thinking as Jesus did is not natural to the human mind. Only if we are walking in the Spirit can we hope to have the mind of Christ. These Scriptures and this truth call us to avoid the common scenario in which work is compartmentalized and our life of faith is kept separate—to be practiced at church and at home. To the contrary, we are called to incorporate our willingness to walk in the Spirit into our work in singleness of heart, fearing God. We are called to demonstrate our faith in God by working heartily as to the Lord and not to man. And we are called to do

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it without concern for whether we are being compensated fairly or not; for we serve the Lord Christ.

This meshing of faith and work may be a new perspective to some believers. One may wonder, “How can I accomplish this?” There are some simple ways to demonstrate the pureness of heart that a believer has because of Jesus and through the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit includes; love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, kindness, etc.<sup>12</sup> Working with joy will immediately give us opportunity to serve others. Coworkers and customers alike will gravitate toward a cheerful person. Serving with a gentle and meek spirit will quickly assure coworkers that we are not there to run them down or climb over them in a race up the “corporate ladder.” Seeking peace and being peaceable will serve to calm a workplace and provide those who are not peaceful a source of inspiration and help. The primary way to serve in the workplace is to reflect the nature of God through the reality of the Holy Spirit living in us.

When we consider the freedom that we have today, it raises questions that would never have been raised in ancient times. Many throughout history had no

options. They were born to a trade, or born to the farm, or perhaps to tend livestock. It was difficult to find other opportunities because survival was much more important than finding fulfillment in a career. In our time, we have many more options. Finding a career that meshes with our talents and abilities is a good thing. However, whether one finds himself in a job that is not fulfilling, or in a job that is extremely gratifying, the *way* in which we do the job is much more important than which job we have.

Preparing oneself for service through the power of the Spirit of Christ is the most important ingredient in serving others through work. What we do for a living may not be as important as *how* we do it—heartily and honestly, with the mind of Christ.

(Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Col. 3:23

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 6:34

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 6:25

<sup>4</sup> Luke 2:49

<sup>5</sup> Prov. 6:6-8

<sup>6</sup> Prov. 24:27

<sup>7</sup> 2 Thess. 3:10

<sup>8</sup> 1 Thess. 4:11-12

<sup>9</sup> 2 Thess. 3:8

<sup>10</sup> 2 Cor. 11:9

<sup>11</sup> Col. 3:22-24

<sup>12</sup> Gal. 5:22-23

## Haiti Water Aid

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salary of the drillers and buys fuel for the trucks. This also helps the community to feel ownership and take care of the well.

### How you can help

We are very thankful for the prayers and support shown to this mission. We are very thankful we have faithful brethren that continue to volunteer for Water Aid work trips. Without these volunteers we would not be able to continue the mission. But there continues to be a need for more brethren to fill these work teams. While mechanical knowledge is helpful, it is not absolutely necessary. On the work trip, we usually spend several days working on the equipment then help drill a well.

Trip schedules can be found in the Silver Lining or on [acworldrelief.org](http://acworldrelief.org).

Prayers are needed for the mission. This is difficult, and sometimes dangerous, work. Wells are occasionally drilled on top of mountains and the roads are treacherous. Pray for the Haitian drill team’s safety. Also pray for the health of the drillers as they have many medical problems.

Donations can be made to World Relief with Haiti Water Aid

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