



THE CHALLENGE OF WORK

Ruth 2:1-23

- Many people today are dissatisfied with their jobs because of: 1) A lack of compensation; 2) Stress they encounter on the job; and 3) Difficult relationships at work.
- The Bible offers principles that can lead us to have strong and fulfilling careers.
- *“One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, ‘Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it.’ Naomi replied, ‘All right, my daughter, go ahead.’ So Ruth went out to gather grain behind the harvesters. And as it happened, she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech.”* (Ruth 2:2-3)
- Ruth was a widow living in a foreign land, but she didn’t use her challenges as excuses to keep her from working hard and trusting God for His provision.
- *“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.”* (Colossians 3:23-24)
- **What else does it take to overcome the challenges of work?**

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

TAKING INITIATIVE

- *“One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, ‘Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it.”* (Ruth 2:2)
- Ruth didn’t wait for someone to tell her what to do.
- *“Lazy people are soon poor; hard workers get rich.”* (Proverbs 10:4)
- Initiative is the opposite of laziness and procrastination.
- Many people have struggled to find and fulfill God’s will for their lives because they don’t say “Here I am, Lord” and they aren’t willing to “Rise and Go.”
- *“Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘Rise and go to the street called Straight...”* (Acts 9:10-11 ESV)
- If you don’t know what to do, then just do what you would want others to do.

- Jesus - *“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you.”* (Matthew 7:12)

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

EMBRACING EFFORT

- Boaz’s Foreman - *“She has been hard at work ever since, except for a few minutes’ rest in the shelter.”* (Ruth 2:7)
- **Hard work, diligence and effort is one of the greatest testimonies a Christian can have.**
- *“Work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away.”* (2 Peter 1:10)

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

EXHIBITING FAITHFULNESS

- *“Boaz went over and said to Ruth, ‘Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don’t go to any other fields.’”* (Ruth 2:8)
- **Boaz asked Ruth to remain loyal and faithful to only gather grain at his field.**
- Jesus - *“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities.”* (Luke 16:10)
- **We all must pass the faithfulness test if we want to be blessed in our work.**
- *“Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.”* (Proverbs 3:3-4 ESV)
- **Loyalty and faithfulness give us a pure heart and a clear conscience.**

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

- *“Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. ‘What have I done to deserve such kindness?’ she asked. ‘I am only a foreigner.’”* (Ruth 2:10)
- **Christians should express gratitude in their words, deeds, and intentions towards their employers and those that give them opportunity.**
- *“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- **We can be thankful IN all circumstances even when we are not thankful FOR all circumstances.**

Overcoming the Challenges of Work Requires:

CHECKING OUR ATTITUDE

- *“I hope I continue to please you, sir,” she replied. “You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers.”* (Ruth 2:13)
- **You can’t attempt to please others if you have a critical spirit, a negative outlook, a demanding presence, and a bitter heart.**
- *“Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.”* (Ephesians 6:7)
- **When you have the perspective of working for the Lord instead of men it changes your attitude and prohibits you from responding in an unchristlike manner.**

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

BEING GENEROUS

- *“So Ruth gathered barley there all day...and filled an entire basket. She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law. Ruth also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from her meal.”* (Ruth 2:17-18)
- **Ruth didn’t see the “fruit of her labor” as belonging only to herself.**
- *“Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.”* (2 Corinthians 9:6)
- **Stingy people resent others “having”, while generous people enjoy giving.**
- *“If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need.”* (Ephesians 4:28)
- **One of the greatest benefits to working in this world is the joy gained from being generous and sacrificial towards others.**

Overcoming The Challenges Of Work Requires:

BUYING INTO COOPERATION

- *“So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz’s fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she lived with her mother-in-law.”* (Ruth 2:23)
- **Ruth was able to find purpose while working alongside others she didn’t know and simultaneously living with her mother-in-law!**
- *“How wonderful and pleasant it is when people live together in harmony!”* (Psalm 133:1)
- **In order to win our co-workers to the Lord, we will need to embrace the position of a servant towards them.**
- Jesus - *“But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant.”* (Matthew 20:26)

- **God uses our hard work to bless us, to plant us, to grow us, and to build us.**
- *“The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.”* (1 Corinthians 3:8-9)
- **What are my current challenges in my workplace and what changes can I make in order to better reflect the Lord and my calling from Him to reach the world?**

Dig Deeper Resources For Further Study:

Honoring God In The Workplace Discussion with Pastors Dennis Watson and Manley Miller - [Click Here To View On Right Now Media](#)

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