

# Wisdom for Workplace Issues

VALUES AND CHARACTER ARE CRITICAL TO THE  
LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF A WORKPLACE TEAM.



**This resource focuses on the Workplace issues which are equally applicable to life in general.**

Note: Bible passages are from a variety of modern translations unless otherwise noted.

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The Navigators Detroit Metro Area Ministry

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# Wisdom for Workplace Issues

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***A complete PDF copy of these discussion guides is available for download and printing by going to [www.CreatedAndLoved.com/workplaceissues](http://www.CreatedAndLoved.com/workplaceissues)***

*The Navigators Detroit Metro Area Ministry*

## About the Workplace Issues Series

*'By the Seventh Day God...rested...from all His Work which He had done.'*  
*Genesis 2:2*

In creation God 'worked' and as a worker Himself, He has provided work to us as a gift. Through work and our work situations, God wants to both grow our faith and grow our influence for Him in our workplaces.

We are spiritual beings having a physical experience while we live on the earth. Yet 'Christianity has sometimes encouraged the mistaken notion that God and the spiritual life are reserved for Sundays and special days, with the unfortunate effect of trivializing the value of our everyday lives. Too often spirituality in the West has been seen as something you can do only if you escape from your ordinary life.'\*\*

'It's assumed sometimes that no one who remains in the 'secular world' can live out the richness of the Christian Faith. Truth is everything in life is actually sacred where God is in it. Any job can be a calling if we approach it as an avenue of loving service to our God and to our neighbor.'\*\*

*"From Washington to Wall Street to Main Street, work dominates the landscape of modern life. But unless you can connect what you do all day with what you think God wants you to be doing, you will never find ultimate meaning in either your work or your relationship with God."*\*

'Our self-worth is not bound to the size of our pay check or our office. If we approach work as a calling from God, success becomes more a matter of helping others than of accumulating riches.'\*\*

Our aim in this Series is to help you embrace a healthy and fruitful view of your work life as both a calling and deeply fulfilling.

\* ***Your Work Matters to God***, Doug Sherman and William Hendricks, *Study Guide Introduction*, NavPress 1988

\*\* Excerpts from ***Neither Curse nor Idol: Towards a Spirituality of Work for Lawyers*** Joseph G. Allegretti, Copyright 1996, *The School of Law, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas*,



## Enjoying Work (That You Don't Always Love)

**'The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life.'**

'Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our attitudes.'

- Charles Swindoll -

### Comments or Thoughts...

**Read This... 'How Important is it to Love Your Job?'** ... Jill Bird, Publisher of WorkLifeBalance.com

'Much has been touted about how important it is to find a job you love. Maybe that's not as critical as we've been led to believe. You can and should find enjoyment in your work. Doing so is very valuable to your life in many ways, including greatly increasing your probability of financial success. But you don't have to love, or even like your overall job to enjoy everyday aspects of it.'

It is critical to distinguish between the job and the way you do it. This is important because every job has aspects that will be very unpleasant for you. You need to be able to get through them with a smile on your face.

Let me give you a personal example. Coming out of college I helped start a company that required me to develop a sales pattern to teach to others. The nature of the sales contact was face-to-face cold calling. Unlike some of the great salesmen I've worked with since, I DISLIKED SALES. So much so that, for the first year, I got up every weekday, threw up, and then went to work.

Although my specific job literally made me sick, I was proud and took satisfaction in the way I was doing the job. I was giving it my best. Somebody had to create a successful way of selling our product, and money and manpower restrictions made me the best choice.

Passionate about the job...no. Passionate about how well I did the job...yes. Fortunately, the effort paid off and we were able to hire and train others to do what I didn't like to do. For a few of those folks, it was their dream job. For most, it was an okay way to make a good living. As for me, I moved to a job that I disliked less...

...And you may discover, as you focus on doing it better, that some of the irritants of your job become more rewarding, or at least less lousy. For me, I eventually grew to like sales, though never to love it. However, after 30 professional years, I am fortunate to have created a job I love doing. It would have never happened without my previous work experiences, many of which were less than ideal...

...So, paraphrasing a verse Stephen Stills penned, "If you can't be in the job you love, love the job you're in (or the way you do it)." It will make EVERY JOB much more enjoyable and rewarding...'

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

### **Wisdom from the Bible...**

#### **Colossians 3:23...**

'Whatever you do, work at it with all of your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.'

#### **Proverbs 16:3...**

'Commit your work to the LORD, and then your plans will succeed.'

#### **2 Chronicles 15:7...**

'But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded.'

#### **Ephesians 6:6...**

'Work hard, but not just to please your (bosses) when they are watching. As (servants) of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.'

#### **Ecclesiastes 3:13...**

'Every (person) should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all (their) labor— it is the gift of God.'

#### **Psalms 90:17...**

'May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us ...'

## **Comments or Thoughts...**



# INTEGRITY

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...the Quality or State of being Complete or Undivided'*

*'Integrity is making sure that the things you say and the things you do are in alignment.'*

- Katrina Mayer -

*'Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.'*

- C.S. Lewis -

*'There is no better test of a man's integrity than his behavior when he is wrong.'*

- Marvin Williams -

*'Wisdom is knowing the right path to take... Integrity is taking it.'*

- Source unknown -

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Read This... **'Global Leadership: True Meaning of Integrity'** ... So-Young Kang

Consistency is a choice that we make as leaders every single day, even when the situation or environment is not great. If you just had an argument with someone before walking into your next meeting, consistency means that you will make a conscious choice to shift gears and release yourself from the negativity of the last conversation and not bring that to the next meeting...

Given the real definition of integrity, we recognize that it is actually extremely difficult to act with integrity 100% of the time. We aspire to be in integrity with what we believe but sometimes we mess up. Sometimes our emotions get the best of us and we are unable to intentionally manage our behavior and actions. Sometimes we don't give ourselves permission to be our true selves out of fear of what others may think or due to an inability to truly 'integrate' the various parts of ourselves into ONE, complete WHOLE person.

So, what does it take to be someone who leads with integrity? Consciousness and choice. I believe that there are at least six things [four are mentioned here] that a great leader chooses to do and to be, on a journey towards greater integrity:

1. Intentionally reflects on what to say, how to behave, how to make decisions in a way that is reflective of his/her values and beliefs.
2. Is the same authentic person regardless of the situation? You can meet this leader with his/her family, friends, church, or at a boardroom, and you will see a consistency in behavior, actions, and words. You will recognize this person no matter what environment he/she is in.
3. Recognizes the impact that he/she has on others. This leader is conscious of how his/her behavior and words impact those around him/her intentionally and often times, unintentionally. So when this leader behaves in a way that is without integrity, he/she stops, acknowledges, apologizes, and corrects course. This requires humility, authenticity, and others-centeredness as one needs to see how others are responding.
4. Actively focuses on the development of character and wholeness. This leader spends time intentionally working on this area in various ways, such as reading, getting coached, listening to the counsel of others, going to leadership development courses, and reflecting on how to develop character.

## Comments or thoughts...

## Wisdom from the Bible...

### Proverbs 28:6 ...

'Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.'

### Luke 16:10...

'One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.'

### Luke 6:31...

'And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.'

### Titus 2:7-8...

'Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity and sound speech that cannot be censured ...'

### Psalms 15:1-2,4b...

'O Lord, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart. He swears to his own hurt and does not change.'

## Comments or Thoughts...



## DILIGENCE

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...steady, earnest, and energetic work; persevering application.'*

*'I never could have done what I have done without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one subject at a time.'*

- Charles Dickens -

*'Patience and diligence, like faith, remove mountains.'*

- William Penn -

*'What we hope ever to do with ease, we must learn first to do with diligence.'*

- Samuel Johnson -

### Comments or Thoughts...

#### Read this... from CharacterFirstEd.com

'Diligence is "focusing my effort on the work at hand." Diligence is like an investment, which means that what you put into something determines what you will get out of it. A diligent person works hard because anything worth doing is worth doing right, and the way you do your work is a reflection of who you are.

The opposite of diligence is laziness. Lazy students daydream in class, forget their homework, and care little about school. These habits lead to a poor education and a difficult future.

Be diligent, not lazy. Your future depends on it!!'



## **I Will...**

1. Concentrate on my work.
2. Follow instructions.
3. Do a job right.
4. Finish my projects.

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

## **Wisdom from the Bible...**

### **Galatians 6:9...**

'So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.'

### **Proverbs 12:24...**

'Work hard and become a leader; be lazy and become a slave.'

### **Colossians 3:23...**

'Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.'

### **Proverbs 13:4...**

'Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper. Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.'

## **Comments or Thoughts...**



## Listening

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...to pay attention to someone or something in order to hear (and understand) what is being said (or communicated)' ... parenthesis added*

*'Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.'*

*- Shel Silverstein, poet and cartoonist -*

### Comments or Thoughts...

#### Read This...

*'Have you ever been in a conversation with someone who was not listening to you? How did you know? How did you feel?'*

*It is possible that we have the wrong impression of listening. Listening is anything but sitting around nodding and murmuring, "un-huh, uh-huh" again and again in complete passivity. As author Doug Pollack clarifies, listening is "a sensitive but assertive quest to really understand someone else. It requires you to probe, explore, and reflect back what you've been hearing to ensure that you've truly understood what's been revealed to you." As noted by author Ram Charan, "[Active] listening opens the door to truly connecting and is the gateway to building relationships."*

### Comments or Thoughts...

Some example phrases to consider using that demonstrate you have heard and are seeking to understand ...

... from the books God Space and the Arts of Spiritual Conversations - Doug Pollock

1. So, if I'm hearing you right...
2. Let me make sure I'm tracking with you. You're...
3. You're saying you feel... Is that right?
4. Wow! You're really...
5. What you really want me to grasp is that...
6. It's like... Does that capture it?
7. So what ticks you off the most is...
8. So what excites you most is...
9. So the really big thing for you is...
10. Do you mind if we take a quick time out so that I can replay what I thought I heard you say?
11. You seem to be saying...
12. I think I hear you saying...
13. It sounds like...

## Comments or Thoughts...

## Wisdom from the Bible...

### James 1:19...

'Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.'

### Proverbs 17:27...

'A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even tempered.'

### Proverbs 18:13...

'If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.'

### Proverbs 17:28...

'Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.'

### Proverbs 2:2...

'Make your ear attentive to wisdom and incline your heart to understanding.'

### Proverbs 2:1-2...

'My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear open to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.'

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Loyalty

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...having or showing complete and constant support for someone or something ... Faithfulness.'*

*'Be loyal to those who are not present. In doing so, you build the trust of those who are present.'*

- Stephen Covey -

*'Loyalty means giving me your honest opinion, whether you think I'll like it or not. Disagreement, at this state, stimulates me. But once a decision is made, the debate ends. From that point on, loyalty means executing the decision as if it were your own.'*

- General Colin Powell -

*'Loyalty publicly results in leverage privately.'*

- Andy Stanley -

**Comments or Thoughts...**

## **Your own encounter with loyalty...**

Can you recall a time in your life when someone was loyal to you or you were loyal to someone or something? What prompted you? Conversely, can you recall a time when someone was disloyal to you or to the endeavor in which you were engaged together? How did it make you feel or what did you think?

'Even as society seems to make it increasingly difficult for people to remain loyal to their jobs and relationships – and their sports teams – a growing body of research indicates there are real benefits for people who commit for the long haul. Scientists have documented the health benefits of staying in a long-term romantic relationship, including reduced illness and longer life. Employees who stick with a single company rather than job-hop tend for the most part to be better compensated and to be more productive.' - Shirley S. Wang, Wall Street Journal

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

## **Wisdom from the Bible...**

### **Proverbs 3:3-4...**

'Never let go of loyalty and faithfulness. Tie them around your neck; write them on your heart. If you do this, both God and people will be pleased with you.'

### **Proverbs 17:17...**

'A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.'

### **1 Corinthians 4:2...**

'Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.'

### **Hebrews 10:24...**

'And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.'

### **Romans 12:10...**

'Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.'

## **Comments or Thoughts...**



## Conflict

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...strong disagreement between people, groups, etc... that often results in angry argument...'*

*'Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.'*

- Ronald Reagan -

*'The better able team members are to engage, speak, listen, hear, interpret, and respond constructively, the more likely their teams are able to leverage conflict rather than be leveled by it.'*

- Runde and Flanagan -

*'10% of conflicts are due to difference in opinion. 90% are due to the wrong tone of voice.'*

- Source Unknown -

*'When people respond too quickly, they often respond to the wrong issue. Listening helps us focus on the heart of the conflict. When we listen, understand, and respect each other's ideas, we can then find a solution in which both of us are winners.'*

Dr. Gary Chapman -

**Comments or Thoughts...**

## **Practical Wisdom for Resolving Conflicts...**

### Some Steps to Resolving Conflict – Tamara Lytle

1. Set ground rules. Ask all parties to treat each other with respect and to make an effort to listen and understand others' views.
2. Ask each participant to describe the conflict, including desired changes. Direct participants to use "I" statements, not "you" statements. They should focus on specific behaviors and problems rather than people.
3. Ask participants to restate what others have said.
4. Summarize the conflict based on what you have heard and obtain agreement from participants.
5. Brainstorm solutions. Discuss all of the options in a positive manner.
6. Rule out any options that participants agree are unworkable.
7. Summarize all possible options for a solution.
8. Assign further analysis of each option to individual participants.
9. Make sure all parties agree on the next steps.
10. Close the meeting by asking participants to shake hands, apologize and thank each other for working to resolve the conflict.

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

### **Wisdom from the Bible...**

#### **Ephesians 4:32...**

'Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.'

#### **Proverbs 15:1...**

'A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.'

#### **Colossians 3:13...**

'Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.'

#### **Romans 12:18...**

'If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.'

#### **Proverbs 21:23...**

'Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.'

#### **Philippians 2:4-5...**

'Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.'

#### **Ephesians 4:29...**

'Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.'

## **Comments or Thoughts...**



## Humility

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...freedom from pride or arrogance: the quality or state of being humble.'*

*'Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less.'*

- C. S. Lewis -

*'Selflessness is humility. Humility and freedom go hand-in-hand. Only a humble person can be free.'*

- Jeff Wilson -

*'Humility is the highest virtue of a human being. In fact, it is the root of every virtue.'*

- Andrew Murray -

*'Pride makes us artificial and Humility makes us real.'*

- Thomas Merton -

### Comments or Thoughts...

#### Read This... **'The Need for Humility in the Workplace'** ... Brenda Smyth

We live in a society that values individuality ... that encourages competition. We work in a world where we are constantly advised to speak up, be assertive, toot our own horn, beat the competition ... Humility is an often overlooked, yet an extremely valuable human quality.

Humility is our ability to admit that we don't know everything, and that everyone has equal value.

Why is it important in the workplace?

- It reminds us to keep learning.
- It enables us to ask for advice (regardless of whether you're the boss or fresh out of college).
- It keeps us quiet when we're in a conversation about something we know little about.
- It means giving ... before we receive.
- It helps us listen to and recognize when someone else's idea is better than ours.



“There’s something truly powerful about (humble people) that we can all stand to emulate,” wrote Lindsay Holmes for huffingtonpost.com. “Studies have associated humility with healthy adjustment, good leadership and other positive emotions ... demonstrating that in order to reach total success, we could stand to benefit from getting in touch with our modest side.” She quotes Mike Austin, PhD, professor of philosophy at Eastern Kentucky University: “Many people think of humility as ... thinking very little of yourself, and I don’t think that’s right. It’s more about a proper or accurate assessment of yourself. A big part of humility is knowing our own limits, our strengths and weaknesses.” Learn to be humble. Here’s some advice to get you started:

Understand your strengths and weaknesses. It’s hard for most of us to accurately self-assess. Ask a few people who know you well to give you some candid feedback so you know what your weaknesses are.

Remember to keep learning. Improvement is a lifelong process that should never stop, even when you’re really good at something. Whether it’s through books, classes, or people, continue to learn.

Develop a grateful mind-set. “Be willing to receive advice, corrections, and contributions. True gratitude takes a willingness not to be the sole contributor to your accomplishments”, says Robert Roberts for bigquestionsonline.com. He also suggests that you keep a gratitude journal where you write down ways that others have contributed to your successes so you’ll be more aware of your dependency on others.

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Wisdom from the Bible...

#### **Luke 14:11...**

‘For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.’

#### **Philippians 2:3...**

‘Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.’

#### **1 Peter 5:6...**

‘Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.’

#### **James 3:13...**

‘Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.’

#### **Proverbs 18:12...**

‘Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor.’

#### **Micah 6:8...**

‘He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.’

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Excellence

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** *'...very good, extremely good...'*

*'The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.'*

- Vince Lombardi -

*'If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.'*

- Colin Powell -

*'Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way.'*

- Booker T. Washington -

*'Excellence is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.'*

- John W. Gardner -

### Comments or Thoughts...

#### Read This... From Chapter 11: The Pursuit of Excellence ... Ted Engstrom

*"... Excellence isn't determined by comparing our score or performance to someone else's. The pursuit of excellence comes from doing our best with what we have to God's glory and with a view to growing and improving, but not with a view to the score or who is watching from man's standpoint.*

*So then, biblically speaking, the pursuit of excellence refers to pursuing and doing the best we can with the gifts and abilities God gives, giving our best to the glory of God. But ideally, it is done without the spirit of competition or seeking to excel simply to be better than others. Excellence includes doing common, everyday things, but in very uncommon ways regardless of whether people are watching. The reality is that God sees our work and rewards us accordingly..."*

### Comments or Thoughts...

## Wisdom from the Bible...

### **2 Peter 1:3...**

'His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.'

### **Colossians 3:23-24...**

'Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.'

### **Daniel 6:3...**

'Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.'

### **Philippians 4:8...**

'Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.'

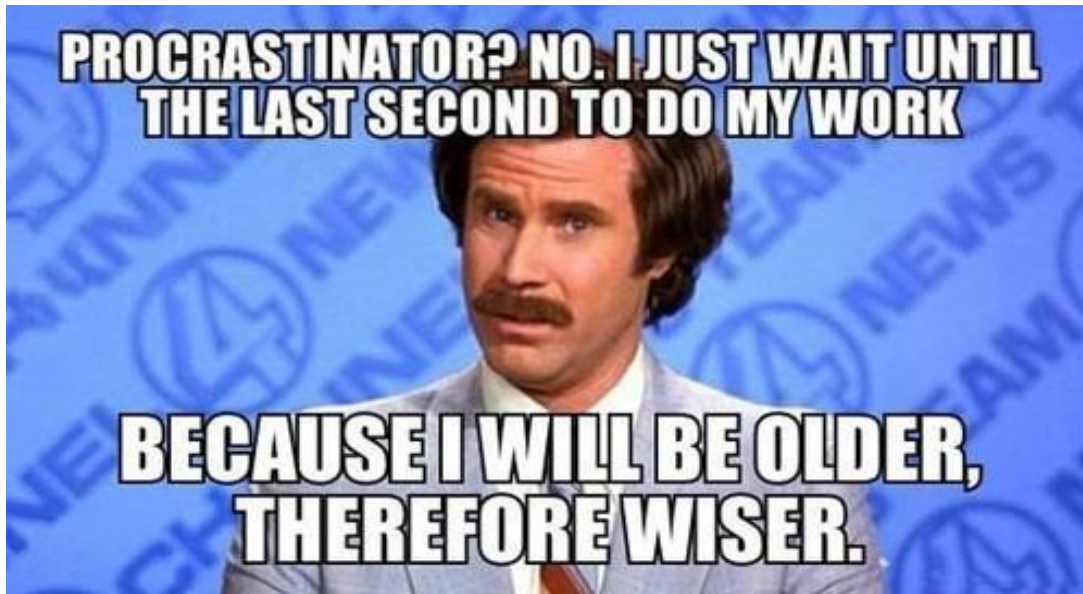
### **Philippians 1:9-10...**

'And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ ...'

### **Mark 7:37...**

'And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." '

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Procrastination

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** “...to put off intentionally the doing of something that must be done...”

‘Procrastination is like a credit card: it’s a lot of fun until you get the bill.’

- Craig Parker -

‘Procrastination is one of the most common and deadliest of diseases and its toll on success and happiness is heavy.’

- Wayne Gretzky -

‘There’s nothing wrong with procrastination. Or is there? I’ll leave it to you to decide, but only if you have the time.’

- Craig Brown -

### Comments or Thoughts...

**Read this... ‘Procrastination in the Workplace – You’re Not Alone’ ... Brenda Smyth**

One in five people in the U.S. is a chronic procrastinator. The condition is so common that if you’re not a procrastinator yourself, there’s a good chance you work with someone who is. And while putting off one little task now and then won’t have a huge impact, if delays become part of the accepted company culture, a huge drop in productivity could result...

... According to Joseph Ferrari, PhD, in an article for the American Psychological Association, everyone puts off an occasional task. A true procrastinator habitually delays important tasks, even when he or she knows there will be consequences. “While everybody may procrastinate, not everyone is a procrastinator,” explains Ferrari. Procrastination is more than just waiting or delaying. “It is a decision to not act.”

Which brings us to another interesting finding: Procrastination is often linked with indecision. How much time and thought should you invest in gathering information and options before making a decision? Some individuals believe that rushing the process will jeopardize creativity. Others struggle with stopping when they've gathered a reasonable amount of information—causing them to be indecisive or delay taking any action at all. Additionally, sometimes an effort to produce perfect work can cause a person to become mired in minor details and procrastinate.

**If you're a chronic procrastinator**, overcoming this behavior starts with awareness. Think about what causes you to procrastinate.

- To help kick the habit, experts suggest focusing on simple self-regulation skills. “— simply putting one foot in front of the other,” recommends Timothy A. Pychyl, PhD. Set an intention and then get started. “Showing up is half the battle with self-regulation.”
- Another suggestion offered in a Princeton University article is adopting a time management technique that doesn't increase your anxiety. A giant to-do list or a minute-by-minute schedule only increases your stress. Instead, make a manageable list with built-in flexibility and portions of bigger projects. (Include things you enjoy doing as rewards as you complete steps.)
- Put deadlines on your calendar (both for the complete project and smaller portions of it). Again, don't overwhelm yourself with 12 things all due on the same day.

**If you're working with a procrastinator**, and you're a do-it-now person, this is a setup for frustration. How can you best work together without driving each other crazy? You struggle to understand why the other person keeps stalling ... while they wonder why you want the information a week before it's due.

- Relieve some pressure by making sure that deadlines aren't arbitrary, and that everything isn't “urgent” or due at the same time. Try assigning one task at a time.
- Move up the date or time when a task is extremely important.
- Communicate the consequences of a delay. (This might also help you realize that consequences aren't dire.)

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Wisdom from the Bible...

#### Proverbs 13:4...

‘No matter how much you want, laziness won't help a bit, but hard work will reward you with more than enough.’

#### Proverbs 6:6-8...

‘Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones. Learn from their ways and become wise!...they labor hard all summer, gathering food for the winter.’

#### Proverbs 10:4...

‘Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.’

#### James 4:17...

‘Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.’

#### Colossians 3:23...

‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.’

## Comments or Thoughts...



# Creativity

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** “...*the ability to make new things or think of new ideas.*”

‘Everybody has a creative potential and from the moment you can express this creative potential, you can start changing the world.’

- Paulo Coelho -

‘To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science.’

- Albert Einstein -

## Comments or Thoughts...

**Read This... ‘Some Steps You Need To Take To Be Creative At Work’ ... Paul Sloan**

‘It is easy to get into a rut at work. The longer you have been doing the job, the greater the tendency to keep doing things the way you have always done them... In almost every job there are opportunities for creativity and innovation—sometimes they are small procedural improvements, and sometimes they are big, risky innovations. How can you put some imagination and creativity into your work?’

Recognize that every product, every service, every method and every aspect of your job can be done differently and better. Approach every task with the attitude that the current method is temporary and that your job is to find a better way to do it.

### **Ask people.**

Ask customers what problems and issues they have with your products or services. Ask suppliers for ideas for cost savings and quality improvements. Ask colleagues in other departments what could be improved....

### **Run regular brainstorms.**

A well-facilitated “ideation” session or brainstorm with a diverse team will generate plenty of great ideas for any business challenge... You should hold them often with your team... Start with a clear statement of the issue and some broad criteria for what a good solution might look like. Turn the brainstorms into action by implementing the best ideas.

### **Look far outside.**

How do other organizations in different fields tackle the sorts of challenges that you face? ...What do businesses similar to yours but in Singapore, Holland or Shanghai do? Research them on the internet...

### **Discuss issues and ideas with your boss.**

Find out what his or her big issues are. What is the corporate strategy? Maybe you can contribute a few ideas of your own that will help your manager or the company at large. Talk about the challenges and your proposals and suggestions. Show that you are a positive contributor of ideas.

### **Build prototypes.**

Show people how an idea would work in practice with a mock-up or a prototype. Ask for their input and ideas. Make the idea real and you will get feedback. Test new product and service ideas with customers.

### **Change your attitude to failure.**

If everything you try works then you are not being bold enough. Innovation involves trying some things that don't work. Treat each failure as a learning opportunity. The innovator's motto is: “I succeed or I learn, but I never fail.”

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

## **Wisdom from the Bible...**

### **Exodus 35:31-32, 35...**

‘And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze. ... He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer.’

### **Ephesians 2:10...**

‘For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.’

### **Colossians 3:23...**

‘Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...’

## **Comments or Thoughts...**



## Failure

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** ‘...omission of occurrence or performance.’

‘Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.’  
- Winston Churchill -

‘I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.’  
- Thomas A. Edison -

‘Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.’  
- Winston Churchill -

‘It's fine to celebrate success but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure.’  
- Bill Gates -

‘Failure is just part of the process, and it's not just okay; it's better than okay. God doesn't want failure to shut us down. God didn't make it three-strikes-and-you're out sort of thing. It's more about how God helps us dust ourselves off so we can swing for the fences again. I used to be afraid of failing at something that really mattered to me, but now I'm more afraid of succeeding at things that really don't matter.’  
- Bob Goff -

### Comments or Thoughts...

### Read This... ‘WHAT YOU SHOULD DO WHEN YOU FAIL AT WORK’ ... Paul Petrone

“Failing at work sounds like the absolute worst thing you can do in your career. Well, it isn't. First off, if you never fail at all, either you are incredibly lucky or (much more likely) you aren't taking big enough risks. Sometimes, you fail not because you tried something new, but because you just screwed up. That's not ideal, but it's not awful. What is awful – not owning your failure or trying to sweep it under the rug. So, what would you do when you fail at work? How can you curb the negative, or potentially even turn it into a positive?”



## The 3 things you should do if (when!) you fail at work...

1. **Get ahead of it – tell your boss before your boss finds out.** When we make a mistake, we usually do everything we can to ensure our boss doesn't find out about it. Well, if it's a big mistake they are going to find out, and it's only going to be worse if they discover you tried to hide it. So, be upfront and tell them about the failure.
2. **Don't make excuses.** Own it ... "Good bosses want you to learn from your failures, so show them that you already have," McLeod said.
3. **End it on a positive note.** Not always, but most of the time you can end the failure conversation with your boss on a positive note. Acknowledge that – the positive is you learned what didn't work in the market, which brings you one step closer to determining what will work.

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Wisdom from the Bible...

#### Psalm 145:14...

'The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.'

#### II Corinthians 12:9-10...

'And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, for when I am weak, then I am strong.'

#### Proverbs 24:16...

'A righteous man falls seven times and rises again...'

#### Philippians 4:6-7...

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

#### Isaiah 41:10...

'So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.'

#### I Peter 5:7...

'Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.'

#### Jeremiah 29:11...

' "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." '

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Competition at Work

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** ‘The act or process of trying to get or win something that someone else is also trying to get or win. A person or group that you are competing with.’

‘The ultimate victory in competition is derived from the inner satisfaction of knowing you have done your best and that you have gotten the best out of what you had to give.’

- Howard Cosell -

‘The healthiest competition occurs when average people win by putting above average effort.’

- Colin Powell -

‘Be loyal to those who are loyal to you. And respect everyone, even your enemies and competition.’

- John Cena -

‘Friendships born on the field of athletic strife are the real gold of competition. Awards become corroded, friends gather no dust.’

- Jesse Owens -

### Comments or Thoughts...

#### Excerpts from **Competition at Work: 3 Steps to Keep it Healthy and Motivational**

Eric Cormier, [www.Insperity.com](http://www.Insperity.com)

... A little friendly competition motivates most employees, but let competition get out of hand, and attrition and conflict trends up while morale and efficiency plummets.

... Smart companies recognize that cut-throat behavior doesn't benefit the organization or those around the bad actor. The challenge is to harness all the brainpower and creativity each and every employee has to offer.

... Think like a ballplayer. The team can't win unless everyone contributes their individual talents. The mindset of clawing your way to the top has always been unhealthy and doesn't jibe with today's more inclusive approach to work and career advancement. Competition has shifted to 'challenge'."

## Comments of Thoughts...

## Wisdom from the Bible...

### **Colossians 3:23...**

'Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.'

### **Philippians 2:3-4...**

'Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.'

### **Galatians 5:26...**

'Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.'

### **1 Corinthians 10:31...**

'So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.'

### **2 Corinthians 10:12...**

'Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.'

### **Hebrews 13:5...**

'Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.'

### **1 Timothy 6:10...**

'For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.'

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Stress

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** ‘Something that causes Strong Feelings of Worry or Anxiety.’

‘We live as though there aren’t enough hours in the day but if we do each thing calmly and carefully we will get it done quicker and with much less stress.’

- Viggo Mortensen -

‘We can easily manage if we will only take, each day, the burden appointed to it. But the load will be too heavy for us if we carry yesterday’s burden over again today, and then add the burden of the tomorrow before we are required to bear it.’

- John Newton -

‘When we long for a life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure.’

- Peter Marshall -

‘In times of stress, the best thing to do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.’

- Fred Rogers -

### Comments or Thoughts...

**Read This... ‘Coping with Stress at Work’** ... American Psychological Assn.

‘...Everyone who has ever held a job has, at some point, felt the pressure of work-related stress. Any job can have stressful elements, even if you love what you do. In the short term, you may experience pressure to meet a deadline or to fulfill a challenging obligation. But when work stress becomes chronic, it can be overwhelming and harmful to physical and emotional health.

...APA’s annual Stress in America survey has consistently found that work is cited as a significant source of stress by a majority of Americans. You can’t always avoid the tensions that occur on the job. Yet you can take steps to manage work-related stress.’

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Common Sources of Work Stress...

Low Salaries...Excessive Workloads...Few Opportunities for growth or advancement...Work that isn't engaging or challenging...Not having enough control over job-related decisions...Conflicting demands or unclear performance expectations...Not enough work...Disorganization...Interpersonal conflict.

### Effects of Uncontrolled Stress...

Work-related stress doesn't just disappear when you head home for the day. When stress persists, it can take a toll on your health and well-being.

### Taking Steps to Manage Stress...

**Develop Healthy Responses:** Exercise, Hobbies, Reading for pleasure, minimize TV and computer use at night. Set aside time for things you like.

**Establish Boundaries:** Avoid being available to work issues 24/7. Separate work and personal life.

**Keep Perfectionism in Check:** Striving to do your best is a good strategy and your results may actually be better and you'll be less stressed at work.

### Learn How to Relax...

Take a few minutes during the day to get away from tasks. A walk, enjoying a lunch break, deep breathing, stretching, etc. Unwind on the way home with music. Leave work at work.

## Comments or Thoughts...

### Wisdom from the Bible...

#### Philippians 4:6-7...

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

#### 1 Peter 5:7...

'Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.'

#### Proverbs 3:5-6...

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.'

#### Psalms 55:22...

'Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.'

#### Isaiah 40:31...

'But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.'

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Respect

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** 'Understanding that someone is important and valuable and should be treated that way.'

'Ask anyone in the workplace what they most desire from their co-workers and superiors, and the likely answer is to be treated with dignity and respect. Employees in the workplace report that being treated with respect by leaders is more important than any other leader behavior. Showing respect is not limited to superiors, everyone in the organization can and should show respect for others. Whether you're saying good morning to your co-workers or cleaning up after yourself in the office kitchen, showing respect for others in the workplace goes a long way. Respect for ourselves guides our morals; respect for others guides our manners.'

- Lawrence Sterne -

'The truest form of love is how you behave toward someone, not how you feel about them.'

- Steve Hall -

**Comments or Thoughts...**

### Why Show Respect in the Workplace

**Respect contributes to Job Satisfaction:** Surveys report that respectful treatment of all employees was rated as 'very important' by the majority of those surveyed making it a top contributor to overall job satisfaction. In respectful workplaces, employees are inclined to work harder and stay productive.

**Respect can Reduce Stress:** When employees know they're respected, they can freely do their jobs without worry of being ridiculed or criticized. They can also relax and be themselves without the stress of feeling like they need to try harder in order to prove their worth.

**Comments or Thoughts...**

## How to Show Respect in the Workplace

Respect comes in many forms and are fairly easy to demonstrate once you've made the commitment.

- \*Treat people the way you'd like to be treated...with kindness, courtesy, politely.
- \*Actively listen to others and don't put in your 'two cents' before they're finished;
- \*Listen to and use other people's ideas often...it'll increase motivation and efficiency.
- \*Don't gossip or demean others.
- \*Be aware of your tone of voice, body language and demeanor.
- \*Be positive and always praise more than you criticize or correct.

### Comments or Thoughts...

### Wisdom from the Bible...

#### **Matthew 7:12...**

'So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets.'

#### **Romans 12:10...**

'Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.'

#### **Philippians 2:3...**

'Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.'

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13...**

'We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you...and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.'

#### **1 Peter 5:5...**

'Likewise you who are younger be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'

### Comments or Thoughts...



## Helping Others

**Merriam –Webster Definition:** ‘...of service or assistance, willing to help other people, giving help to make it easier to do a job, deal with a problem, etc.’

### From a number of studies, these comments...

‘Here’s a good reason to help your coworkers with an upcoming project or presentation: Altruists in the office are more likely to be committed to their work and are less likely to quit their jobs. Beyond all that, researchers found perhaps the biggest benefit of office altruism: those who help others are happier at work than those who don’t prioritize helping others.’

- U of Wisconsin-Madison -

‘Helping others makes us happier. People who said, in their mid-30’s, that helping others in their work was important, were apt to report being more satisfied with their lives nearly three decades later.’

- Wisconsin study of 10,000 HS graduates -

‘No one has ever become poor by giving.’

- Diary of Anne Frank -

‘No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.’

- Charles Dicken -

‘The best antidote I know for worry is work. The best cure for weariness is the challenge of helping someone who is even more tired. One of the great ironies of life is this: (one) who serves almost always benefits more than (the one) who is served.’

- Gordon B. Hinckley -

‘If you’re not making someone else’s life better, then you’re wasting your time. Your life will become better by making other lives better.’

- Will Smith -

‘There’s no greater satisfaction than being served in an area where you have no competence.’

- Roger Van Noord -

### Comments or Thoughts...



**Question:** Is Altruism a cause...or a result of something else?

## Comments or Thoughts...

## Wisdom from the Bible...

### Philippians 2:4...

'Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.'

### Galatians 6:9...

'And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.'

### 1 Peter 4:10...

'As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another...'

### Mark 10:45...

'For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...'

### Hebrews 13:16...

'Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.'

### Acts 20:35...

'In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." '

**NOTE:** All above passages from the Bible: English Standard Version (ESV)

## Comments or Thoughts...



## Optimism

**Merriam-Webster Definition:** 'The inclination to put the most favorable construction upon actions and events or (people) or to anticipate the best possible outcome.'

'Research from Yale University found that being optimistic adds an additional 7.6 years on average to our lives, which is more than low blood pressure, low cholesterol, healthy weight and regular exercise. Other studies show optimists experience significantly less stress, less depression, and heal faster than pessimists...not only that, but optimists outperform their own abilities.'

- Dr. Noelle Nelson -

'I am an Optimist. It does not seem too much use being anything else.'

- Sir Winston Churchill -

'Gratitude makes you happier and more optimistic, improving your health and relationships and boosting your overall well-being.'

- Brenda Nathan, Optimist Journal -

'The optimist looks at the horizon and sees an opportunity; the pessimist peers into the distance and fears a problem.'

- William Arthur Ward -

'An optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity.'

- Sir Winston Churchill -

'Building a practice of gratitude is the best way I know to create an optimistic approach to life. Start each day by lying in bed for five minutes and mentally acknowledging what you are grateful for.'

- Silken Laumann -

### Some ways you can become more optimistic at work...

#### Focus on 'What' is Working...

Instead of focusing on the negatives, look at the situation with a new lens. Look for ways to maximize your skills and your contributions to the company.

### **Play the ‘What If’ game with a Positive Spin...**

We all play the ‘what if’ game, but for the most part, we play it negatively. Instead, ask yourself ‘what if’ in a hopeful direction. For instance; ‘If I get fired, I have a good skill set. I’ve learned a lot at this job and I’ve made new connections. I’m sure I can parlay some of that into a new situation.’

### **Don’t Be so Hard on People...**

Everyone makes mistakes and fails at something from time to time. Figure out what you can do to help them. This will enable you to value their efforts to do better and they, in turn, will most likely value your help.

### **Lift Your Employees Spirits...**

If you tend only to point out things an employee does wrong, start acknowledging your employees for doing things right. They will be more likely to repeat the good behavior they have been praised for and their sense of competence and happiness on the job will increase.

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

### **Wisdom from the Bible...**

#### **Joshua 1:9...**

‘Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.’

#### **Psalms 118:24...**

‘This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.’

#### **Philippians 4:6...**

‘Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.’

#### **Jeremiah 29:11...**

‘For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.’

#### **Proverbs 17:22...**

‘A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.’

#### **John 16:33...**

‘I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.’

#### **I Timothy 6:6-8...**

‘Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.’

**Note:** All above passages from the Bible, English Standard Version (ESV)

## **Comments or Thoughts...**

# Extending the Invitation to your Seeker Friends

(Possible ways to invite your friends)

- “The Bible says much about integrity, conflict, excellence, and other issues that apply to the workplace. Would you be interested in reading a short passage from the Bible on one of these subjects?” Perhaps show them one of the studies.
- “I’m planning to get together with a small group of us at work (neighborhood) for an hour discussion about integrity, conflict, excellence and possibly other topics from the Bible. It would be great to have you join us. It’s open to anyone, no matter what perspective they are coming from. Would you have interest in checking it out once?” Show them one of the studies.
- “In a couple of months, I’m planning to get together a small group of us from the office (neighborhood) for an hour discussion about integrity, conflict, excellence and possibly other topics from the Bible. When I do this, may I invite you to come once? No obligation.”

## Some Helpful Guidelines for Group Discussion

- The purpose of Wisdom for Workplace Issues is to have an open and enjoyable discussion about real workplace issues as they relate to the Bible and Jesus Christ.
- The format is an informal discussion centered on reading a short article, reading passages from the Bible and discussing them as a group:
- The aim is to explore, discover, and learn about the importance of each topic, and that the Bible has something to say on each of these topics.
- Resist the urge to teach. Instead try to listen and ask questions so everyone can discover answers for themselves.
- Take turns guiding the discussions to encourage everyone’s participation.
- Discussion Tips:
  - Stick to the topic or passage under discussion.
  - Avoid tangents...gently bring the discussion back to the topic.
  - Trust the Holy Spirit and let the Bible speak for itself.
- Invite people to ask questions and share their thoughts.
- Our aim is to have a good discussion of the topic at hand.
- Maintain confidentiality, courtesy and respect toward others.

# Discussing Workplace Issues using the Bible with Seeker Friends

'Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.'

- Revelation 1:3 -

'Everything else can wait, but the search for God can't wait.'

- George Harrison, Ex-Beatle -

## Ways to Discuss the Bible with Seeker Friends...

### One-to-One

'As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.' Proverbs 27:17

One Christian discussing the Bible with a seeker friend in a home, office, or restaurant.

### Two-on-two

'Calling the twelve to him, he sent them out two by two...' Mark 6:7

Two Christians discussing the bible with two seeker friends in a home, office or restaurant.

### Three Christians with five to ten seeker friends

'Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves, a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.' Ecclesiastes 4:12

A triad of Christians discussing the Bible with five to ten seeker friends in a home or office.

## Getting Started

- Develop a list of potential people to invite to your reading group.
- Pray daily over your list of names.
- Go deeper in your relationship with potential people.
- Initiate some spiritual conversations. For example: "Do you have a faith background?" "How could I pray for you?"
- Ask God to give you one or two Christian partners to co-labor with you.