

### **Good Steward in the Workplace/Community**

When we gather in Church on Sundays and/ other times as children of God, many of us are loving, nice, smiley and caring people. Many people love our Christ but do not like Christians because when they interact with some of us outside church (in the workplace and community) we are not like our Christ. The call of God is that we are good stewards of his grace in the workplace/community. A Steward has the responsibility to faithfully utilize and manage resources assigned to her care by the Master/Owner. As stewards we have been assigned resources that include time, abilities, skills and knowledge that we may turn into money or mercy/volunteer work.

We are stewards of the resources in the workplace as employee or employer, service provider/ contractor, etc. or community as volunteer, public servant, service provider (employee/employer), etc. Your work is an opportunity for you to be salt and light in the workplace/community with the goal of drawing others to God. Your workplace or community is your immediate mission field, you are God's ambassador or high commissioner for it. We need to embrace our role as an ambassador by representing our "heavenly country" well in a way that encourages people to desire to have a relationship with it. It is when we have done it so well, that our Father is pleased. If you are wondering why you should see your work as an ambassadorial position, let us explore biblical perspective of work together below.

There are two critical God-given mandates for mankind:

- **Creation Mandate** of Genesis 1-2 to subdue or rule the earth with God
- **Redemption Mandate** of Matthew 28 to reconcile people and the earth to God

#### **Creation Mandate of Genesis 1- 2:**

- Gen. 1:26-28: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'"
- Gen. 2:15: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

Creation Mandate teaches that we are called to serve God and others through work. Work is our bridge or connection point to the community. Some Christians think the work done outside church is just for financial income and of little significance and this result in some Christians:

- Having little joy in their work,
- Putting in less than their best effort to their work, and/or
- Separation of activity in the workplace/community from God.

## **Work – Biblical Perspective**

Work originated in God himself and to be a worker is part of what it means for a person to have been created in God's image and likeness – Jn. 5:17 – “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” A Christian engaged in work in a corporate workplace or community can be described as the presence of the Kingdom of God in the very heart of the devil's kingdom as work has a divine purpose and is a divine calling. Work should be holy, as we do all things to the glory of God.

## **Work in Christian Writing**

In Early Christian writing, Christians worked out their holiness in the ordinary callings of their lives. Matt. 13:55 & Mark 6:3 show Jesus as a Carpenter and 1 Thessa. 2:9 shows that Paul worked. Col. 3: 23 encourages us to work as if God is our employer.

Martin Luther stated that “When a maid cooks and cleans and does other housework, because God's command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service of God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns.” [Cited in Forester, 148]

## **Creation & Redemption Mandates**

Creation Mandate is not diminished or replaced by the Great Commission. The Great Commission is *re-creative*; restores man to enable him to fulfill his purpose as the servant of God and do God's pleasure in the world by fulfilling the creation mandate. The two mandates belong together - man serving God in the world that God has made for him. Work is not only our service of God but also an instrument of his care and provision for us. God gifts men and women for the fulfillment of their vocations. God prepares and equips men and women to do certain kinds of work.

## **Transformation of Society Begins in the Workplace**

"While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there" (Acts 17:16-18).

When we begin to equip and release those in the workplace to fulfill their godly roles in business, government, media, arts/entertainment, and education we will begin to see the idols in our cities removed. The marketplace is the place where there is authority that can change society. Changes will come through good stewards who are in places of power who are also in relationship with pastors and intercessors.

If we want to influence or transform society, we need to demonstrate the following qualities of a good steward of God's grace:

1. Compassionate
2. Generous
3. Grateful
4. Prayerful
5. Willing to Sacrifice
6. Trustworthy

7. Willing to Share
8. Content
9. Responsible
10. Obedient
11. Loving
12. Loyal

In addition to demonstrating the above-stated qualities, we need to keep the **“I live it out at work”** statements below in mind:

**I**

**Live out my faith by**

**Inquiring about others’ worldview to better understand and serve them**

**Validating that God is love by loving others**

**Encouraging others when they are in need**

**Insisting on doing the right thing and intentionally showing kindness to others**

**Treating others with respect**

**Owning up to being a Christian**

**Using wisdom to respond to conflict between Christian values and company policies and procedures**

**Trusting only in God alone**

**Aligning faith claims with the demands of the workplace and of my work**

**Translating faith teachings into action**

**Witnessing to the power of God at work in my life**

**Offering to pray for others when they are in need**

**Renewing my mind through the study of God’s Word**

**Knowing how to respond to enquiries about my faith and to present my faith experience using others worldview as a springboard**

After reviewing qualities of a good steward and “I Live It Out at Work” statements, what will you do differently from now?

**God Bless Your Efforts as you strive to be a Good Steward**