

How to be a Good Provider
Sunday, July 11, 2021
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Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

Many would think that our message today is primarily for men; however, the principles we will deal with are for everyone; especially those in the role as the head of their household, which especially, in our day, is not limited to just the men.

1Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

These are strong words!

There are some who go far overboard with this and actually harm their loved ones by providing too much at times...others provide not enough...others provide plenty of money but little spiritual guidance...others read their Bibles and go to Church but still struggle financially.

Each of us is going to have to determine that right balance for ourselves, and I certainly wish you the best as you do.

Some rely of the government to provide for them. I thank God we live in a country where there is help for those who truly need it, though far too often many abuse the system.

God is holding us responsible for being that good provider every family needs.

The things I am about to share with you today are things I needed to learn early on when I was growing up; but sadly, did not learn until much later.

Let me be clear: the basic principles we are going to discuss today are not new; they are timeless and they are essential.

A fair percentage of our audience today is young to middle-aged adults who are in the process of raising their children and building their futures. To you especially; you WILL NOT succeed in being a good provider without applying these principles in your life.

Our text today is:

Ephesians 6:5-9

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

There is a wide discrepancy among Christians when it comes to material blessings, like making enough money and the management of various resources.

Most of you already know that all good things come to us from above. All the good things; the blessings of health and wealth and prosperity; they all come from the Lord.

It might seem that God loves some of us more than others. Does it seem to you that God loves some of His children more than He loves you?

We actually just read the answer to that in verse 9;
“neither is there respect of persons with him.”

I do not believe that God loves some of His children more than others; nor that He favors some of us above others.

I understand that there are certain difficult special circumstances that are sometimes allowed or even chosen for us by God’s will; things like disabilities or times of testing or of preparation for God’s calling in our lives and many others.

Other than these exceptions it is very likely that the reasons for most of these large economic discrepancies lie with us.

This I do know: After I got saved and began to seriously study my Bible, as I began to apply the financial principles and the principles of a proper work ethic I had learned; especially after I learned to give...things began to change economically for me.

Did you know that most of the top givers in any Church now give more than they used to make before they learned to be generous givers?

I would venture to say that the top 20% or so of givers give more than the bottom 20% or so make.

How would you like to become able to give more than you now make?

The absence of generosity will definitely hold you back and void your life of many promises from God, thus you really need to become cheerful and a generous giver.

However, today’s message is NOT about giving.

Today's message is about the principles that enable you to have substantial resources from which to give.

I will share a few of the most essential principles, nothing near all, but hopefully enough to get you started in the right direction.

Principle number 1:

I. You absolutely must learn to see yourself as a servant.

A. How do you see yourself; particularly in the workplace?

1. Ephesians 6:5

Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

2. Do you see yourself as a servant, or do you see yourself more as an equal to the boss or the customer...or maybe a little better?

3. There are a lot of employees out there who think they know more than their boss does; and that may well be true.

4. But be careful: In [Matthew 10:24](#) Jesus said, **The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.**

5. There are lots of ways in which you are equal to your boss or to your customers...but not in that for which you are getting paid.

6. Your job, your position, is that of a servant; you are to provide whatever product or service you agreed to, on time, every time the way the one who writes your check wants it done.

B. This is what servants do... good ones do it with fear and trembling!

1. This is one of the biggest life lessons you will ever learn.

2. Here is an illustration we've used before but bears using again: Let's say you are one of five people working at a car wash.

a. You receive word that the boss is buying a new automated system, laying off four of you and doubling the wages of the one he chooses to keep.

b. To make his choice, he gives each of you a dirty car to personally detail. The best job gets the new position with the double wages.

3. If you really wanted that new position, you would attack every detail of cleaning that car with all the expertise you have.
4. The fender wells, the grille, the mats, under the mats, the glass, the edges of the doors; you would double check everything and then check it again.
5. You would probably make yourself a personal check list to make sure you didn't miss anything.
6. You would handle every detail of that project with fear and trembling as though your entire livelihood depended on it; because it does.
7. This is how the most successful people in the world address everything they do; they know that "Success is in the Details"!
8. And then they teach those under them to do it the same way.

Next:

II. You must understand Who you are really working for.

A. You may work in a plant or in a small business or at a desk in front of a computer or that car wash or any number of places.

1. But you Christians are really serving the Lord.
2. *Vs. 5* of our text says... **Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, **as unto Christ;****
3. *Vs. 6* says... **as the servants of Christ,** doing the will of God...
4. *Vs. 7* ... **as to the Lord,** and not to men:
5. Some of you say you don't like your boss: you'd better fix that, because your real boss is the Lord!
6. It is the Lord we serve!

And what most do not understand...

B. It is also the Lord who sets our pay rate.

1. Go back and read *Vs. 8*: **Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he* be bond or free.**

2. The check may come **through** the boss or the company, but it comes **from** the Lord!

3. **Luke 6:38** Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For **with the same measure** that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

4. I have come to understand that the measure with which God releases His blessings to us is determined primarily by our attitude as a servant.

5. Someone said that it is “your attitude determines your altitude”!

III. Look at some of these attitude characteristics of one with a servant’s heart. (In addition to serving with fear and trembling).

A. *Vs. 5 says that he serves... in singleness of your heart...*

1. This means that when you go to work you actually focus on your job; what it is that you are being paid to do.

2. I don’t want a guy handling a nail gun powerful enough to drive a nail clean through your heart thinking about what he did last night or what he plans to do next weekend;

a. I want him thinking about where he is placing those nails; one, because I am paying for the material.

b. Two, because I want him to go home at the end of the day in one piece.

c. Your job is to do your job well and give it your full and undivided attention.

B. *Vs. 6 says... Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers;*

1. ophthalmodouleia

of-thal-mod-oo-li'-ah

From [G3788](#) and [G1397](#); *sight labor*, that is, that needs watching (*remissness*): - eye-service.

2. Good luck trying to pronounce this Greek word but what it means is easy to understand; don’t be somebody that needs watching!

3. Your service should be the same whether the boss is there watching or whether he is gone; remember...your real boss is never gone.

4. Don’t be a menpleaser; This is that “apple polisher”; there are other terms for this that I am choosing not to use.

C. *Vs. 7 says...With good will doing service...*

1. This is doing your job kindly and gladly with the best interest of your employer or customer at heart.
2. I have often been in the presence of various service workers who obviously did not want to be there.
3. You have seen those whose attitude was as though they thought themselves somehow above the job they were having to do.
4. There are a lot of people out there on various jobs who are thinking “I deserve better than this”.
5. You may be one of them.
6. If you think you deserve better, you have basically two choices:
 - a. You could pray and ask God to give you what you really deserve.
 - b. Or, you could just go about being worth far more than you are getting paid and see what your real boss does with that.

D. *Perhaps the most important aspect of your attitude is the attitude of gratitude.*

1. **Colossians 3:17** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*
Vs. 15 says...and be ye thankful.
2. Does your attitude reflect genuine gratitude?
3. Or does this aspect of your attitude need an adjustment?

Conclusion:

In the outset of today’s message I asked you if you considered yourself equal to your boss; I said that there were ways in which you are equal but not in that for which you are getting paid.

One of those ways you are equal is that you both are sinners; and thus, both deserve to be cast into a devil’s hell and be forgotten about for all of eternity.

If you are a Christian, it means that Jesus not only loved you enough to die in your place; it means that He sought you and found you and bought you back from your sin.

He owns you and He owns me! I am bought and paid for; He is my Master and I am His servant.

Sometimes on a truck going down the road you will read a sign that says “Owned and operated by _____”

Jesus is my owner, but we need Him also to be the operator!

Furthermore, I am totally OK with that. Are you OK with that? Are you sure?

If you are not now being rewarded the way you would like to be...it is just possible that the reason you don't get rewarded or promoted or recognized like you want to IS (sadly) that you actually DO serve your employer like you serve Christ?

I will let you think about that for a moment.

What would our Church be like if every member served the Lord to the exact same level that you do?

Does your desire to serve Jesus rise to the level of one who is truly grateful that He saved you from your sins?

Or do you really know Him at all?

Your family needs a good provider, in all areas of life; are you willing to become one?