

Stewardship begins with a commitment to hard work.

Sunday, January 9, 2021

ICEBREAKER: Have the class members share where they had their first job. Tell them you are looking for the worst first job in the room! Have the class vote and give a prize to the worst one!

INTRODUCTION:

- Ask: where did you get your view of money?
- Someone may say, “I don’t think about money” or “I’m not good with numbers.” With that statement you have just outlined your view of money.
- So, where does our view of money come from?
 - Usually both directly and indirectly.
 - From parents, friends, neighbors, employers, advertisements, banks, credit card companies, car salesman, stores, and celebrities to name a few.
- Have you ever considered *God’s plan* for your money? He has one and it is absolutely imperative to our success in life to understand it & apply it. God is very interested in the way we view money and the role of it in our lives. It is one of the most often taught topics in the Bible.
- Over the next few weeks we will be outlining God’s plan for “A CHRISTIAN AND HIS MONEY.” Today we will learn a critical principle that we must believe and apply: **God’s plan for the Christian and his money begins with a commitment to hard work.**

TEACHER NOTE: This lesson will be taught to a variety of ages. Some have not started a career, some are in the middle of a busy work life and others have retired. Regardless, *everyone has God-given work to do everyday!* Some is paid work and some is not. The student should see his academics as work, the homemaker should see her daily duties as work, the retiree should view their home/volunteer duties as work.

BIBLE STUDY: The Biblical View of Work

1. The PURPOSE of work: (Take time to look up these selected verses and briefly state point.)
 - a. To please the Lord – Genesis 1:28 “subdue it.” Work is NOT a result of the fall. Work is an opportunity to please the Lord on earth.
 - b. To bring provision – Proverbs 13:11
 - c. Work brings improvement – Proverbs 14:23
 - d. The goal of work is not to get rich – Proverbs 23:4-5
 - e. To provide for your family – Proverbs 28:19
 - f. To provide for our household/rebuke against idleness – Proverbs 31:27
 - g. To make an honest living & to bless others – Ephesians 4:28
 - h. To make a living – 2 Thess. 3:12-13
 - i. These reasons for working are God’s commands! This is the engine that drives God’s economy!
 - j. ILL: Someone shared this experience – “I learned this lesson one day when I was cleaning the grungy bathtub of a family that wouldn’t notice and would never acknowledge or thank me even if they did. I was getting madder by the minute, throwing myself a pity party, when the Lord broke into my thoughts. He quietly said, ‘I see you. And I appreciate what you’re doing.’ In an instant, that totally changed everything. Suddenly, I was able to do a menial job—and later on, more important ones—as a labor of love and worship for Jesus. I know He sees and appreciates what I do. It forever changed my view of work.”
2. The SIN of refusing to work. (Take time to look up these selected verses and briefly state point.)
 - a. Refusing to work = disorderliness (deviating from the prescribed order/rule) 2 Thess. 3:10-12
 - b. Not providing for your family is worse than the heathen – 1 Timothy 5:8
 - c. Idleness leads to other sins – 1 Timothy 5:13

3. The CURSE on those who refuse to work
 - A. Forced Labor – Proverbs 12:24
 - B. Destruction / Wasteful – Proverbs 18:9
 - C. Hunger – Proverbs 19:15
 - D. Ruin – Ecclesiastes 10:18
 - E. ILL: In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, by William Bradford, Governor of Plymouth Colony, Bradford states that initially the Pilgrims sought to practice a form of collectivism/ socialism to grow their crops. It was a complete failure. People became lazy and would find excuses not to work. Bradford decided to follow the Bible's teachings about work. He divided the land into private property and told the owners that what they grow they can eat. This provided incentive and a huge increase in production! William Bradford concluded, "The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundry years and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanity of that conceit of Plato's and other ancients applauded by some of later times; that the taking away of property and bringing in community into a commonwealth would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God."

APPLY: Why is work valuable?

1. Through work we serve people. Most work is part of a huge network of interconnected jobs, industries, goods and services that work together to meet people's physical needs. Our jobs give us the wonderful opportunity to engage with others on a daily basis. This can be one of the most fruitful mission fields in our life.
2. Through work we meet our own needs. Work allows us to exercise the gifts and abilities God gives each person, whether paid or unpaid. God expects adults to provide for themselves. Scripture says, "If one will not work, neither let him eat!"
3. Through work we meet our family's needs. God expects the heads of households to provide for their families. He says, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."
4. Through work we earn money to give to others. In both the Old and New Testaments, God tells us to be generous in meeting the needs of the poor and those who minister to us spiritually.
5. Through work we love God. When we work, we are obeying His two great commandments to love Him and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We love God by obeying Him from the heart. We love our neighbor as we serve other people through our work.

TO DO: What is one specific way that this week's lesson has challenged your ideas about work?