

Living by Christian Values at Work

by Sanjay Poonen

Living by Christian values in the workplace requires faithfulness, humility, and a commitment to serving others and seeking God's will.

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Scripture: Ephesians 6:5

Topics: "Faith At Work", "Christian Ethics"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living out biblical principles in the workplace, focusing on being a witness for the Lord, standing for values, and being a servant leader. It addresses challenges like dealing with bosses who may not align with godly principles, balancing career progress with family time, and staying faithful in challenging work environments.

Transcript

It's a joy like Sunday morning to be again here with the brothers and sisters. And 1975 Wednesday meetings used to be much smaller and very intimate, 20-25 people in our living room, in our home, and it's a tremendous joy to see some of the folks who were not even born at that time, now here, and some folks who were babies at that time. And I was six years of the old and now have crossed the age of 40.

How many of you here work at a company, in a job, during the week? Raise your hand. That's almost 90%. How many of you are a mom at home, have a job at home? That's also a very honorable job.

In fact, one of the most important. How many of you are below the age of 40? Good, I'm really glad to see young people here on Wednesday. It goes downhill after the age of 40.

No, I'm just teasing. It actually goes uphill for the Lord. But it's very important that in our first years up to the age of 40, especially as you get your first job, from usually about mid-20s, that we can live some principles in the workplace that I think the Lord has called us to.

As I mentioned on Sunday morning, for me, my personal calling has not been to stand here in the pulpit or in the place where I live every Sunday morning. I believe my calling in life is to be a witness for the Lord in the workplace. And outside of that, the Lord has given me a responsibility for a small group on a Wednesday night of 15 or 20 brothers and sisters that we meet.

And that's my calling in life. And it's important that when the Lord gives us a calling, that we're very happy and secure in that calling. I am delighted to hear my brothers speak.

I'm delighted to hear other brothers speak. I'm delighted to hear my father speak. And when there's an opportunity to share the word, that's good.

But I find my place in the body. And that's important because often we think if we are in a part of the body that is not visible, but is behind the scenes, and we've heard many times about parts of the body that are behind the scenes, like the liver, like the heart, like the kidneys, like parts of the brain, that we can't really have a ministry. And there were many disciples, and many those who followed Jesus and those who supported Jesus, who worked behind the scenes, who had a tremendous ministry to support those who were at the pulpit.

And I want to encourage every one of you, if you have a daytime job, and the Lord hasn't called you to be a teacher, or a pastor, or a prophet, apostle, you have a ministry for the Lord in the workplace. And the Lord called many people that we see in the Bible, certainly the ones that I'm going to talk a little bit about, Daniel, Joseph, Nehemiah, they were examples of men of God who took a stand in the workplace. They had values that they stood for, they had principles they lived by, and the Lord used them.

And it's important that we understand some of the principles, and it's been my testimony that as the Lord has given me both success, as also times where I've reflected on failure in my career, that I have steadily found more and more ways by which I can give the glory to the Lord, and also encourage other believers who are younger than me, as also the other believers who are in the workplace. We have an opportunity, brothers and sisters, in the small things that we do, where Jesus said, be faithful in little, that we can be a witness for the Lord, because people around us watch us. I often work, and now I have management responsibility for a number of people, but many people often come to me and say, how can I plan my career so that I can do this, and I'm very frustrated with this part, and I would like to do this, and many other things that I'd like to do over the course of the next several years, how do I plan this? I'm not satisfied with what I'm doing.

And the important thing that I seek to share with them is the fundamental principle that I've learned from God's Word, which is, if you're faithful in little, God will give you more. He was faithful in little, He was faithful in much. So, in many places, the Lord may have given us a very small responsibility in the workplace, and when we're faithful with that, the Lord honors that.

He may give us more, He may not give us more. It's important that whatever we are asked to do in the workplace, that we're extremely faithful, and in that faithfulness, that those around us, especially those who are unbelievers, see in us an example. Often, you might think, as you work in the workplace, here are other people who you work with that you're jealous of.

They may have more of whatever it is. They may have more money, they may have more. And you may be surprised often that those people are jealous of you, because you have something in your heart, you have something that defines true happiness that they don't have.

So it's important, especially in a place where, as here in Bangalore, and I'm sure in many of the cities, we're faced with lots of temptations to desire more, compare ourselves to people in the workplace who you think have more, to understand fundamentally that our citizenship is in heaven, and that if everything disappeared tomorrow, everything, if God took away our job, we would still be incredibly happy, because

all that we have eventually is going to be here in stubble. And the only thing that matters in the kingdom of God is character. And as we talk about some of the practical principles, I wanted to lay that up front, because when you have that peace of your mind, that ultimately, if everything disappeared, and I lost my job tomorrow, if I was fired, if the Lord chose to take my intellect away, if he took my hands away, what mattered the most is that I was going to live for the kingdom of God, then everything else is upside.

Imagine if you got fired tomorrow and you had that peace, it didn't matter, because you now have a bedrock, a foundation of complete security in the things that matter. So it is important in the ups and downs of life, the highs and lows, that we have that foundation and that bedrock that our citizenship is in heaven, and that nothing in this world can take away that citizenship, so that we're never disappointed. And disappointments will come.

Joys will come. The other thing that it does is when joys do come, we're able to give glory back to the Lord in complete surrender. One of the things that a lot of young people struggle with today is stress.

And we feel that from the point we are in high school. Right? We have exams. We have tests.

We have a lot to study. We have only so many hours in the day. We have pressure to do this during a certain point in time.

Maybe we want to go to the meeting, but we know that after the meeting we have to go back. Maybe it's tuition. Maybe it's a variety of other things that happen.

And so much bombards us during the week and it's sad today we even see some very sad incidents where the pressure is so hard among young boys and girls at so early ages of their life. We had an incident in Clarence School where an unfortunate young girl committed suicide. In my day and age that would have been unheard of, but the pressures that young boys and girls face today is incredible.

It may not be anything like those of you who are over the age of 40 or 50 or 60 ever faced. So it's important that we root and ground our young people, our children. I pray for my young girl and my two boys because the pressures that they're going to face are going to be completely different from the pressures I face.

So those of you who are parents and you have young children, pray for them. Pray that the Lord protects the hedge around them because the pressures they're going to face in high school, in middle school, in kindergarten are going to be significantly bigger. I am thankful for a couple of things that happened to me when I was in school that helped me root and ground me in a few things.

One was everybody knew in my school, Clarence School, that we had a home fellowship. And that didn't make you the most popular person, but it made you known for the Lord whether you liked it or not. And I wasn't the most popular person and I struggled with that because I wanted to be popular, but there were lots of things around me that made me less popular.

And that was okay. And it taught me very early that if I wasn't the most popular person and if the boys or the girls or anybody made fun of me, I was going to learn to get over this. Where it was okay if people made fun of me.

Or whatever. I had thick glasses. And lots of kids who are young or you know that when you're not the biggest boy or girl I wasn't the smallest, I wasn't the biggest, I was in the middle.

And you have all kinds of pranks that get played in school today. Many of you boys know this. I'm sure there are pranks that the girls also play.

But you have the boys who want to go and deflate someone's tire, bicycle, that happens. They make fun of people. And all of us probably have had our fair share.

But when I came into the children of God and among the people of God, I was secure. There was nothing that could touch me. Because I had a safety and a security not just in this physical building.

But I had a safety and security in knowing that I was loved. I was loved by brothers and sisters who wanted my eternal good rather than just the short term good of whether I was popular or not. I am thankful that personally for me, I wasn't the most popular in my class.

That was okay. And even though I did well academically, that did not make me popular. So if you are one of those boys or girls who are not the most popular in your class, that's actually a blessing.

Because often the person who is the most popular in the class is going to have a harder time entering the kingdom. They are like that rich young ruler who cannot give up their popularity. And it's important as the Lord gives us more of anything, we realize that we are in danger of being that rich young ruler.

The other thing that I am grateful for very early in life was that even though the Lord had given me a gift academically to do well, that inside the church, I had to leave that brain and that gift outside the doors. If the Lord was going to use me, it was not because I was smart. Not because I won a lot of prizes at school.

It was going to be because I humbled myself and I got grace in the time of need. And God is no respecter of intellect. The temptations that a smart person face, the temptations that a person who is not as academically challenged or intellectually gifted, the person who is athletic, the person who is not athletic, the temptations are the same.

We talked about the temptations on Sunday. The temptations of the eye, the ear, the mouth, are all the same. So be encouraged, brothers and sisters, if the Lord has given you a gift or the Lord has not given you a gift.

If the Lord has given you a gift, submit it back to the Lord, put your crowns on at His feet and say, Lord, thank you for the gift. I'm going to use it for the kingdom. Because the most important thing is character for the Lord.

And a couple of other things that were important to me was very early in life, and this is where I think it's important that all of us come to the meetings Wednesday, Sunday, whenever there's a chance, because you hear some messages very early in life. And again, for those of you who are parents, I encourage you to do the same with your children. For me, there was not much choice.

The meetings were in my home. So I had to go and listen to it. I actually was thankful that some things actually made me interested in going to the meetings, like playing the piano.

It made me interested in saying, okay, I'll go there, even though I'm not sure I want to sit there for two hours, it's nice to play the piano. And it was actually a very small, it was a keyboard about this big, which had buttons, just three or four buttons. And they were inscribed into the tablets of my heart.

And quite frankly, these are very important laws that all of you can remember. You know why you can remember it? They're up here. These plaques that have been put up are the types of laws, there are many more, but these are the ones I remember growing up.

And if you do nothing else, and you're finding on a Sunday morning or a Wednesday evening, you're dozing off, you can take a tablet of your heart and ask the Lord to really put them into the tablet of your heart. Let's look at a few of them. You can actually live your work life by taking these five or six of them and living your life by them, and you'll find tremendous joy.

Let's look at one. Be merciful to others just as God has been merciful to you. When you are a manager for the first time, or you have a responsibility for somebody, or if you're not somebody, if you live your life by that, you will be from the average person in the world who seeks to lord it over other people.

God gives grace only to the humble. How diametrically opposite that is to the principles of this world. In this world, you see them, I was in Bombay the last two days, met with many senior executives of some of these companies, and you can sense some of them will give you an air of humility, but there's a lot of pride.

It's in the Church of God that we understand that everything that we achieve in the world is nothing. It's zero. It means nothing if we lose our salvation, and the most important thing we can do is invest in the kingdom.

Let's look at another one. If we judge ourselves, we will not be judged. Simple principle we can live our life by.

It doesn't mean that we don't judge the community of people like serpents, but it means that if we find somebody in the church that's doing something different, and they and their light are doing this, we heard about that on Sunday, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Another one. So what should be our attitude when the Lord gives us much? We're going to bless.

We're going to bless as many of those around us that the Lord can give us. Bless of our time. We can seek and encourage and appreciate.

We heard about that on Sunday. We can bless. It is more blessed to give than to receive, and certainly when the Lord gives us money that we use that to say, Lord, if you took that away tomorrow, I cannot take my car, my money into the grave.

You hear some of these people who say when I die, would you drive me into the grave because I have this expensive car. Do you think how stupid that sounds? and they have no idea that when you die, all of this, we all know that, but think if we could live that every day where it is more blessed to give. Finally, all things are possible if you can believe.

Imagine if we could live our life that way that every time you're struggling with something that's really weighing you down. You say, Lord, I don't know what you're going to teach me through but I do know one thing, that all things are possible. It doesn't mean that I'm going to get maybe this promotion, or it doesn't mean that maybe I'm going to be able to solve this problem, but your will for me is going to be done and all things are possible.

I'm going to ask you for grace and humility and you're going to get me through this. That's the way in which we can live. So these very simple principles, you may hear, and I'm actually really blessed that these have become almost a part of my heart, and there's many more like these, 50 more that we could spend all Wednesday evening talking about, but they'll come back to you during your work time and you'll remember them.

You're struggling with something, all things are possible if you believe. There's a sixth one that I'm going to imagine is there, if you would, and I talked about this on Sunday, and it's really been a blessing to me in the times of stress, and many, many, many young people struggle with stress. And mothers struggle with stress at the home, you might think, for those of you who are husbands who leave your wife at home or that they don't have any stress, but you only have to have your first child and know what it is like to have somebody who's crying a lot in the night to know that that's stressful on a mother or father.

Dealing with children and all of that is stressful on a mother, but like we talked about on Sunday in Hebrews 1, if you want to be filled with the oil of gladness, I remember when I was a young boy, I think, Brother Newton, you're going to have to help me with this, there was a place that you took us to that had a beautiful waterfall pretty close to here. I forget, you could stand underneath this waterfall and in fact, right outside the waterfall there were a couple of men and then you could go and stand under the waterfall. I think Brother Newton and Brother Nithya took us there once.

And the picture of that waterfall, which is extremely relaxing and so on, has stayed in my head, which is to say, Lord, if I wanted to be drenched in the oil of gladness, in that moment of stress, in that moment of tough battling, you've got a simple law, which is, anybody remember who was here on Sunday? It's a test. Hate, iniquity and love righteousness, simple. So what is the message formula before you get under that waterfall? Hate, iniquity and love righteousness, a simple law.

So when we're dealing with stress and say, Lord, I want to come out of this with the oil of gladness, wherever it might be, in the workplace, at home, it's a simple law. Hate, iniquity and love righteousness, you're going to get a bigger waterfall. If you have hated it this much and love this much, you might get a small little glass.

Then you might get a little bigger bucket. Imagine if we could have a waterfall of gladness on us every day. And it doesn't mean that we are not facing sorrow or challenges and that everything is happy-go-lucky and we could spend all of our time playing around and then try to get things done in the last 15 minutes before a big assignment.

No, it means that when we are dealing with stress and something that we feel our blood pressure is going up, we can submit ourselves to that oil of gladness. So I encourage you, brothers and sisters, as I sort of summarize what I said here a little bit. When you think about all that we go through and many of the questions, I'll read a few of the questions that in Buddhism we hear about actually on the Wednesday evening and the Sunday morning meetings.

And all we need to do is have two ears listening and saying, Lord, keep me in a place where he who has ears to hear will hear it. And then these verses, I've just mentioned six of them, will come back to you just like they did to the first century Christians God is absolutely one that can change our lives, whether it's in our daily life and our work with the Lord or also in the workplace. Now what I want to do in the next 15 or 20 minutes is just walk through a few of the things that I shared three years ago actually, almost three years ago to date about some of the principles that all of you can live through.

And I'm going to review it because I think it was recorded the last time I spoke on this. So you're welcome to watch that on the YouTube that's on the CFC site. But the first principle I think that's very important is that every one of you is called to be a leader.

And a leader does not mean a manager. You may have responsibility in the workplace for one person, for two people. You may be responsible for zero people.

And as a leader, there are some fundamental things that you can learn from Jesus and you can learn from what we see in examples that can be absolutely applied in the workplace. It certainly is very applicable when you have responsibility for people. And quite frankly, it is the exact opposite of what you see in a lot of leaders and managers today.

And the first key principle is that leaders are shepherds. If you think about the type of person that you have respected in the church, whether it's an elder, whether it's a teacher, whether it's an apostle, you notice their shepherding heart. We see that among the elders in our fellowship here.

We see that among the young brothers and sisters who serve in the Sunday school or serve in helping serve the food. They are shepherds. They really care about people.

It's amazing how when you're first given responsibility for whatever, if you can have that attitude of a servant as a leader, the Lord will bless you. It has been my testimony that the thing that has inspired many around me who are not believers in the workplace that I work in that I sought to live my life as a servant leader, which is to say my opportunity is to serve not my boss. That's easy, serving my boss.

That's easy serving my team. And their success is my success. The company's success is the Lord's success if I'm doing the will of God.

And today in the workplace, there are very few people who live by that principle of shepherding. Now, there's a couple of other things that I think are very important when you live by the simple principles often that you'll find in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, the Sermon on the Mount. That's so amazing how you can apply many of those things in the workplace.

But I want to also say a few things about the characteristics of leaders who are shepherds. You notice that shepherds, a couple of other characteristics, they are extremely good communicators of the right word at the right time. You notice a teacher can stand up here and the Lord gifts that person, a man or a woman, in a Sunday school.

Sisters can also be teachers in that type of setting. They are extremely good at giving us a word for the right time and the right place. And I think that one of the things that we can do is learn how to be precise and crisp communicators in what we do in the workplace.

It's a skill that the world values, but I will tell you it's something we can learn in the church. And you might think this is more than just a feel-good type of pep talk, because I will tell you often the thing that has given me the most boldness to articulate something was the fact that early on I was encouraged by the brothers to get up here and speak from my heart what the Lord had put on my heart, even if it was a confession of faith. It taught in me boldness to speak in a very crisp fashion often we were told by the elders spend no more than two minutes up here or three minutes.

And we asked ourselves why was that unimportant? How many of you in the workplace like to sit in a conference room and you have somebody rambling on for 30 minutes about something? The manager says shut up, we're going to move on to something else. But we can learn some simple principles about communication even here. So when the Lord uses you in a place where you, on a Wednesday evening, it may not be a Sunday morning, you have an opportunity to say in a very crisp fashion what the Lord has put on your heart.

And it's not just good communication and good skills and good speaking. The Lord will give you the boldness in the meetings to be bold and speak up here. You will find that the same boldness the Lord anoints with you in the workplace to be crisp and communication is something the Lord gives you a burden to write a note of encouragement to another brother or sister or a short note on their birthday or whatever it is, a short note of appreciation.

That very same skill that the Lord gives you to use in a way to bless others you will find comes back in the way in which you articulate something in the workplace where you're asked to write. So the principles that the Lord calls us to live our life by in the workplace and you will find that you stand out. I believe that the reason Daniel and his three friends were also successful was they were taught early in life by their parents some fundamental principles not just don't compromise.

They were taught to be bold to be bold in their witness perhaps very crisp in the way in which they communicated and as a result they stood out from a lot maybe the equivalent of television was just standing around watching games and so on and so forth. These brothers were instructed by their family were disciplined by their family and those values came in later on. So I encourage you as you think about some of the things that even the world values very much which is the way in which communication is done in spoken or in written form you can learn those values in the church by saying Lord give me a word not a smart word of intellectual word but give me a burden in my heart and allow me in a Wednesday meeting to be bold so that I can confess from my heart with my words and use that word in a short two or three minutes to bless others and you will find that same boldness helps you in the workplace.

Same time you might find writing this little note to somebody on their birthday takes too much time. You don't have a short time to write a short note of appreciation. Sit down and clear your head for an hour and you will find the first time it took you a long time to write a very short paragraph of appreciation to somebody.

The next time you do it it takes you 45 minutes. The third time you do it it took you 30 minutes. The fourth time maybe it takes you 15 minutes and you're getting better and better and that same skill will affect you.

There are so many people I find when I read their emails or I hear them speak they're rambling on and on and I don't know what they're really saying in the workplace and then often you hear that somebody else was crisp. I think that one of the reasons the Lord has blessed many of you I heard this actually from somebody after the Sunday meeting was that many people were getting better often better than perhaps some of the other folks that they were competing with. Where did that come from? Not just because you were watching movies and all these things on TV or whatever.

Hopefully that's not the reason. It's the reason because you were bold enough to first pay attention in the church here as also apply that. So think about some of those very crisp things last time we talked about.

When you think about the values, the goals, the decisions that we make and I talked about these three different things that are important. It's very important that we set for ourselves values that last for a lifetime. You don't change your values in the middle of your life.

In companies they have these things called corporate mission statements or values and often you find that companies today we saw this with Satyam in India. We saw this with a company named Enron in the US. You have these CEOs of the business who behind the scenes are lying about something or the other and you wonder how did this CEO now go to jail for 10-15 years? Somewhere along the line their values had dishonesty and finally they got trapped later on in life.

Goals are what we set for ourselves for a short period of time or a long period of time and decisions are what we make every day. So simple little framework by which you could think about this. It is very important and I think this is the reason that you have a lot of CEOs who later on in their life eventually they are doing a lot of illegal potential things and they get trapped is early on in their life they have cut corners.

So that later on they say well you know maybe saying this is you know 2000 versus 1800 is not such a big deal and there is a financial statement that later on they get caught for. So early on in life it is very important. I talked on Sunday about the principles that Jesuits teach their kids.

In the first 8 years if you give me a child they will be a Catholic for the rest of their life. In those first 8-10 years we learn certain values. Honesty being being completely honest is something that you see later on in life slowly people get more and more and more dishonest and I think that many of those people who get trapped and eventually even CEOs that get put in jail have early on in their life found a way to cut corners.

Lie about something a white lie here and there. It's important especially for those who are young. If you find there's any part of your life that's not being honest submit that before the Lord and say Lord I am going to live my life being completely honest.

And one of the things that the Lord seeks from us in our spiritual life is complete honesty. He wants us to say Lord I'm struggling with this area I want to bring my life before you and I want your grace because you give grace to the humble. That same honesty apply that completely in the workplace.

And you'll find that the Lord blesses you. The Lord blessed Joseph He blessed Daniel He blessed Nehemiah there are many examples in the Old Testament off that honesty that you can learn very early in life. But those of you who are older and have struggled with this make sure that what you struggled with doesn't get repeated in your children's generation.

What can we do? We can teach our children early in life before they reach the age of eight. I find slowly not yet but my four year old is bordering on the case where there's a few places where she wants to extend the truth. Very early on in life we'd like to teach her that honesty is the most important.

Lying is not allowed in this house. Right? And think if we can live that same level of principle where by the time we get to the point where we get our first paycheck whether it's 22 or 25 or 30 or whatever it is that we have understood that honesty is at the core. There is so much in life in the workplace that is dishonest.

And we know this. It doesn't have to be the gross bribing and so on. It could be in the way something is marketed or the way in which you describe things.

Honesty today is a rare value and the Lord has called us to be those types of values. A couple of the values that Jesus taught about if you think about Jesus' values was absolutely humility washing his disciples' feet and seeking out for help.

The other example I used when I spoke about this last time was an incredible example in the 1940s of this man named Eric Little who the story goes that as he was thinking about the various events in the Olympics he couldn't run a particular event and he chose not to because there was Sunday and you know that and he missed the heat and as a result was not able to win that race and on the other event where he could compete and win the gold medal and it wasn't his favorite event I think it was the 200 meters just as he was about to get to the starting blocks this man came up to him and gave him a piece of paper and in that paper he rolled it out and was and he said I will honor those who honor me I will honor and it's a very again one of those laws that you can put up here the 6th, the 7th,

the 8th law if we honor God He is not a debtor to us in any way or any principle I have seen that here in CFC I've seen this with many brothers we've heard stories of brothers who were at the point of bankruptcy brothers and sisters a family that were on the point of suicide and they gave their lives to the Lord they dedicated their lives to the Lord the debt or the depression did not go away but amazing how the Lord ministered to that family and those are testimonies that we can celebrate so in the workplace when you're tempted to do something that might feel like a compromise remember the heroes that have gone ahead of us who chose not to compromise but to stand for the Lord and remember that even if it means that we lose our job when we honor God He will not be a debtor so think about

the values that you represent in your life I want to read a few of those that I played out and I would encourage each of you as you think about your life to write down it doesn't have to be 10 I'm going to list out a few that have inspired me and I go back and read these these were something I wrote 3-4 years ago and it's the exact same ones I look at every year and say Lord help me to live my life every day by these values if you haven't I would encourage you to write them down for yourself it doesn't have to be the same 5 or 10 that I outlined here but make sure that you have those understood maybe print them out and put them in front of your desk put them maybe in the back of your your wallet or your purse and live your life by them here's one I am going to live my life on earth like

it's vapor and I am a citizen of earth a citizen of heaven what does that mean? we've heard this on many many Sunday and Wednesday evenings if the Lord were to take you tomorrow and we've had plenty of people who've died young I'll give you one example we had a gentleman who runs the division of India for SAP a man by the name of Ranjan Das 42 years old a year older than me extremely fit no problems no no trace of heart disease no trace of anything in his life ran our operation here in India extremely fit last year went for a run came back to his home collapsed and died 42 this can happen to you know if the Lord chooses that's when will we be ready if that's what the Lord and there are so many people who die earlier than their time because they've lived either in a way that was not

befitting to their to their body of discipline either in eating too much or not sleeping or whatever it is that could cause stress and I'm not saying that that was necessarily anything in this situation but when that happens especially when it happens to young people it's a sobering moment to say Lord I'm going to live my life for you completely whether you allow me to live to 45 to 65 to 85 whatever it is I think for many of us who are in our 40s we won't live to a long age because hopefully the Lord comes back and takes us but every day that we live we're going to live as a citizen of heaven secondly I will work hard in everything that I do and the Lord grants me success I will fall on my knees in humility praying to the Lord will give me

grace to be faithful again this is again by the

way the exact opposite principle to how the world lives when they're given success they celebrate it they want to put garlands on you and celebrate it they boast about it and it does mean that the Lord gives us success we do accept it but we say Lord I bring back this is not the trophy I am working for in life my citizenship in heaven is so I'm looking for a crown if you give me a success here it's good if you don't I'm still going to live my life for the kingdom number three I will be a light on a hill keeping my Christian behavior excellent so others can glorify God very simple principle but if you ask yourself how many of you in the workplace are a light on a hill we sing this song I remember you're singing this as a child right don't put it under a bushel remember that song right

those words will come back to you when you're older don't put it under a bushel hide it under a bushel no right we think that those words that we sing as a child go away they come back to you and it will it will either bless you or it will haunt you okay and let it bless you not let it haunt you or you say Lord I had a chance to put my light on a hill and thank you for giving me the grace to do it and it's more than just the badge that says Jesus saves it is ways by which the Lord could use you to be a light on a hill for good or for bad when you google anything to do with Poonam you know instantly what we stand for in our family and I have plenty of times where I go into a meeting in different parts of the world I'll go and address a team in China or in different parts of the world and

they know everything about me because they've googled me and they know what I stand for what my family stands for they've seen often this video that talks about true Christians in the workplace because it's there and it's available and I say Lord that's going to be my testimony it's okay if somebody's offended that I am a holy person or whatever they want to call it or whatever they want to make fun of you but I'm going to stand for you and when there comes times you will have an opportunity to be a servant leader and many of the principles that you live for will become something that you can soar seated there have been many times where I've had people that come to me and say there's something different about the way in which you manage a team there's something different about the

way in which you conduct team meetings or the way in which I say I live my principles if that person is somebody I feel free that I can give a strong word to I'll say I live my principles by Matthew 5 through 7 it's very simple I'm amazed often there have been times where I'm having this a lot of people a couple of people who know me at work and something happens and I talk to them a little more about this and I find out they're actually a Christian and they look at me and say you know I'm not surprised one person I was at at Abundant Life the church where we are and he happened to run into me because he was there that same Sunday and he said listen I heard this person named Zack Poonen the other Sunday is he related to you I said yeah I'm his son and he said okay I'm not surprised so I

can wouldn't it be amazing if one day we're at the judgment seat of God and we had the same last name as our father in heaven and this person says he was a Christian I'm surprised in the way he or she acted so let us live our life as a light in the hill salt in the food we know what salt in the food is right there are points in time where the Lord has called us to be bold and up and visible there may be other times where we're embedded inside a meal but we stand out for the kingdom number four I will be open to the direction of the Holy Spirit wherever it might lead whatever it leads me to and whatever it leads me to speak and to act and this is something where so much that is spoken often especially in places today where much is done in group settings where you have to collaborate in a

work setting many of you are younger you find you're in a conference room and you're having to collaborate about something the Lord will give you wisdom to say the right thing to be participating in the right conversation to step away and maybe go and take a bathroom break when the conversation is going in a direction that is not fitting for the Lord and people will know why you exited the conversation and you came back two or three minutes later and they'll understand okay this person does not want to sit through a conversation that is not fitting to the Lord it's in the way in which especially for those of you who may be working with males the way in which men may talk about women or by the way women may talk about men that happens in the work place it doesn't happen just in school it

happens in the work place too the Lord will give us wisdom number five I will be generous with the seed the Lord has given me and it doesn't have to be just money I would encourage you those of you who are young to be generous with all the other seeds well before you get money because when you live your life by those principles the Lord will give you wisdom when He does give you finally a paycheck so let's talk about some of the other seeds the first seed that all of us have is time we have time that outside of what we sleep and the place time we go we have time and you'll be surprised even if you feel you have no time when you add it all up and you budget just like you budget a bank account we have lots of free time and how we use our free time will be also how we use money when the Lord

gives it to us we can use our free time to bless people we can use free time to bless ourselves selfishly right we could use free time to study the word that same type of generosity of how we deal with that will be also the same same thing with the other thing that we have that we could use that's generous all of us have a mouth and most often our tongue is used for the wrong purpose most often and this is something men and women right we all know how much think if we can use and take the word that we heard on Sunday really seriously which is we are going to appreciate those around us our brother our sister our sister our siblings our parents before we leave home and if we leave home and the Lord gives you a family your wife your children it's a tremendous blessing then when we've been

when we've been faithful with little then the Lord may give us much which is actually a paycheck and we say Lord this is yours you've taught me to be faithful with my time with my words and now when you actually gave me money I'm going to use it for the kingdom we have plenty of examples of those who are faithful Proverbs 31 has plenty of examples of the godly wife who's faithful wakes up early in the morning if the Lord gives you more I would encourage you to say Lord if you take this away it's it's I'm going to still give glory to you and use what the Lord has given you to bless others it doesn't mean that the Lord is expecting you to put whatever amount you have to give generously but I really encourage you to bless others with what the Lord has given you before you think about how you

bless yourself number six I will do nothing out of selfish ambition and this is a temptation especially when the Lord gives you success in your life and you start tasting success and you start thinking I did that I am so good that's the reason I was successful that's the reason the Lord gave me this and if you're not careful that's the exact same sin that Nebuchadnezzar avenged selfish ambition is the biggest temptation for those of you who the Lord has given success to and pray that if the Lord has given you that success that selfish ambition do nothing out of selfish ambition says but submit it to the Lord that that will be rooted and grounded out of us so that when the Lord does give us success we say Lord thank you now does that mean that we don't have any desire to do as best as we

can because that word ambition could mean then are we just supposed to be a sheep and not a serpent so to speak right the Lord will give you wisdom there is no fixed recipe of where you need to be more

aggressive where you need to be more passive I think often when you're negotiating for whether whatever it is where you have to make a bold statement you see examples in the scripture I'm always amazed that there were times in the scripture where godly men argued their point very vociferously very firmly there was a time where Paul gave a defense of himself as we know about in Acts there was a point in time where Jesus said this is not my time he escaped or he argued against and there were other points in time where the right thing for Paul was to get beheaded the right thing for Jesus was

to get crucified the right thing for Stephen was to get stoned the right thing for the first century Christians was to get imprisoned some died so the lord will give us wisdom as to the right point in time where we have to be a little more aggressive in stating our position and other times where and if we have doubts about it the best thing we can do is fellowship with the saints and ask somebody else I'd like to share with you this situation what do you think I should do pray about it the lord will give you peace about a decision whether it needs to be more aggressive in a position or to be more passive in that position number seven I will be a servant leader I will not seek my own glory instead I will seek to honor God and praise and encourage those around me I talked about this leader

this is wanting today there are so many leaders today that live by grandiose you know pompous goals boasting pride and especially many of the people we see among us who are young and successful and it's very important especially for those of you who are young and doing well it always impresses me when I meet an older business person who is humble who the lord has given success because the lord does bless the ungodly and the godly makes the sun to shine the godly and the ungodly and they're humble and that's something that we can learn from number eight I will be careful with all of my words and actions I think we've covered that earlier number nine I will seek the counsel of others frequently I will make the godly my heroes this is something that all too often we think we can make

decisions on our own and the first thing we need to get comfortable doing even before we decide that another brother or sister is accessible to give us their advice is to go to the lord frequently and say lord I am stumped I don't know how to solve this I don't know how to address this issue because you may be in a crisis situation at work during the day and there is no brother or sister to pick up the phone and call there may be nobody who you can talk to and the first thing the lord wants us to do is come to him and it's been amazing how there have been plenty of times where I say lord I don't know how to solve this situation and the answer didn't actually come but as the lord guided through the situation I could see certain doors mysteriously opening and some other doors mysteriously

closing and who do you think was behind that it was the lord job situations should I take this job should I pick this should I interview for this should I interview for that besides the counsel of the godly which we should seek there are going to be plenty of times where the lord wants to get us to stand on our own feet be grown up men and women and we can do this by turning to the lord in prayer and then not be in a position where after we have sought the lord sought perhaps the counsel to be in a place of self condemnation about a decision well I'm not sure maybe I made the wrong decision five years ago maybe that job was the wrong thing that's water under the bridge you say lord if I'm really walking in the center of your will Romans 8 28 and 29 will be true for me which is I am not

going to go back and question the past if it was the wrong decision you make it still work out for my good if I'm at the center of your will and I think we can live our principles not just in life in everything we do in all of our decisions especially the ones that you make there's only one decision that is the most important decision and that's our salvation but there are other decisions that are also very important like who you

marry and so on job decisions are probably third or fourth in that list of most important decisions and number ten and most important I would say is be on fire for God God wants passionate young men and women and if the lord has given you boldness use that for the kingdom use that to be bold on Wednesday evening Sunday morning be bold to serve and you will find

that that same boldness helps you in the workplace it will give you boldness that I found often that I'm surprised often in the younger generation of the brothers and sisters in the church I see some incredible boldness and I say Lord thank you that the younger generation is actually being bold bolder for you and you're going to bless them wherever you use them being a change agent is tough which means there are going to be times where you are tested because doing something and I don't mean just doing something different and standing for the lord but where you have to take either a position or if the lord gives you managerial responsibilities a direction that may be different and changing a particular direction in a company may be very very hard and those are often the ones that can weigh

on your heart and your mind and your soul and all of the assignments that I've been given in responsibilities in my workplace there have always been a couple of situations where I've entered in a new job and just as of Friday just as before I came here the company announced that they were going to give me some more responsibilities and as I reflected on that it was very clear that there were people in this new group that I would have responsibilities for were antagonists not to me but really kind of weighing down the group weighing down the morale and I asked myself lord what are you going to help me do here because this may be one of the tougher assignments you have given me and I said like this I look back at some of these same things as I was coming here over the weekend and taking the

flight here and I said lord I'm going to be on fire for you and everything else you're going to give me wisdom on absolutely and if there is somebody even in the worst case in your workplace who is trying to torpedo you you know what torpedoes are right they're like these things that go under the water you don't really see and all of a sudden the ship has a hole okay there's a lot of people you know in your workplace who are trying to torpedo you you say lord nothing can torpedo me or my ships going towards heaven they can try to torpedo me on this earth so those are a few of the questions and principles that I seek to live my life by there are many others that are in the video that you can watch I did want to spend the last five or seven minutes answering some of the questions that I

think I've covered a little bit on but I want to also share as hopefully because three or four people had some questions that were submitted and by the way outside of these questions if you have any other ones don't feel bad about emailing and I will try to answer them separately first question is in relation to one's boss what does submission entail if you feel your boss does not back his words with action is it appropriate to express that opinion in a discussion with colleagues or agree if someone else says as much is the standard different from our attitude to church eldership it's interesting I was reading in the newspaper this morning about some person who got fired because they expressed their opinion about their boss on Facebook and they said their boss was something something

something and the company read it and they fired them so how should we react to a boss who does not behave or the words are appropriate if you look at Ephesians 5 I'm just going to read this 6 Ephesians 6 verse 5 we all know this but it's important to read this and many of the attributes here although it says slaves and masters is a picture of the way in which we can think about our lives Ephesians 6 verse 5 through 9 slaves be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling and the sincerity of your heart as to Christ not by way of eye service as men pleases but as slaves of

Christ doing the will of God from the heart with good will render service as to the Lord and not to men knowing that whatever good thing each one does this he will receive back

to the Lord and masters do the same things to them give up threatening knowing that both their master and yours is in heaven so let's assume that there's somebody who's not living by verse 9 they're not godly and I think the question here is what does it mean to submit I believe that the Lord as he gives you wisdom will help you understand the spirit of what verse 5, 6 and 7 is what does it mean to do service unto the Lord for a boss who is maybe guiding you in the wrong way first off I think it's important that we're never rebellious and that we speak with politeness to whoever even if it is a boss that's crude and rude and you see this in the way in which Jesus even in the places where the apostles were contesting or defending their position it was done with graciousness I don't believe

that any man of God should ever a woman of God should lose their cool in the workplace that is losing your temper being irritable but the Lord can give you a response even when your boss says I don't agree I agree this is the way in which I think we do it however if it's not something that is against the word of God submitting is a good thing it is important I believe that as you think about what you say with the colleagues as you discuss this type of situation that others know that you're not one of those people who's trying to foment trouble and trying to lay a political agenda to trap your boss because I don't believe that the politics that the Lord wants us to play are politics of this earth now it may just so happen if you think about what happened to Daniel three regimes came and

went one fell the other one went came, went and Daniel still stood through three different regimes I am sure that every one of them and many of you know when you have a new boss and a new regime comes in they're always trying to think are these people who are working for the old person loyal to me not loyal think about Daniel he was the number two person in all these different kingdoms that fell and the Lord gave him grace to be faithful and irrespective of the fact that he had a new boss some of them were ungodly evil people the Lord gave him grace to find favor now in the extreme position where you find that you're being asked to do something dishonest I think it is appropriate to go and talk to the body inside your company it's usually human resources in some companies they have a way

by which you can talk to them in confidence and say listen I think that their the behavior here is not something I can agree with and I would like to ask you to consider this in confidence I have no agenda to topple my boss but I want to share this with you because I think it's inappropriate the Lord will give you wisdom there and I do believe that ultimately if a boss comes or a boss goes it's important that we distinguish ourselves by the way we act the politics of this world is a scheme to collect a coalition we see this in political systems right chief minister is gone and the national and the next few people are politicizing to figure out who can take that's not the way in which we are called to live I do believe that there will be times where we are persecuted because of the

position that we take and it's in those times that we can find solace not just in the kingdom but in the church when you find that you're persecuted among those who are and you find that you're unpopular the best thing you can do is come here on a Wednesday evening and a Sunday morning and you will find a place that's secure brothers and sisters in the body can you speak about career progress and temptations to compromise and principles to sacrifice some time with family I think I've covered the first part of that but let me teach you the second one because I have to say that this is something that I also wrestle with and I'm not perfect and much of what I'm sharing is from my heart one of the things that's a challenge for all of us especially those of us in this generation and I think

it's going to get worse in the next generation is you're going to be pressured in your time perhaps our older generation worked 40 hours the current generation may be asked to work 45, 50 hours and there's tremendous pressure on the time and we have to realize that that time takes away from our family takes away from our time that we spend with the word and also could take away time from the meetings my own testimony is to say Lord I have to in my work travel but as best as possible I'm going to try and avoid traveling on the weekend completely for work of course if you're traveling to go to a meeting that's different because for me the weekends are time for my family and I'm going to keep that sacred for you and for the family secondly I have tried to it's hard often in a place where you

have to work to also for me keep my travel on Wednesdays as minimal so I can be in our home group Bible study and attend that so the Lord will give you wisdom how you spend your time but this is something that I've also had to wrestle with it certainly gets harder as you get more responsibility and I think the best thing I can share with you is the person who will keep you most accountable to that if you're a husband is your wife and your children they will tell you often if you're spending enough time with them and use that not to be defensive but to say Lord I need to spend more time also if you find that your work is taking you away from the meetings a lot Wednesday Sunday mornings that is something where you really have to ask yourself whether your work has become your God final

question it's a great challenge for me to obey Colossians 3.23 I think this is a very specific situation at work especially when I can't enjoy the technology I am working on and colleagues around me are leaving for better jobs after an acquisition how can I be faithful I think this is the place where the Lord gives us wisdom in our choice of being aggressive versus being ambitious and submitting all of this to the Lord and saying I think Lord maybe the right thing for me now is to open up a job search and look somewhere else do it discreetly I think the most important thing is to ask ourselves whether we have peace as we do that about the job we are looking for or does it actually bring more stress into our life often some jobs may be more stressful for simple reasons like the commute the

distance from your work to your home or your home to your work is so much longer that you are spending less time at home that may be a simple reason of that kind or you might find that even though it's more money it brings so much more stress so think about many of the other factors beyond just the specifics but after all of that when you prayed the Lord does give you boldness to say I need to look at a new opportunity you can do that in boldness I think it's important that at the right point in time you obviously don't want to do that before it's ready that you have an honest conversation with your boss and you say listen I found something else it's not because I don't like you or I don't you leave very respectfully that you don't burn bridges behind you if you are upset about a current

situation in your work the best thing you can do is be extremely graceful in your exit and say I'm really grateful for the opportunity I had here to learn ignore the negatives the negatives are going to be there in a work situation where perhaps you weren't treated well but this is a place where we can practice if they slap you on one cheek you turn the other cheek and be graceful so it's a simple principle again where when you're tempted to bitterness because you were not treated well you return with graciousness and you move on to the next opportunity and you will find the Lord rewards you for that faithfulness so a lot that we can talk more about this I would encourage you brothers and sisters a couple of key things as we close many of these things are not rocket science and they're

also not extremely easy there's no one answer to the other so I've described something where it's not very complicated on the other hand it may not be readily obvious the most important thing we can do is say

Lord I'm going to be like the Bereans that everyday search for what the scripture can tell me wherever I can and live my life by certain principles the tablets of stone that you're going to write in the laws of my heart and you will find that these tablets of stone become your comfort as you think through some of these tough decisions and it may actually save you from a lot of conversations you need to have with other godly brothers and sisters because the Lord gives you wisdom and what do you do with that wisdom you turn that around and you bless others who are younger than you so

outside of that we are tremendously blessed to have older brothers and sisters here who can give you wisdom I pray that my life will continue to be one where I can learn from the older brothers and then I can teach learning and teaching don't be just somebody who is learning and then doesn't find an opportunity to teach those who are younger than you and the Lord so I pray the Lord will use this to bless each one of you we have a tremendous calling in the last days to be citizens of heaven the Lord is going to come back and all of these practical principles are going to help us but then we're going to be in heaven and we're going to be singing praises and the people of God that we're going to deal with are not the people of work they're going to be many of the brothers and sisters who are

here so make the family of God your family and you will find the Lord blesses you and gives you wisdom and many of the other things let's pray

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