

Leading at the workplace - 4 pts.

When we talk about leadership we must ask - where are we leading people.

Leadership is more than just setting a good example. It's more than a work of the flesh. It's more than diligence, and dependability.

Although those things are important.

Since we bear our Lord's name in our daily lives we ought to strive to add glory to His name - not take away from it.

We should know by now that whatever we do, we should do it with our whole heart, for the Lord and not to men.

So, where are we leading people? Off a cliff? Into traffic? Down a rabbit hole? Where are we leading people?

We, Christ's disciples, are charged with the grand responsibility to lead people to Jesus.

I propose to you that leading in the workplace is nothing more than living authentically.

This means naturally being who Jesus called you to be - because if you have been made new, that's what you ARE NOW.

Since this is a session on leading in the workplace let's begin with a short lesson on economics.

There is a term used in business named after a 19th century economist.

His name was Vilfredo Pareto. This term is quite logically called Pareto's Principle.

Mr. Pareto discovered in the late 1800s that 20% of the population in Italy owned 80% of the land.

Since then, this principle has been applied widely.

20% of customers provide 80% of revenue.

20% of employees account for 80% of work problems.

20% of church volunteers do 80% of the work. And on and on.

If you haven't fallen asleep yet, I would like to bring this back to Pareto's original principle on land ownership.

[1Co 3:9, 16 NKJV] 9 ...you are God's field, [you are] God's building. ...

16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you?

We are God's field, we are His building.

So here is the question: what percentage of your person does God own?
80%, 90%, 99%...20%?

We would do well to truthfully answer this question.

It has significant bearing on our daily lives.

Here's why - if our interests are divided, if we do not have unity of Spirit with the Father, then we will not properly represent Him.

If Christ rules 100% of our being then we will be faithful servants everywhere! If Christ rules less than 100% of our persons then we will be found as unfaithful, and perhaps even unwilling to represent our Lord since we have reserved a portion for ourselves.

The fact is, we cannot lead people to Jesus in our workplace if we haven't been fully convinced ourselves.

Practical application #1 - Be sold out, all the way - 100%. Let Jesus own 100% of your being. If you are God's field and building. Let him rule the whole estate!

Now, If we haven't come to the place where we are completely ruled by our Lord then we will tend to behave timidly, or be ashamed of our faith.

Let me encourage you with Paul's words: [2Ti 1:8-9 NKJV] 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called [us] with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

Paul encourages Timothy - don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner...

Don't ever be ashamed of the gospel or the community of saints that you are a part of - these are holy in God's eyes!

This idea of not being ashamed of the gospel is used several times in the NT. Why?

...Because if we're being honest, we feel ashamed sometimes, like our faith is something to hide.

We feel as if our faith is something personal that others shouldn't see.

Maybe super Christians don't feel that way, but me and you? Sure we do. There's no sense in denying it.

We feel like we can't be authentic or completely owned by God - for one reason or another...

We hesitate to live out our lives authentically because we over-value the opinions of those around us, we under-value the God's opinion of us (who says you are His holy child) - and we don't want to be characterized as fanatics or weirdos.

This type behavior is driven out of fear, shame, and an unwillingness to let Jesus rule completely in our lives.

It causes us to lose our authenticity and forces us to manage two personalities - 1 for church, and 1 for work.

What a miserable existence!

We respect the status quo so much, that we refuse to represent Christ in our daily lives for fear of....

well, somebody might want to speak to us about Jesus...or worse, somebody might get saved!

what a terrifying prospect!

Let's be very clear about the gospel as Paul states in Romans 1:16

[Rom 1:16-17 NKJV] 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew

first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

None of us came to Christ in our own lives because the gospel was weird and something to be ashamed of. We came to Christ because the gospel is true, and powerful, and freeing.

Who has deceived us into believing the lie that the gospel of Christ is shameful!?

Practical application #2 - Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner...

On the other hand, there are those who bury their faith way down deep inside and never bring it up because they are afraid of reprisals, punishment, adversity.

That could be anything from being mocked or criticized.

It could be that we are made the unofficial spokesperson for all Christians everywhere - and now we find ourselves answering for every sin that any Christian has ever committed.

Or it could be quite serious - threats of violence, or losing your job.

Let me encourage you: [Phl 1:27-29 NKJV] 27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am

absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

The Bible does not give the believer allowance to hide their faith in the face of suffering. God's Word says: let your conduct be worthy, stand fast, strive together, don't be terrified....we are SUPPOSED to suffer - that is one of the marks of true discipleship!

Please take note: There is an eternal difference between self-inflicted wounds and suffering for Christ's sake...and most people can tell the difference. Don't be that guy concocting suffering out of selfish ambition.

Practical Application #3: Don't be afraid, stand fast, strive for the faith, endure suffering.

You may say at this point in the discussion - Anthony, what do you know about it? Pastors don't have real jobs! It's easy for you to share your faith at work...it's your job!

As it turns out, Pastors do have real jobs - handling 80% of the problems created by 20% of the sheep! It's like shepherding cats sometimes!

The restraint required to keep from yelling, "quit crying and get with the program" is only a gift from God!

Instead, and only with the help the holy spirit we say, “let me pray with you brother.”

Aside from being a Pastor, I also have a traditional job.

Most of the Calvary pastors in the state where I live have traditional jobs as well (out of the 6 churches). It is a necessity in our area to support our families that we must also work.

So I speak with some experience on the issue of being authentic and leading people to Jesus in then workplace.

Allow me to use an often cited passage: [Mat 5:14-16 NKJV] 14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all [who are] in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

I can tell you this - it's harder to shine your light in a room that is already wonderfully lit.

We shouldn't wait to get to church to shine!

We will find ourselves standing in the foyer, shaking hands, asking seasoned saints if they've heard the gospel.

BUT, if we bring our light to the darkness - that has meaning, that has purpose, that creates the opportunity to light somebody else's lamp. To bring somebody else into the kingdom!

Practical application #4: Since you ARE the light of the world - be the Light of the world.

Finally - and very quickly - don't forget your first job.

Wherever you are, God has given you a job in the service of His kingdom.

You are an ambassador for the most high King.

[2Co 5:20 NKJV] 20 ... we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore [you] on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

That's our first job - forevermore - until we give up the ghost or the Lord takes us home, and there are no days off. So lead well in your workplace, and lead to Jesus.