

The Life of Faith by

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Working Hard

I was a teenager when I became born again. One of the first things God taught me was how to work. He used the verses in Colossians.

Colossians 3:22-24: "Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ."

These verses use language we are not accustomed to. The term masters would be the equivalency of our modern supervisors or more accurately business owners. The word bondservant would be the equivalent of me as a common worker. I learned that to work hard for humanity is foolish. But when we work as unto the Lord, we don't lose our reward. Yet, as a worker we still have those who are over us here on Earth.

God has no desire for us to do things to please people. But when we truly work hard as unto the Lord we may still get called names like brown nosers. That is what they called me even though my intentions were only for God, to please Him. They kept telling me that I was a man pleaser even though I wasn't so it drove me to pray. I had nothing else but prayer. I had no one to talk to or get advice from.

I realized after much prayer and meditating on this scripture that I just needed to tell them the truth when they ridiculed me. So as usual they made fun of me as a brownnoser once again. So I told them the truth about the scripture and why I was trying to work hard. In that moment they stopped. I never heard those words ever again. Most likely they stopped because they didn't want to hear about God, but hey, it worked.

Over time this way of thinking on the job became second nature. Working hard has its benefits especially when the reason for working hard is because of God alone.

What struck me as odd recently is why did God show me about work before he showed me about, lets say loving others. Now that I look back I realized God was trying to get me out of poverty. I was single, 18 years old with a child, and no high school diploma. My parents were not in a position at that time to be able to help either.

So even though it may have looked as if I was alone, I wasn't. God knew the future and as long as I was obedient to Him He would be faithful to accomplish His will. Was it easy? Absolutely not!

One of the first places I lived was a cockroach infested apartment. Needless to say that apartment didn't last long. Slowly over time God kept giving more and more as I was obedient. Sometimes He would take away from me in order for me to take a completely different direction. Like when He allowed me to get fired from a job because of physical ailments that were out of my control.

During that time when God was teaching me about work I had a conversation with my Grandpa who told me what a hard worker my dad was. He said he was indispensable on the farm when he grew up. He was always very “dependable” my Grandpa said, “always going the extra mile.”

This is often how God works when He desires to show us something. He will take the scriptures and make them come alive. He knows when to press a scripture on your heart. He knows what will happen in the future of our lives so He speaks and acts accordingly. But we must listen. He will press a scripture on our minds and hearts and it is our job to keep an open eye for what comes next. This is a life lived one day and one moment at a time.

It is truly how all relationship work. Our lives cannot always be controlled and predicted lest we push people away. We all make some decisions at random and those decisions affect others around us. So the Christian life is lived one moment and one day at a time.

This scripture changed more than I could have possibly imagined. I only knew obedience. Not where it would lead.

As I was going through this time I heard of an opportunity to work at a place closer to home and with more pay, if I got hired on by the company, instead of working for a temp service. So I approached my supervisor at my work and asked what to do. He told me that “I could try out the job for a month and he would tell his bosses that I was on family leave.” He also gave me a good reference so I could get hired. What a blessing! It was that new job that set things in motion for me to be able to pay all my bills and get out of poverty.

It was hard for me to pay my bills because even though my son spent most of his time with me I still had to pay child support. More than 50% of my checks was gone before I even received my pay. Taxes and child support together made it difficult to live life.

The church was a big support as they taught me how to budget and to take care of financial issues. One mentor of mine had actually taken my finances over and showed me hands on on how to take care of debt and and current bills.

Our society is not built for us to be alone. We need each other. Part of the reason I have done the things I have done in ministry is to reassure Christians that when we follow God and His word, truly follow, we can and will make a difference. We will make mistakes but it is better to make a mistake than to never try. What can we lose if we are forgiven because of the blood of Christ?