



Sunday, March 14, 2021

WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Who Do You Work For?

Emily Gloria Wilson once worked as a maid for a man named John Kenneth Galbraith. One day Mr. Galbraith came home and asked his maid to hold his calls while he took a nap. While Mr. Galbraith was napping, Lyndon B. Johnson called. For those who are not history buffs, Lyndon B. Johnson was at that time President of the United States. He told Emily, "Get me Ken Galbraith. This is Lyndon Johnson." Without hesitating, Emily replied, "He is sleeping, Mr. President. He said not to disturb him." President Johnson replied, "Well, wake him up. I want to talk to him." The maid replied, "No, Mr. President. I work for him, not you." When Galbraith finally woke up and called the President back, the President said, "Tell that woman I want her here at the White House."

Workers with this kind of dedication are hard to find these days. A trip to many of the companies in the service industry (especially fast food restaurants!) will have you wondering whether some workers even view themselves as employees. It seems that some workers these days believe they are entitled to a paycheck just for showing up to the job. There's too rarely a drive to serve in the world today, let alone a drive to serve well.

Christians are to be different than the world, and this of course is true when it comes to work. Christians ought to follow the advice of Solomon, who said, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). As the old saying goes, if it is worth doing, it is worth doing well. More than this though, Christians are to live to a high standard because of the One for whom they work: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" (Colossians 3:23). Christians work for the Lord first, and ought to act accordingly.

This has two obvious applications. First, we ought to give the best that we possibly can in every worthwhile endeavor. Whether we are a student, an employee, a boss, or retired, we have an obligation to live as though the Lord is our employer. Second, like Ms. Wilson, we ought to keep our priorities straight. It does no good to say that we are serving the Lord in the workplace if our work pulls us from our service to Christ. When an employer asks us to fall short of God's standard such as by asking us to regularly miss church services or to compromise our principles to make the sale, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Ms. Wilson was a worker who had conviction in her service to Mr. Galbraith. We ought to have that same conviction in the secular working world, not because we work for someone like Mr. Galbraith, but because we work for God! Our service to the Lord will probably keep us out of the White House, but we can be sure of a home in heaven if we remain faithful to the one for whom we work (John 14:1-3).

