

CHARACTER IN THE MARKETPLACE

LESSON 1: RED LETTER BUSINESS

“The spiritual life is the life of Christ reproduced in the life of the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit in obedient response to the Word of God.”

– DR. HOWARD HENDRICKS

CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

Joel is a follower of Jesus and very active in his church. He has vibrant, daily fellowship with God and is the type of guy that you want praying for you. Everyone in the office knows about his faith because that is just who he is. Joel is a mid-level manager in a fortune 500 company that does work around the world. Joel loves working for the company and it is very meaningful work for him. He does not agree with corporate values, however, and they often conflict with his own Christian values. Joel has applied for a Sr. leadership position. He is overly qualified for the position and has the respect of other leaders and employees for the work that he does. In his interview with the executive team he is asked some very tough questions based on scenarios that could compromise his beliefs and values. Joel answers the best he can according to his faith values. He is overlooked and doesn't even get contacted by the interviewers. After this process he feels alienated and ignored by Sr. leadership. Thoughts of leaving the job and team he loves come into his mind.

Q. How would you provide biblical encouragement and counsel for Joel?

Throughout the sermon on the mount Jesus focuses our attention on God's true intent for righteousness as He put forth in His law. He describes the character and attitudes of the heart of the follower of Christ. As people in business, we tend to get caught up in what we do. We set goals and accomplish them. We tend to treat God and His word in the same manner and get focused on the doing and not the heart behind it. This sermon gets to the heart of the matter. It is not so much about what Christians do but more about the spiritual character they will possess. And we will only possess this character by giving up our rights and submit to the Holy Spirit living in us who can give life to our dead hearts and transform the way we think. Rom. 12:1-2

MATTHEW 5:1-12

The Beatitudes are an amazing account, or picture, of the life of a submitted heart to Christ according to the values of the Kingdom of Heaven. As we read this passage think about how each character element would be practically defined in your life and specifically what that person would look like as a leader in the marketplace. Think also of the benefits and challenges that business leader would face.

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them. He said:

³ *“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ *Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

⁵ *Blessed are the meek, (quiet, gentle, and easily imposed on; submissive)
for they will inherit the earth.*

⁶ *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

⁷ *Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

⁸ *Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

⁹ *Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.*

¹⁰ *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹¹ *“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Reflect on each of the beatitudes and relate them to character traits of the Christian Businessman.

- Q.** Describe the type of businessperson who would live out these traits at work. What challenges do you think they would have? In what ways would they benefit this person?
- Q.** Which of these character traits do you find most difficult to accomplish at work and why?
- Q.** What workplace situations have you experienced where living out a particular trait was difficult?
- Q.** What have you experienced when you live out these characteristics?
- Q.** What are some roadblocks that can get in the way of being this type of Christian leader at work?
- Q.** How are we to be submissive and humble in a vicious and competitive work environment?