

AUGUST STUDY

The Christian Woman and **Work**



Over the past few years, we have seen changes in society. One of the most dramatic is in economic status. The cost of living has increased while wages have remained the same, hours have decreased, and jobs have been lost. Many work two and three jobs to make ends meet. Society is so concerned with work that it has become overcome by work. Work is a necessity; however, it should not be a distraction from other responsibilities of the home and church.

Being a workaholic has serious consequences. It can have an impact on health, home, spouse, children, and church. Exhaustion prevents the enjoyment of other things in life. You attend church exhausted, unable to focus and worship as you should. Scripture mandates work (2 Thessalonians 3:10), but, there has to be balance.

Jesus came to minister and carry out the work the Father gave Him. He passionately, diligently, faithfully, and obediently worked to accomplish his Father's purpose. He was submissive to His Father's will, the perfect example of how to carry out the work we are here to complete.

This ethic applies in the workplace, home, and in the church.

Workplace Ethic: Work Hard But Do Not Be Overcome

Ecclesiastes 3:9 asks what the worker gains from his labor. The answer is we work to take care of our families, pay bills, buy groceries, and help others. What does our labor profit? Whether in the workplace, home, or church, a proper work ethic will display a positive example of how Christians should work and live.

Many people work day after day with no pride. However, the Christian worker must have dignity at the

workplace, realizing he or she are not there to perform a job or please the boss, but to please God (Colossians 3:17). The job at hand may not always be enjoyable; nevertheless, job performance should be done to the best of your ability with thankfulness. Reflecting this kind of work ethic is one way to be a witness and possibly influence a coworker. Good work ethic could lead a coworker to better job performance. More importantly, it could lead them to Christ. God cares about your

“Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished : but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.” —Proverbs 13:11

job, work ethic, and method for success in the work place. Work honestly and hard. Proverbs 13:11 says that wealth gotten by fraud will dwindle, but whoever earns it by working will multiply it.

Exploration and Interaction

Our attitude plays a role in work ethic. How do you respond to a grumpy coworker?

How do you respond when the boss assigns another task?

Can your coworkers see your dedication to Christ by the way you conduct yourself?

Reflection and Response

Remember, actions speak louder than words, and Christians are a reflection of the Father everywhere. What do you reflect in the workplace?

God never intended work to overcome us to the point of neglecting other important things in life. Can you adjust your life to prevent work overload? If so, how?

Consider the following:

1. Commit your work to the Lord (Proverbs 16:3). God wants total commitment, and He is the enabler.
2. Be Strong! Do not give up! (2 Chronicles 15:7). Your strength will encourage and influence others.
3. Work hard (Ephesians 6:5, 1 Corinthians 15:58). This is pleasing to your employer and to God.
4. Pray (Psalms 90:17). Prayer will get you through hard times at work, providing guidance for tough situations.

Home: Where It All Begins

In today's society, women tend to work outside the home, balancing a job with home, children, husbands, and various ministries in the church. Whether a stay-at-home mom or employed, do not get so wrapped up in work that you forget to take the time to be a mother or grandmother. Those important moments pass

by quickly and with the blink of an eye, children are grown. Sadly, women are so wrapped up in careers that children are raising themselves. God did not intend it to be that way. We are to teach, guide, and raise our children (Proverbs 22:6).

Women must strive to balance duties to avoid being overcome. They have a lot of responsibility in the home (Proverbs 31:10-31). It is easy to get overwhelmed, which causes emotions toward family members to get out of

will respond to the work required based on how you respond to your own work. Teaching responsibility, respect for others, following directions, and doing your best in all areas of life are priorities for success.

The most important thing children can learn is to let God control their lives, which includes home and job. Teach them to pray about the job or situation before taking a step. Remember, labor without the blessing of God is in vain (Psalm 127:1).

“Teach children how to be responsible in the home and it will follow them to their workplace.”

control. Your children notice how you react, and it affects their own behavior. How they see you respond in the home, with co-workers, or in the church family will influence their work ethic, whether they work in the secular world or in ministry. It all begins at home.

Your ethic in the home is as important as it is in the workplace. Teach children how to be responsible in the home and it will follow them to their workplace. Children must realize the importance of working for needs or wants and giving them responsibility in the home helps create good work ethic. Children

Exploration and Interaction

You have an impact on those in your home, your home affects the church, and the church affects the community. Therefore, the ethics within your home have the potential to reach far beyond your four walls. What message is your home sending?

Do those in your home hear you pray?

Do you worship God in your home? If so, how?

Reflection and Response

Do you spend time with God as a family? Or, are you too busy, overcome by doing so much that you do not take the time to concentrate on things that are eternal (Colossians 3:2)?

What work ethic are you teaching?

Church: Make a Positive Impact for the Savior

Church is definitely one place where ethics are important. Ethics within the church make a positive or negative impact on the community and world. If the church functions with genuine Christian ethics, it will have the potential to reach many because the world notices the difference. Unfortunately, some churches have gone away from being set apart as God instructs (Romans 12:2).

High standards of Christian ethics are required when filling leadership positions within the church, whether it is a teacher, youth worker, or piano player. Each candidate should display high standards both in and outside the church. Each person holding a position in the church should not take his or her position lightly. The work is for the church, but ultimately, it is for God.

Church workers can feel overwhelmed when there are not enough people involved in service. A sense of being used replaces working for God. Tension increases, causing a person to give up things because they cannot take on anymore. Serve with gladness but that does not mean take on every job in the church.

Church work is a team effort, and working together makes the church stronger, therefore reaching more for Christ. At the same time, good teamwork teaches young people proper ethics within the church.

Do not become so involved in serving that you forget why and who you serve. The story of Mary and Martha is a prime example of this. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus listening and worshiping. While Martha was so busy serving she



did not take time to sit and listen. She wondered why Jesus did not say something to Mary. She could not understand why Mary was not helping her. There is a time to serve and a time to be still and listen.

Exploration and Interaction

Are you a worker in your church? If not, what prevents you from joining the team?

If yes, are you Mary or Martha? Do you feel overworked, unappreciated like Martha or do you worship as you serve?

What is your reason for serving?

Do you need to step back and let someone else join the team?

Reflection

Work ethics in the workplace, home, or church have a dramatic impact not only personally but collectively. Christian ethics must be taught and continue from generation to generation if we are to make a positive impact on the world around us. A change can be made but it has to start with us. Will you carry the baton of Christian ethics wherever you go and make a positive impact for Christ in the workplace, home and church? I hope your answer is YES!

About the Writer: Wendy Shuemake, her husband and two children live in Dothan, Alabama. Wendy serves in leadership positions within her local, district, and state WAC.