

D-LIFE BOOT CAMP

Training for a lifestyle
of discipleship.



Keeping it Real
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

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BUSINESS ETHICS – PART 1

Christians all over the world work and businesses of one kind or another. Of course, some Christians in every generation will work in full-time. Church ministry jobs, and others will have teaching positions, military jobs, or other government jobs. But by far the greatest number of Christians will work in the business world. It is important therefore to consider the particular ethical questions that arise in business situations,

Many ethical principles covered in previous classes are also relevant for business ethics. So, I'm assuming the background of the foregoing classes on property, work, prosperity, Poverty and wealth personal stewardship, and borrowing and lending. But in this class, we will discuss business ethics from a different perspective, using 6 core ethical principles from scripture to address specific questions about business conduct.

SIX CORE ETHICAL CONVICTIONS ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES FOR MAKING BUSINESS DECISIONS

1. Truthfulness: "You Shall Not Bear False Witness" (Ex. 20:16).

God's expectations of truthfulness in speech required that you will honestly represent your product, not exaggerating its good qualities in a misleading way, and speaking honestly about its shortcomings, just as you would want the other person to do if your situations were reversed (Matt. 7:12; Eph 4:25).

Truthfulness means keeping your word when you agree to something in a business deal. It means not calling in sick when you aren't sick. It means not saying, "I don't remember that," when you do. It means not saying, "Well I didn't understand you to mean that," when you really did understand exactly what was meant.

Eph 4:25; 25 ***Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.*** NKJV

2. Not Stealing: "You Shall Not Steal" (Ex. 20:15).

This means you should not bill your company for work time when you're not working for the company, nor should you build a client for work time when you are not working for that client. It means you should never put personal (non-business related) items on a business receipt and claim more reimbursement than is due to you. If you have access to proprietary information or some intellectual property belonging to the company you are working for, not stealing means you will never disclose any of that information to another company or use it for personal benefit in a way that is not approved by your company.

Not stealing also obviously means not taking products from your company without paying for them. It also means not giving free or underpriced products such as food in a restaurant to your friends without authorization from the owner. The amount of employee theft from companies is sobering, because it shows how little core conviction about honesty many people have today.

Titus 2:9-10; ***9 Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.*** NASU

3. Honoring Marriage: "You Shall Not Commit Adultery" (Ex. 20:14). God's requirement that we honor and protect marriages means that managers and owners of businesses should take care that workplace requirements do not put men and women in compromising more tempting situations.

Owners of businesses and company managers can also help to protect marriages by taking thought for how much strain they are putting on their employees' marriages through frequent expectations of extremely long hours or late hours at work. Another way in which business owners and managers can protect marriages is through policies prohibiting the open display of pornography in factories or workplaces.

However, Christians may find themselves working for businesses where cautious policies such as these are not in place. Still, they should seek to maintain personal purity of heart and irreproachable conduct in such difficult situations.

- 4. Loving Your Neighbor: “You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself” (Matt. 22:39).** Many puzzling ethical questions in business can be solved by asking what we would want someone to do if we found ourselves as one of the other parties in the situation. This is an application of the golden rule that Jesus proclaimed.

Matt 7:12, ***“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”*** NKJV

Love for neighbor also is important when business owners experience a downturn in business and have to lay off some of their employees. If you own a business, I do not think you are obligated to keep on paying people when doing so will eventually drive you out of business (which would do your employees no good either), but love for neighbor does mean acting reluctantly and with a fair and understandable process when you have to lay people off. It means doing so in a way that shows care and respect for the employees, insofar as that is possible.

- 5. Confidence That There Is Always a Right Decision: “God Is Faithful, and He Will Not Let You Be Tempted Beyond Your Ability, but with Temptation He Will Also Provide the Way of Escape” (1 Cor. 10:13).**

Every time we face a difficult decision, whether in business or in other aspects of life, if no clear solution appears at once, there is always a temptation to give in to despair and to think, “There is no good decision possible in this situation! All of my choices are bad ones!

But God's word tells us that this will not be the case for his people. Even Jesus himself faced decisions that, in principle at least, were similar to the difficult choices that we have to make, and the Bible uses that fact to encourage us to go to Him in prayer and to seek His help.

Heb 4:15-16; 15 ***For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*** NKJV

Paul also assures us that, though we may think we are facing situations that are uniquely difficult, All of those situations of “temptation” (that is, when we are tempted to think there is no good choice and we must disobey some command of Scripture) are actually situations that, in principle at least, have been faced by others as well, and God will always provide a right solution.

6. Trust in God: “Better Is a Little with Righteousness Than Great Revenues with Injustice” (Prov. 16:8).

In every business decision we make, it is necessary to maintain a firm trust in God to bless obedience to his commands.

Gal 6:7: 7 ***Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*** NKJV

Every business decision and action should be carried out with the awareness that we do everything in God's presence:

Prov 15:3; 3 ***The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.*** NKJV

This means that earning a profit of \$1000 with God's blessing is far better than earning a profit of \$2000 through dishonesty and then not having God's blessing.

In all things, for both employers and employees, Christ should be the model for Christian business, because He was known to be a man of integrity, even among His enemies (Matthew 22:16). These **6 core convictions** are not at all complex or difficult to remember, but they are remarkably useful.