

# True Christians in the Workplace Part 1

by Sanjay Poonen

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*As Christians, we are called to be leaders in our sphere of influence, and we can serve the Lord in our jobs and careers without having to quit our jobs.*

**Duration:** 1:08:50

**Scripture:** James 4:13

**Topics:** "Christian Living", "Workplace Ministry"

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## Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of being true Christians in the workplace, drawing inspiration from biblical examples like Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah, Peter, Paul, and others. It emphasizes the need to have godly values, work hard, be a light in the workplace, seek the counsel of others, be a change agent, and seek to improve and grow those around you. The sermon also highlights the significance of being careful with words and actions, seeking the direction of the Holy Spirit, and not seeking selfish ambition but rather seeking to honor God and encourage others.

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## Transcript

So I've titled this talk, True Christians in the Workplace. And what I want to talk to you about is how the Lord has been working in my life. I have been working for the last 16 rough years of my life, and the Lord has taught me a lot.

The Lord has called me in my life to a very different type of calling than I called my father. My father was called to a full-time ministry. I believe the Lord has called me to a full-time job, and to serve the Lord in the context of my job.

Many of you, 99%, maybe 95% of you will have a full-time job for the rest of your life. Maybe 3-5% of you may be called to actually serve the Lord in something that's more full-time. So for most of us, like many of the people we will see in the Bible, many of the apostles, had full-time jobs.

And it's very important that we understand how we can serve God in the context of our full-time jobs. What I would like to know, though, before we start, is I'd like to get a survey in the room of the different types of jobs that some of you have today in your work setting. So I've got a whiteboard here that I'm going to use.

And we're going to use the screens there. And I've got a little bit of a pulse from talking to some of you. How many of you are in jobs that are in a call center? Raise your hands if you are in those type of settings.

Okay? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. About 10 people. How many of you are in jobs that are in an IT type of job, where you're an engineer or you're in a company where they produce service? And it doesn't have to be necessarily, by the way, I should broaden it, beyond just software engineering. It could be a mechanical engineer.

It could be any kind of place where you're in an IT or non-IT type of setting. Okay, you've got a lot more people. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Raise your hands high if you wouldn't mind.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, yeah. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Okay.

IT and non-IT. How many of you are in HR or administrative type of roles, where you are working in a job where you're actually helping out, recruiting people, or if you're in a job where you're administratively helping in a particular role of some kind? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Okay. All right, I'm running out of job descriptions.

Tell me some other roles that people are in today. Biotech. Okay, how many are in biotech? 1. Anna, I thought that must have been 5 when you volunteered that name.

Okay, that's 2. What else? Let's just make this biotech and medical, okay? So I can get a big enough. There's 3 people. Anybody in biotech or medical? And this could be... Vincent? Vincent can be your personal trainer.

Okay. About 6 people. Anything else? Teaching.

Oh, teaching. Why would I forget that? It's a noble profession. Teaching.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Okay, 6, 7. Banking. How many in banking? 1, 2, 3. All right. Okay, folks.

This session... Marketing. Sales and marketing. You should have raised your hand only once, okay? Hopefully you're not doing 3 jobs at one time.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Okay. Sales and marketing. Homemakers.

All right. The best of all jobs. How many of you are homemakers? 1, 2, 3, 4. All the wonderful women in the back.

Okay, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Okay. Folks, this session is going to feel a little bit like a classroom, okay? So, students, okay. I forgot that.

Students. How many students who are still in college? And you shouldn't have a job also, okay? So hopefully I can give you... 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Okay. This is going to feel a little bit like a classroom.

And I'm going to feel a little bit like your professor or teacher. But I'm going to ask you if you wouldn't mind during the times that I'm asking you questions, if you could not have as much conversation among yourselves, just like your teacher asks you to keep quiet every now and then. I'll say, hey, listen, this is discussion, and I'm glad everybody's talking, but it's important that we also try and keep focused here because I think it's important.

What I wanted to show you here is that there are so many different types of jobs in the body of Christ. Just in the same way there are so many different types of people. The experiences that I have gone through, a little bit of which I will share, I'm not making it in such a way that it's only applicable to my job.

I want to share with you experiences that are applicable to any kind of jobs because they're based on principles that are in the Scripture. And they're based on the types of principles that we see in many of the working and apostles who had jobs and how they lived their lives. Okay, I'm going to divide this discussion into two parts.

The first part I'll cover this afternoon, and the second part, Ravi, I think we've got tomorrow morning, right? Okay, so we'll do the second part. And the first part I've titled Values, Goals, and Decisions. And I want to talk about how it's really important that as young people, you're between the ages of 20 and 40, you have a set of values that become the bedrock, the foundation stone of what you build your professional, your working life on.

Second, every one of you will have goals that you build your plans for your life on. I have certain aspirations. And how do we make them ones that are based on godly principles? And the third part of it is decisions that we have to make every day.

So the way to think about it is values are what you're built on. It's non-negotiable. You don't change them ever.

Goals you may have for every year, or every quarter, or for every three or four years. Decisions you make every day. Okay? We'll come back to a good way in which you can think about that.

Tomorrow, I will make it a little more practical, and we'll talk about some practical guidance as to how, if you are an employee, how does the word of god talk about how we should relate to our manager? If you're a manager where you are beginning to have responsibility for people, and many of you may be in that stage where you have to do it very soon, how would you treat your employees? We'll also talk about how we ought to be thinking about managing our money when the lord gives us money. How do we manage our time? The lord may give us a lot of time at times, and at other times we may be short on time. We may have times where we have a one hour commute to go to work.

What do we do with the time? How do we make sure? Fourth, managing stress. I know stress is a significant part of everyone's life, and we'll talk about that also tomorrow. Okay.

So let's cover today's discussion, and I'm going to first off ask if we can move two slides down, Elizabeth. Okay. First, a couple of questions.

We're going to make this interactive. I'm hopefully going to be in a place where everyone here will get at least one chance to make a contribution today. It's going to feel like a classroom.

You can raise your hand and be bold to speak what the lord puts on your heart as we answer some of these questions. Okay. And it's not necessarily ones that we will all answer together, but I want you to be thinking about them.

Let's put the first question up there. Can one be on fire for god and still have a secular job or has the lord called only full-time Christian workers? What do you think? Someone said theoretically yes. What else? Do all of us, can we only serve the lord if we have a full-time job? Do we have to quit our jobs in order to serve god? Why? Anybody raise your hand and tell me why.

What else? Take one other from the sisters. You can be a witness for those. What about the disciples? Where did Jesus call them? What were they doing? Fishermen.

Most of them are fishermen. Tax collectors. They didn't change their jobs.

Very few people, even Paul. What was Paul's profession? Tent maker. He had a job.

So 95, maybe even 99% of the brothers and sisters in this room until you're retired, you may have a job. So it's very important that we know that we can be on fire for god even though we have a job. We shouldn't have to think the only way we can serve god is we have to quit our job and then we have to become a servant of god.

Can you have a career inside your job? In your secular or corporate job? Yeah? Yes? Anybody disagree? Shouldn't be a main priority. Okay. Good.

Anybody disagree? Saying you cannot have a career. Okay. Are there examples in the bible? Again, we should always think not just what worldly wisdom and worldly books.

Are there examples in the bible of godly people we knew who had a position where they rose in their company? Daniel, David, Joseph. We're going to talk about many of them. There were also examples in the new testament of godly people who were businessmen who helped the disciples behind the scenes.

What do you do when the lord first gives you your first paycheck? Many of you are coming out of college and you will for the first time get a paycheck from your company. It's an amazing experience. I remember when I was in college, I started working in the dining hall to clean dishes and I got my first paycheck.

What will you do when you get that first paycheck? Will you hide it under a mattress? Okay. Will you go out and spend it? Think about it. We don't need to answer that.

I don't want to put anybody on the spot in terms of how you use the money that you have. Do you know that christians are called to be leaders? Anybody disagree? What did Jesus say in the great commission? Go out and make disciples. We talked on Sunday about being a shepherd.

Believe it or not, every one of you is called to be a leader. When I say be a leader, it doesn't mean that you're a manager or a director or a vice president or a senior vice president. You're called to be a leader for whatever the lord puts in your sphere of influence.

One day it may be more. In Joseph's story, and we look at Joseph, he was given a small sphere of influence when he was in prison. Anybody know what that sphere of influence was? He became one of the chief people who organized the prison.

That's all he did. He didn't have freedom. And then later on, God made him what? The number two person in Egypt.

So it's important that we are called in whatever setting it might be. It may be that the lord has called us in the place where we're working or in the body of Christ to be a leader. And the best way we can be a leader is by being an example.

And having a heart of a shepherd that can allow other people to watch our example and grow from that. And constantly looking for ways by which I can encourage and grow those around me rather than looking for selfishly what I can gain. The selfish person is always looking to how they can gain.

They sit in their chairs and they're looking to see how they can get from people stuff. They can get from the brothers who are sharing at the pulpit. The brothers and sisters who are looking to share are the ones who will become leaders and the lord will bless.

And it doesn't have to be just in the church. What ends up happening is that most of the Christians I have met, who the lord has blessed in their workplace, it started off because in the place where the god set them, the lord set them in a church setting on a fellowship, they were faithful to being a leader. And in your head I want to really emphasize a leader does not mean somebody who's standing up and speaking, somebody who has got a title.

It's your sphere of influence where the lord gives you a responsibility. When you take a responsibility for those who are organizing a big part of this conference, they are leaders. Those who are organizing the singing, you're a leader.

Those of you who are teaching in a Sunday school, you're a leader. It's very important that the lord is able to show you how you can develop that leadership in the setting the lord has given you. Okay, very important question here.

Is your life compartmentalized compartmentalized into a spiritual life versus a professional life? And let me kind of use the next question to tease that a little further. Are you a friend of Christ on Sunday and then a friend of the world the rest of the week? Okay. There are a number of brothers and sisters which starts early in life but you see those who are in their twenties and then it continues all the way till they are retired or even die.

Where they come to the church or they come to fellowship on Sunday morning. They say all the right things and if only you could be a fly on the wall watching them during the week and seeing how they behave at work. Okay.

And you notice that they are completely different people. Or there are others who basically say I'm going to live until I'm 65 and I'm going to work, I'm going to work, I'm going to work, I'm going to earn lots of money and then when I'm retired I'm then going to say Lord now I want to serve you. Right.

I think we've heard many of the brothers here speak about giving the dregs of our life. In fact the example used was drinking a cup of tea. Imagine that you came, you had guests who came to your home and you drank all the tea and at the very bottom was some dregs and you said here Mr. and Mrs. Guest here is your tea for you.

Many of us give the dregs of our life to the Lord because we have so much that preoccupies us from the standpoint of worldly ambition and selfish goals that when we come to give our life to the Lord we give only the dregs. Or we have two different lives. We say the right things, we're passionate on Sunday and then we go to work.

Everything about work occupies us. Or we have a completely different personality, a hypocrite personality. Alright, just to make sure that you're not sleeping.

We're going to make it even more interactive. How many of you here like fruit? Everybody here likes fruit. Okay.

I would like to get 10 volunteers up. Raise your hand. 10 volunteers.

5 on this side 5 on this side. Alright, only 5. So the first 5 people and 5 sisters. Okay, come up to the front.

Come up to the front, the 5 people. I'm going to have you folks number of 5, just 5 people come up. 5 brothers and 5 sisters.

Come stand up here. Stand right up here so everybody can see you. Right up here.

Alright, 5 sisters. Don't be shy. We've got only 3 sisters.

Come on sisters. Everybody raise their hand when you said you wanted fruit. Alright.

Okay, I've got a fruit basket here and I'm going to serve you guys some fruit. Have we got 5? Okay, you can take your pick of your favorite fruit. Who didn't get a fruit? Anybody didn't get a fruit? Anybody didn't get a fruit? Okay.

I've got the last fruit here. All of you like fruit. I would like you to eat your fruit that you have.

Yeah, you can eat it. If you have a skin on it, you can peel it and eat it. It's washed, don't worry.

Brother Ian assured me it was washed. Okay, some people are peeling. Some people are... What's wrong? Some people are eating, some people aren't.

How is the fruit? Are you enjoying it? Is it sweet? Quite juicy. Keith, you don't like this fruit. You want another fruit.

Okay. How does it taste? Good? What happened? What's wrong? The shopkeeper cheated you. Okay.

What happened sisters? What happened? You got cheated. What is it? It's a fake fruit. Could you tell it was a fake fruit when you grabbed it? As soon as you laid your hands on it.

But you couldn't tell from a distance. All right. For those of you who had the fake fruit, I have some fresh fruit.

You can take it. I don't feel like you got cheated. You can grab a fruit on your way back.

And those of you who have the fake fruit, just leave them back here. Give them a hand. Put the fake fruit back in here.

They need to go back to Brother Ian. Okay. This is an illustration of a lot of Christians who come to church on Sunday and they look like this.

You can't tell whether the fruit is alive. In fact, this looks just like an apple. In fact, when I saw it from a distance, I thought it was a real apple.

And then they go to work and the inside gets chipped. You look inside it. Pressure starts hitting at this thing and it's hollow.

There's nothing there. And the true fruit of believers are ones who have that radiance to them wherever they are. And people can drink of them, the fruits of the Spirit.

Love, joy, peace. We'll look at that in a little bit. These are the folks who have genuine life and character to them wherever they are.

So remember that analogy. For many of you, are you a friend of Christ on Sunday and then a friend of the world during the week? What is the fruit that you are giving those around you during the week? It's easy to fake a lot of people. Eventually it catches up.

Many of those who live that type of life, they fall away because more and more you start sensing that they don't have focus on the heavenly things and more and more distractions start happening. More pressures in work. And even within the church, people are able to say it's a fake fruit.

So, I talked about this on Sunday and it's very important if you look at many of these examples. We can move to the next slide and click down with all the examples of leaders. I used a few of these examples and I want to look at a few of them in more detail today so we can study from some of the godly examples.

One of the things that's most inspiring to me is to go back to the scriptures and find out what the age was of some of the godly people that we read about. Often we read Joseph and Daniel and so on and so forth and we don't really think that such and such a person was this age, approximately. And there's a lot of research that's been done.

And then ask yourself what if I was 18 and I was placed in a similar circumstance to Joseph or to Daniel. What would I do? Something shared about Abraham on Sunday. Abraham was a leader.

Why was Abraham a leader? For those of you who were paying attention on Sunday. Anybody. What was his attitude of the way in which he approached Lot? Unselfishness.

He had a heart of a shepherd. And at the time when God called him from the Ur of the Chaldees, did anyone know that today he would be the leader. The entire Jewish nation traced their roots back to Abraham.

Think about that. An entire nation. Millions and millions of people traced themselves back to a simple act that this man of God did to leave where he was, Ur of the Chaldees, and then to systematic decision after decision of faith.

The Lord used him in his life and then very much like he looked at the stars and said this will be your children, that's exactly what happened to Abraham. But it started with systematic step of faith. We're going to look at Joseph, Daniel and Nehemiah.

And we will also look at, what about Peter and Paul? Let's talk about them first. They're both in the New Testament. Peter, was he a leader? Why? What were the virtues and qualities that you admire in Peter? Honest? Concerned for the others? He took initiative.

Yeah. All these very very good qualities. When he was around Jesus, he was always the boldest.

He said, Lord if anybody else leaves you, I'm going to stand with you. Okay. A little bit proud perhaps.

The Lord had to teach him how to humble himself. But what happened just a few months or days even later when he denied Christ? What was Peter's reaction after that? Repented. Repented and God used him after the he was anointed with the Holy Spirit in a dramatic way where his life was never the same.

Paul, let's talk about Paul for a second. What was Paul's life prior to God grabbing him and converting him? He was persecuting the saints. And how did the Lord use him as a leader after that? Anybody? Spread the gospel more than probably anybody of the others.

Wrote the most number of books in the New Testament. Again, how the Lord was able to transform someone who was opposed to him dramatically into someone who became one of the greatest apostles. Lest you think it's only a man.

There was a woman. How many of you sisters know the story of Deborah? Who was Deborah? Okay. Sat under a tree.

And what happened? Who can tell me the story of Deborah? Speak up, anybody. Raise your hand and tell me. And what happened when the general or the person she was looking to lead or help lead, he came and said, listen, I'm not going to be able to do this.

What did she say? The Lord is going to deliver the enemy into who? Into a hand of a woman. And anybody know the end of that story? What happened? Jail put a nail right through somebody's head. The Lord is able to use women and a judge was perhaps a working type of person.

It wasn't. She was said she was a prophetess. But she had a job.

She was a judge. And the Lord can use you even in your work setting to be a leader. And that's very important.

We talked about Joseph. Okay. And I think I've used this before.

How many of you here are in your 20s? Raise your hand. It's the majority of the people in the room. Okay.

What do you think Joseph was doing in his 20s? He was in prison. Imagine if you spent your entire 20s when people tell you you're supposed to be building your career, supposed to be going to college, building a job, your entire 20s in a prison. What was the Lord doing in preparing him in prison? Men who are in their 20s.

Giving him a foundation. What else? Teaching him what? Humility. Right? Remember what he had done when he was a 17 or 18 year old.

He had gone to his brothers and said I saw a dream and what was in the dream? All of you were falling down and worshipping me. Right? God had to humble him. Put him in prison.

And then all through his 20s as he came out of that what happened next? He interpreted a dream for the two people who were in prison. Who were they? Baker and the body. And what ended up happening after he interpreted that dream? They forgot about him.

Imagine that. Anyway, part of the reason I'm asking us if we can move to the next slide is when we think about Joseph. Joseph had certain values that he, the Lord taught him.

As a young man. As a young man, he flew from temptation. And we know how important that is.

Sunday talked about this morning about opening the door to that fridge. Joseph learned early in life that even if it meant he was going to be put in prison, he was going to flee from Potiphar's house. And that became the Joseph that the Lord entrusted later on to become the number two person in the world.

Egypt was the biggest kingdom in the world and the Lord blessed him to the point where he not only became the number two person in the world what did he do to the people of Israel? He saved them. There

may not have been a Jewish nation if that entire seven years of famine meant that Jacob and his children including Joseph all died. The Lord used him more than just as his number two person in the world.

God used him to save the Israelites and save the people of God. And that's the type of ministry the Lord can use you wherever you are. Whether you are in a place where you are number two person or you're just a person working in a company or wherever it is.

If you're faithful if you're faithful with the type of values that Joseph had there's a tremendous blessing ahead. Let's talk about Daniel's three friends. Let's go to the next slide.

Everybody here knows that story, right? What were the values that these three friends had? Raise your hand and speak up. One at a time. Yeah.

Not willing to compromise. Yeah. Yeah.

How old do you think these young men were? Probably between 18 and 20, 21. They were studying in college. They were taken out of captivity and they were trained and they did not compromise.

How many know the story prior to that? They were asked to drink the wine and eat the meat and they said no. And what ended up happening to them while they were in their college setting? They did better than the students who had compromised or had gone along with that. What about Daniel himself? Let's move to the next slide.

What were the qualities that one and values one admire in Daniel? Absolutely faithful. Here's the amazing thing about Daniel. There were three different kings that came one after the other.

And Daniel was still the main person, the number two person that the Lord had, God had in that type of setting. Typically today in a company when you're in a very senior position when there are three different new managements that come out, they usually take out or remove the top people and they bring new people in. But in Daniel's case, he was such a faithful person even though new management came in he still had an important job in each of those different kingdoms because he was faithful.

He was faithful and he was not ashamed to pray in a public setting as you can see there where people saw him praying. And a good example to many of us who are young to learn very early in life that when we take a stand for God, He will honor us. What about the values that we see if you look at the next slide in another amazing person I mentioned it briefly on Sunday.

Anybody here know the story of Nehemiah? He was 40 years old at least that's what the tradition is when he his brother came and told him of all the desecration that was going on in Jerusalem, the walls were torn down and as I mentioned on Sunday, he wept. He had such a burden. He was the king's cupbearer the number two person in the kingdom and he had such a burden and the king said go off and do this and here you see on the right he went to Jerusalem by night he inspected the walls and left his job did that over the course how many people know how long it took to build the wall? 52 days.

Amazing construction job. He was faithful with the plan that the Lord gave him and was he a full time worker?

In fact the person who worked alongside him who was the priest was Ezra but the Lord gave him a burden for the kingdom of God where on the side he was doing this while he had a job he became the governor of

that territory then he went back amazing amazing story there are many in CFC who have that type of brother Ian is a good example where he has a full time job but he has spent so much of his time to help with so many different projects within CFC an example to many of us of how the Lord even if you've got a job he has a plan to use you in a setting like this where you can be an example where you're organizing different things during a conference and so on takes time away from your job but it's important that we have our heart set in the kingdom of God well let's move down two slides to

the values of Jesus what did we see in Jesus in this picture this is something you will never hear about in a company imagine that you were working in a company and you got your first job as a manager and they told you listen the most important thing to being a leader and being a manager is being a servant can you imagine that you ever heard that in a job never it's completely opposite from the values that the world has the values of the world are you will serve me I am the manager I am the big person you will do the job okay and you will order around all the people and the way in which Jesus taught us to serve to be leaders was through being a servant and it's amazing when you take that simple principle and apply it in the workplace how pleasant and how wonderful life can be it's been my

testimony that when the Lord has given me responsibility for people many of you will have a place in time where perhaps you will have a few people in your company that you have to manage when you can take a genuine interest in them as a servant leader helping them helping understand them rather than looking out for your own selfish interest it's amazing not just how the Lord blesses you the Lord basically uses those people to make you in essence help you be successful and I believe that in a number of different places so much of today's world is caught up with selfishness and seeking their own and it's amazing how even in a business and a corporate type of setting when we have these values that Jesus has taught us the Lord can help us be an example and also help us be successful okay what

type of values we move to the next slide that Jesus teaches disciples very very important there are going to be times in your job where it's going to feel completely uncertain I'm going to talk about this tomorrow I'm going through one of those right now where I don't know what's going to happen in some of the circumstances related to some things going on in my job and there are going to be times where you have complete uncertainty and the Lord is going to tell you trust me and it's going to feel like walking on water completely it's going to feel like walking on water and then we take our eyes off the Lord and we begin to think we can do it on our own strength what happens next start sinking start sinking and the Lord has a plan for our lives if we can only see the Lord's hand reaching

out to us and thank God Peter said help and the Lord was right there but there are going to be plenty of times in the place where the Lord has set us where the Lord is going to say I am just waiting for you to see me across the water walking across the water if you would only open your eyes you would only open up and say Lord I'm looking to you I'm looking to hold your hand walk across this water now although it feels impossible and instead in our own humanness we try to do something and the Lord frustrates us we feel like we're sinking we feel more frustrated and may it be at those times that we fall on our knees and say Lord help I need help let's look at one final example and I'm using this just as a way to move to the next one my dad talked about this last night amazing man it doesn't

have to be just the Old Testament or some of the New Testament characters there's plenty of people and I'm using by the way not people who had full time jobs Jesus obviously was an example of somebody who was called into a ministry of his kind I've tried as much as possible to use people who had regular jobs this person was an athlete Eric Little I actually didn't know this but he only lived till 43 some of you I know this

camp is between 20 and 40 I am 38 and I imagine to myself what if I only lived 5 more years and besides the type of example he had in his stand for the Lord in the Olympics that we all know about his last few years was amazing and many of you know that we heard the story yesterday in 1924 in the Olympics he was supposed to run the 100 meters and the 100 meters was going

to be on a Sunday and it was known well ahead of time that it was on a Sunday and he said I'm not going to run instead he trained for the 400 meters and it wasn't his favorite event it was really just 100 meters he wasn't used to the longer events and he trained and trained the first event was the 200 meters and he ran in that and he got the bronze medal and then he ran the 400 meters and just as he was about to begin his race somebody put a paper into his hand anybody know what was on the paper?

Samuel 230 he ran with that paper and many of you know if you've seen pictures of him or seen parts of the documentary or movie, he had a very interesting way of running, ran with his back up face up it was an Eric Little characteristic way of running in fact one of the races apparently that he was running in Scotland prior to the Olympics people were watching him run and he was coming from behind and he was coming from behind and people said listen, he's not going to win this race and then somebody said it's because he hasn't started running the way he does and then as he got towards the last 100 yards, he straightened out his back, head up and then he shot up so he had an amazing way in which he ran, but that was in the place where he was an athlete and as many of you know, the story

went on where he after he was in the Olympics he ran for a little bit longer and then he felt a calling to follow in his parents' footsteps to be a missionary in China and he had to go through an enormous amount of sacrifice and for those of us who know, being a missionary in a remote part of the world imagine going to a village and in China there was lots of inconvenience he did that he came back married with his wife, went back they had three daughters and it was an enormous amount of inconvenience his health had some issues and so on but he kept through to being a disciple and a witness even in that setting the story goes that during the Japanese war the Japan-China war he was confined in a certain place and he would run to catch rabbits for dinner because that was the only food he

could find of meat he would break up fights apparently it said between two different groups within the prison and make them play hockey together because he was an athlete and he would use his skills as an athlete there to get people and then at the end of the hockey game he would preach to them about the word of God apparently the Japanese, the story goes, the Japanese the only person they trusted to make the food was Eric Little because they worried everybody else would poison him so they knew that he was somebody who even the heathen people there so lots of stories written about this amazing man who at the age of 22 how many of you are 22? 22 was the year in which he ran the Olympics and won that gold medal in the foreign leaders and 43 was when he died and a true testament to those who

honor him, one day when we get to heaven, I want to meet this man he had didn't have a big role in his life other than that one or two years and then after that, the rest of his life he gave up what felt like glory in the world he could have run several more Olympics and been a big star in Scotland, in the UK he decided to follow the Lord and become a missionary so what I want to leave you with is asking yourself what are your values your goals and your decisions and I'm going to talk a little bit as we wrap up this evening about some of my values that I have sought to put before the Lord I'm going to leave some of the verses for you to meditate on but if you move to the next slide as I mentioned earlier this is the way to think about it the values are who the ones that define who you are

you keep your values for your life if you are someone who is likely to compromise and you continue to compromise and compromise you will be somebody like that for the rest of your life if you're if you're one who starts sowing early in life the type of values that many of these godly men have they will stick with you whether you're in a fellowship meeting or whether you're in the church it's very very important that the values that you have are ones that are based on godly godly principles let's move to the next slide goals are what you set for a short or for a long period of time so you may set a goal for all of 2008 I'm going to lose some weight or I'm going to set a goal that may be a more bodily or physical goal I'm going to set a goal to be a disciple of the Lord my goal is going to

be an ambition where the only things that matter are seeking God's kingdom first decisions if you move to the last one are what we make every day of your life so if you put them all together values are who you define who you are, what you define your life to be and I'm going to talk about 10 or 12 values that are ones that I have personally put before the Lord and said Lord these are the values I want to live my life and I want to ask you folks you don't have to put down 10 or 12 but write down on a piece of paper maybe this evening what are the values that you're going to make your own what are the goals that you're going to set for yourself maybe we'll just focus on the next you know 2008 and then how are we going to make our decisions and how is the Lord going to guide us okay let's

talk about the values that I have sought I'm going to share this now and I'm going to leave a bunch of verses up here and a few of them just in the interest of time I'm going to ask somebody in the room here to read so that we can all can meditate on them the first value and none of these are necessarily in any order but I have sought these and I have to say that these are values that I am growing in many of them are not ones that I can say I completely before the Lord I'm able to fully live through but it's a goal it's an aspiration it's a set of values that I want to maintain and it's very important that I feel that I'm able to put them on a piece of paper and say Lord these are the values I want to have even if I fall short I'm going to go back to this piece of paper and say Lord these

are the values I want to have help me give me grace and give me power number one my life on earth is like vapor I'm a citizen of heaven what does that mean when I'm in a job and I find that I'm either getting fired or I'm getting promoted it doesn't matter my life on earth is like vapor and in fact those are the passages of scripture anybody here if you want to can you open up to James 4 and verse 13 and the first person who gets it reads it and then somebody here read 1 Peter 2 9-12 while they're doing that Robbie what time do I need to finish 5:45 ok good I'll wrap up in a couple minutes James 4 verse 13-15 ok somebody else very quickly stand up and read 1 Peter 2 9-12 anybody who's got it read it first Amen so it's very important that we keep those values to understand that our life on

earth is short ok let's move to the next value I am going to work hard in everything that I do everything that I do I'm going to work hard and make sure that it's done before the Lord anybody can read Colossians 3 verse 23 ok the first person to get it read that verse please stand up and read it and read it loud and somebody read 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 11 Colossians 3 23 first Amen to that ok 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 11 amazing think about that and we can keep that as part of our goal to attend to our own business work with our hands and live a quiet life ok let's move to the next value that I've put down be a light on a hill salt in food keep my Christian behavior so that others can glorify God the amazing thing about this in the sermon in the mount is the Lord used two different

pictures a light on a hill and salt in the food what is what's remarkable about light on a hill everybody can see it ok what's remarkable about salt in a food nobody can see it it's inside ok imagine that you are both

at a point in time where you need to be bold and vocal you're a light on a hill and there are other points in time where you're just blending inside the crowd but people still taste you you may not be up and bold ok important I'm not going to everybody knows Matthew 5 13 and 16 Matthew 5 20 let's read 1 Peter 2 we covered 1 Peter 2 12 so we'll skip that everybody here should know the sermon in the mount so I'm not going to read that let's move to the next one number 4 be open to the direction of the Holy Spirit wherever that might lead enthusiastically approach new challenges

John 14 26 can somebody read that and 2 Corinthians 9 verse 2 amen and this is the amazing part when you're on your way to work someday or when you're coming back home you may have a long commute if we can have in our the Holy Spirit guiding us in whatever we do it doesn't have to be just spiritual decisions the Holy Spirit can guide us on a lot of decisions we have to make on earth then we're able to enter that type of life ok the next verse 2 Corinthians 9 2 anybody and it just there describes an example of always being ready always being ready alright let's move to the next one be generous with the seed the Lord has given me 2 Corinthians 9 10 and 11 anybody want to read that somebody who is already in 2 Corinthians 9 read 10 and 11 it's ok good anybody it's an amazing principle when I

asked you in the beginning of this I said when you get your first paycheck how are you going to use it bless your parents bless those who have invested in you in honoring your parents one of the best ways in which you can honor your parents is when you get your first paycheck you're able to give them a blessing for all the years in which they were able to bless you and it doesn't have to be just that first paycheck parents is one example of who you can honor give to the Lord and it doesn't have to be just mean giving in an offering box you can bless many others around you who are in need and when it talks about giving cheerfully I believe it's very important as the Lord gives us more that we're able to use completely everything that we have anything that we have for the kingdom of God

let's move to the next principle do nothing out of selfish ambition very very important let's have three people pick up these verses and while you're finding those verses and reading the world talks again and again and again they will teach you classes about being ambitious about having goals about having your eyes set on getting up and up the corporate ladder imagine that we can have the principles of these verses driving us not just in our home but also in our job 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 9 ok James 3 verse 14 and 16 1st Thessalonians 4 and 11 anybody got the first verse? 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 9 please stand up and read it speak loud always being pleasing to him ok next one James 3 verse 14 to 16 let me emphasize that last part where jealousy and selfish ambition exist what tell me

again disorder and every evil thing ok you are probably working around managers of yours who got selfish ambition evil selfish ambition only taken up in themselves and invariably you'll see disorder and lots of different things going on it's a significant lesson I've seen so many around me above me below me and so on who have had selfish evil ambition only important caring for themselves when somebody does a good job in their group they take the credit for that and then go and tell their management they did it that's an example of selfish evil ambition invariably you see so much disorder and it's a tremendous lesson when the lord gives you responsibility one day when you're a manager or when you've got more responsibility around people you're able to give the credit to other people you're

able to be a servant leader that can serve that group of people that the lord gives you responsibility to and do nothing out of selfish ambition this is not something that's taught in the world you know and you know when I went to business school we never learned this it was all about selfish ambition living a life of a Christian in the workplace is a very very different set of principles from what the world teaches us ok let's

move to the last six and then we'll be wrapping up we talked about this again and again and again during today Philippians 2 verse 3 to 9 this is my value I'm going to seek to live as a servant leader anybody can read that Philippians 2 verse 3 to 9 amen amen so we've talked a lot about that being a servant leader let's go to the next one being careful with all my

words and actions James 1 verse 26 who can read that hopefully somebody here has even memorized it it's a tremendous verse for us to imagine the amount of foul talk that goes on in a work setting bad language filthy talk ok talking about movies talking about stuff that if you were to ask if the lord was sitting here in the corporate setting where I am or when you go out to lunch with them would he be honored and my own use of my tongue in that type of setting tremendous challenge if I'm going to have godly values in a workplace I am going to be careful with my words and my actions ok let's move to the next one we have four more left seek the counsel of others frequently and thoughtfully Proverbs 16 15 verse 22 who can read that for me the lord has taught me in the times when I'm really

really wrestling with a decision and many of these places are decisions where you will have to decide do I take this job do I take another to really really seek the counsel of the godly that the lord has put around me don't feel shy to come and ask a godly brother in the church I am not sure what I should do here and they may not have the answer but just being able to sit down with that brother and pray about this the lord may as you're leaving that little prayer give you the wisdom of what to do time and time again I have found that when I have gone to the lord in prayer it may not have been immediately but shortly thereafter and for advice from the godly that the lord has put around me decisions became easier often when I try to battle it through on my own it became so much more

difficult and I just frustrated myself but often I want to do it because I think I know all the answers myself okay let's move to the next last three I've got a dozen here and we're number nine number ten never be satisfied with the status quo be a change agent now this is going to be a little tricky but let's let's read this verse in Romans 15 verse 10 anybody got that I think I have the wrong verse 20 rather sorry okay now this is an example of Paul basically saying I'm not going to go to the place where Christ has already preached I'm going to go to a different place into a place where it's going to feel uncomfortable okay and they're going to be a number of different places where just like many of the apostles Paul is a great example of a change agent and a change agent is one where

when the lord puts them in a setting they turn things upside down they stand in there and they're able to revolutionize the workplace and do something radically different okay and I'm not saying necessarily it needs to be just in a corporate type of place but they're able to bring new values in there be prepared that the lord will use you as a change agent only because you are a believer and have godly principles that many of the rest of the world doesn't have okay let's move to the last two seek to improve and grow those around me above me and beneath me and work in all other areas 1st Thessalonians 5 verse 14 imagine that you are in a setting for those of you who are in this type of job HR and admin okay that comes naturally to you because you're always dealing with people then imagine

you're in another job where you're in a call center and you find out that there are people who are faint hearted and there are people in the job setting who are depressed and you're able to say listen let me go to lunch and just ask you how you're doing the lord can use you in a setting where if your attitude is listen it's not just all about me and what I can gain but the lord has got me here to be an encouragement to somebody in this place I have found that in my own work setting there have been a number of different people who have just even though I don't wear a button or a badge that says Jesus saves know that they

can come and talk to me about something and even my saying I'm going to pray for you we don't necessarily do it there in person but they know that I'm living by different

set of principles and that becomes to them an example of a place where I can encourage them there are going to be other places where the lord has used that as an opportunity to sow the seed and then a friendship develops more of a friendship develops one of the examples of this was a young fellow in my work who had graduated out of college he's a Muslim person in United States and I had mentored him a lot from the point he had graduated from college and he eventually had followed me from one job to another job and at my wedding he got to hear the gospel because my dad preached it and he was surrounded by all these amazing men and women of god and I know that a seed was sown there because over the period of 4 or 5 years what had become as a friendship had eventually been a place where the

lord had used that as a place where he could sow a godly seed and we'll see I hope that he will one day perhaps even turn around but the lord will use this in a place where you're in a setting where you're constantly helping and encouraging perhaps those around you who are faint hearted and then all of a sudden a door opens that the lord may open up for you ok the last one here not seek my own glory I will seek to honor god and praise and encourage those around me Romans 15 verse 5 and 6 so I leave these dozen here I'm not going to I'll make a print out of this if it's helpful what I want you to think about if we can go to the next slide and we'll cover the rest of it tomorrow is perhaps between now and tomorrow morning that's Elizabeth clicks down through all of these no yeah stop that

put down 3 or 5 or what on a piece of paper doesn't have to be now but think about this before tomorrow morning and we'll continue this discussion tomorrow morning what are the values you want to stand for in your work setting I've listed out a dozen of what I'm challenging myself before the lord and say these are the values I want to live by and make them godly values it's not values that are just you know I'll be a nice person I'll say good things about other people I'm not going to get in anybody's way think about the godly values that you want to stand for in your work setting and put them down on paper as ones that you can and ask yourself can you live by these Christian values and be successful or does it mean that you can't what do you want to pray before the lord that he will help

you change in 2008 so we're going to talk more about this tomorrow I'm out of time now but I want you to be thinking about this we'll talk tomorrow about goals and decisions and also how we can use these practically in the context of a couple of different areas of our life dealing with time dealing with money dealing with stress and so on heavenly father let's pray heavenly father I pray that the words that we've heard tonight lord as we are called in a place where we work perhaps 4 or 5 sometimes 6 days a week whatever the time frame it is that we work during the week lord I pray that you would use us as these godly examples we've studied in the bible, Joseph, Daniel Nehemiah lord even the apostles in the new testament many of whom were tent makers had a job during the week but served

you during every waking hour that you gave them lord I pray that that passion would overcome us lord that we would know that our life on earth is a vapor that all that counts lord is what we do for you that our goals and ambitions would be in heaven lord if you bless us on this earth that's good, if you don't that's also ok lord and I pray lord that we would be heavenly citizens I thank you lord for every brother and sister here that has a heart for you I pray that you would use us as shepherds for those who you've placed in our lives whatever and whoever it might be wherever it might be lord may we be the real true fruit lord not the fake fruit the fruit that can bless those around us thank you jesus amen

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