

=THE HOLY SPIRIT=

Lesson 6

Work

INTRODUCTION: Notice Proverbs 6:6-11, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.” No parent can be successful in rearing a child unless he teaches the child to work hard. No child can develop character without developing a willingness to work and an affinity for work. God did a great favor for man when He told him he would earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The old proverb says, “An idle mind is the Devil’s workshop.” Someone has said, “Idleness is the mother of sin.” So really when God commanded man to work, He was commanding him to be moral and to have a right outlet for nerve force which if not used, would find vent in wrong outlets. Hence, God uses labor to train us in obedience, self-control, perseverance, etc. Work is a tool which God uses to make men. In order to make men and women of character out of our boys and girls, we must teach them to work.

- I. TEACH THEM VERY EARLY TO HELP IN THE HOME. In the earliest years of a child’s life, he has a natural instinct to help. Girls like to “play house” and dust, scrub, wash, sweep, make doll dresses, etc. Boys like to “play store” and make things. It is then that the child wants to help, and work is play to him. The wise parent will be careful not to destroy this instinct. During these early formative years, the child should be taught that work is not a burden. It is not an evil, but rather something in which he can delight.

Do not associate in the child’s mind that work is drudgery. Seize upon the natural instinct that God has given a little child by teaching him that work is proper, normal, and yes, even delightful.

- II. ENCOURAGE THE CHILD TO MAKE HIS OWN TOYS. It seems unwise to buy too many toys. Perhaps it would be better to buy the child the tools enabling him to make his own toys. The parent could join the child as he makes his toys and perhaps even make things for the home. Hence, the child will be far ahead of the other children. He has been trained to realize that if he buys it, he forfeits the fun of making it. Even the tiniest of toys I ever had, I made myself. I can recall making carts, cars, scooters that had skates for wheels, slingshots, sleds, kites, etc. Girls could make doll clothes, dollhouse furnishings, etc. Not only does this teach children initiative, but it also makes them thrifty.
- III. CHILDREN SHOULD HELP IN HOUSEHOLD TASKS. At a very early age children should be taught to clean their rooms and make their beds. It should be their regular duty, and if the performance is less than acceptable, the parent should not correct it, but should point out to the child the weaknesses, thus teaching him to finish correctly the job he has started. There are many chores that even a little child can do around the house such as making the beds, drying the dishes, cleaning the room, emptying the garbage cans, taking care of pets, setting the table, etc. Regular duties should be given the child when he is old enough to begin.
- IV. THE CHILD SHOULD BE TAUGHT THAT HE IS A PART OF A TEAM AND THAT HE IS SLACK AT HIS JOB IF HE DOES NOT WORK. He should think of himself as an integral part of society, a part that is essential to the whole. He must feel each of us must work to do some service for the rest of us and that if one person does not do his work, he is not being fair to others. It is like one player on a team not doing his best. An old proverb says, “An idle man is of no more use than a dead man and takes up more room.” It is not right or fair, as members of this great team, to not work or labor.
- V. TEACH THE CHILD TO DO HIS BEST AT WHATEVER HE DOES. When he does his best, brag on him and magnify his efforts. When he doesn’t do his best, let your disappointment be shown. Of course, this is only workable when the parent has built a close relationship with the child so that the child’s heart will be broken when he displeases the parent. We are admonished in the Scriptures to do everything that we do with all our might. Someone has said, “He who is afraid of doing too much always does too little.” By constant reminders and praise, the wise parent impresses indelibly in the mind of the child that

anything that is worth doing is worth doing right. The job should always be done a little bit better than when someone else does it.

It has been said that there are three classes of people: those who fail to do all of their duty, those who do all of their duty, and those who do a little more than their duty. The people in the first group lose their positions; the people in the second category hold them; and the people described in the third group are promoted!

- VI. THE CHILD SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO THINK THAT LABOR WHICH IS DONE WITH THE HANDS IS DIRTY WORK. Parents should make all work honorable. They should insist on honest, hard work. No matter what the work is, if it is honest and well done, it is dignified and honorable. Let him know that every job has its own particular charms and interests, and the more he knows about the job the more interesting it becomes. Hence, whatever one does, if he does it well, he should feel a sense of pride and accomplishment.

When Brother Hyles was a young man working his way through college, for 18 months he laid oak floor for a living. For several months he put up drywall. He had been a salesman, and he had worked in a service station and in a grocery store. Once he was a paper boy. In the Army, he was a paratrooper and a parachute packer. He had worked in mechanic shops, loaded box cars, sold in clothing stores. Once in the Army, he was on the garbage collecting gang. In every job he felt a unique pride if he worked and did his best. He even found a new way to stack garbage in the truck, and became the envy of all the garbage collectors.

The child should not be afraid of perspiration or hard work. Whatever his job, if it is a proper one and if it helps society, it should develop a sense of pride. Of course, if this attitude is developed, it is because the parent stresses it to the child.

This means that one should prepare himself properly for any task and give himself to it completely. The more he knows about the job the more interesting it will become.

- VII. THE CHILD SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO HAVE CONSTRUCTIVE HOBBIES. Even leisure can be work, and work can be rest. Rest is simply the changing from the use of one set of nerves and muscles to another. The postman rests in an air-conditioned room; the executive rests by taking a walk or hike. City folk rest by going to the country for the weekend; country folk rest by going to the city for the weekend. George Bernard Shaw once said, "Happy is the man that makes his living at his hobby." A famous baseball star said that he was happy because he was getting paid for what he preferred to do.

If the child can be taught to use his spare time constructively, he is a few steps ahead of the others. The making of model airplanes and various crafts can help the child prepare for either a vocation or an avocation. Hence, he is taught to enjoy work rather than leisure and that part of his life which is not given to his vocation can be a constructive part. Many of the greatest works ever written were written by men who were employed in fields other than writing, but who used their leisure for writing. Marcus Aurelius wrote his meditations in moments of rest.

- VIII. TEACH A CHILD TO CHOOSE AN OCCUPATION THAT HELPS MANKIND. There are many jobs that are of no service to one's fellow human beings. Children should be taught to respect the work of the carpenter, doctor, preacher, farmer, garbage collector, baker, merchant, lawyer, etc. A vocation should not be chosen because it is one's preference or solely because one enjoys doing it. High on the list of criteria should be its service to fellowman and its making of a part of this aforementioned team of society. No occupation should be just a means to make a living but rather a means of service to others.

For years Brother Hyles encouraged his young people to play sports as a hobby but not to consider professional sports. They should enjoy music but not consider a professional career in music. Of course, no one should enter a profession that caters to the lower instincts and hinders society. Such professions as

working in a factory that produces liquor or tobacco and being a bartender, a barmaid, etc. should be taboo. Every vocation should be one of service and one that helps our fellowmen. One of the finest statements in the Bible is said of David when it was said of him that he "...served his own generation by the will of God..." (Acts 13:36)

Once there was a man who inherited a good name and much money. He did not participate in the life of his community; he dedicated his life to riotous living. He went through the money, spent it on pleasure, and died leaving his money to another. However, a small portion of his money was left to a publisher with instructions to the publisher to prepare and issue his biography. When the book was finished, it was beautiful and costly. The binding was elaborate. There was a title page and picture of the deceased. Then on page one was recorded the day of his birth. On the last page of the book was recorded the date of his death. The rest of the book was simply expensive blank paper. The biographer was saying that this man was born and died, but in between, he did nothing for others. How sad! It is sadder, however, to realize how few parents instill in the minds of their children the importance of choosing a profession that will benefit society.