

More Wisdom for the Workplace

Air Dates: January 2-6, 2023

Day One

I want to give you some words of wisdom for the workplace. First words of wisdom: Talk to yourself in encouraging words, not negative ones.

In Psalm 41 and 42 you will notice this phrase is often repeated: "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." Evidently the writer was struggling with depression, with discouragement, with the blahs, just like you and I struggle from time to time. And he talked to himself as a way to speak the right words into his mind and turn around his wrong thinking.

In verse 6 of Psalm 42, we read, "My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you..." Now this is a very good technique and habit for all of us to learn. When you feel down, you should then force yourself to remember and recite out loud God's goodness to you in times past.

Are you having a tough time today? Then, stop right now and talk to yourself; find some place where you can say something like, "Look, Mary, what is your problem? The God of all the Universe loves you and cares for you, he has met your need time and again."

I noticed in Psalm 42 and 43 that the writer also verbalized his doubts. "Why have you forgotten me. Why have you rejected me?" He voiced those doubts and questions out loud to God, *but* immediately he came back to the truth of praising God and hoping in God.

When I find myself doubting and questioning God, I try to voice those to him out loud. "Lord, I feel as though you're not there. BUT I know better Lord. THEREFORE, I trust you, I place my hope in you. You are my Savior and my God."

So, talk to yourself. I believe it's a Scriptural principle we need to incorporate into our lives to help us find victory in those everyday ups and downs of life.

Day Two

What's the good word today? That's a cliché we sometimes use. Well, I have good words for you, words of wisdom for the workplace, right from God's Word. So, here's our word of wisdom for today:

Learn to overlook insults or hurtful words.

Have you ever been insulted? It's not much fun, is it? Not too long ago, I discovered that someone had insulted me, and I struggled with it quite a bit. But God showed me some good lessons out of his Word about how to handle an insult, and I'd like to share that with you today.

I was upset about that insult; it had hurt and I wanted to retaliate. I wanted to let that person know they had hurt me. I wanted to make them feel badly about it. Can you identify with those reactions? Then I

read Proverbs 12:16, which says "Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult."

I knew God wanted me to overlook that insult. But I thought, "That's not fair. They shouldn't be allowed to get away with it." But I couldn't deny the clear word from God to overlook that insult. That was the first thing I learned about handling an insult.

Secondly, I had to get it out of my mind, because I found I was thinking of it continually, and it was keeping me from getting anything done, it was keeping me upset, it was doing me harm. So, I had to attack the thought patterns and bring them back in line.

Then I asked God to show me what I could learn from this insult, and amazingly, there was a number of good lessons for me that God made clear through his Word.

So, if you've been insulted lately, I recommend this procedure to you. Number one, overlook it. Act as though it never happened. Number two, push it out of your mind every time it starts to come back in. And number three, ask God to teach you a specific lesson from the experience. Then, the whole unpleasant episode will not have been fruitless. You will have grown and learned through it.

Day Three

The good word for the workplace today is: Learn to stay positive even in a negative environment.

You know, many times you can go to work feeling really positive and up, but you leave in a negative, complaining mood. What are the things in your working world that cause you to have a bad attitude?

It can be co-workers or management who irritate you, who cause you unnecessary problems, who don't do their share of the work, or who are very negative people themselves. Most of us have some of those people in our life.

Or perhaps there are times when you have an impossible amount of work to accomplish, or difficult deadlines or pressures, or unrealistic expectations, and that certainly can bring you into negative territory. Perhaps it's your environment: The temperature is not right, or it's drab and dreary, or noisy and hectic. Whatever these things are which tend to make you negative rather than positive, you need to identify them.

Then, look at those things and ask yourselves three questions:

1. Can I confront this situation and try to change it? I find that most people gripe and complain without making the first effort to find a solution. They give up without trying. I don't think you have grounds for complaint unless you've at least tried to find a solution.
2. Is there some way I can compensate for this situation? For example, if you have a dreary office, how can you perk it up? Maybe plants and posters will help.
3. Ask yourself what goes with your territory. Every job, every industry, every profession has certain aspects which simply go with the territory, and those you must learn to accept without allowing them to bring you down.

Think about the things that make you negative and ask God to give you the grace and wisdom to rise above them and be the positive person you need to be for his glory.

Day Four

Change is the one thing you can always count on, they say. And yet change is one of the most difficult things for us to accept. I've been giving you words of wisdom for the workplace, daily nuggets from God's Word to remind you of his principles as you face various situations at work.

And one of those situations is change! A. W. Tozer wrote: "We rest in Thee without fear or doubt and face our tomorrows without anxiety." Do you face your tomorrows without fear or anxiety? I find that the great majority of us live in fear of change: *What will I do if this happens? What will happen to me if that happens? Where will I go if this doesn't work out? Who will be there for me if he or she leaves me? How can I learn to cope with these changes in my lifestyle or my job routine?*

One of the greatest attributes of our Mighty God is that he never changes. Change happens when things improve or when they decay. But God has no need for improvement, and he cannot be less than what he is already. Therefore, he has no need of change and he's promised us that he never will. Oh, what comfort and peace this should bring to our hearts, as we live in this world where change is the only thing you can count on.

It was when I was facing a very uncertain future, with many changes ahead, that I learned the joy and comfort of trusting in a God who never changes. My first reaction was to go into panic mode, but after spending time with God, I started clinging to the promise that he will never change. As I have faced more changes in my life, I am more confident than ever before that my days are written in God's book and nothing is out of control. One thing that can never change is God's love and his presence in your life, and as long as you can be certain of that, you can accept the other changes you may face.

Dear friend, if you're facing some changes today, some unknown paths ahead of you, be confident of this: Your God will never change, and he has promised never to leave you or forsake you. Constantly remind yourself that he's the same yesterday, today and forever. Whatever changes come your way, they cannot destroy you because he is your refuge and strength, and that will always be true no matter what happens.

Day Five

I complete this series on words of wisdom for the workplace with:

We should always strive to bring out the best in others, not the worst.

Often we can bring out the best in others by giving deserved compliments or recognition—focusing on the positive in them rather than the negative. So often others will improve their performance or their attitude if someone just gives them a little recognition or praise. You can bring out the best in others by commending them when you can.

In Proverbs 15:30 we see that a cheerful look brings joy to the heart. You can bring out the best in others by something as simple as a smile.

Proverbs 12:18 says, "...reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing." And Proverbs 15:1a tells us that, "A gentle answer turns away wrath." It's easy to see that the words we speak can either bring out the worst or the best in people.

If you respond to someone with sharp and uncaring words, in a rushed or hasty manner, it can easily cause them to respond in a poor way. But by choosing your words carefully, it's amazing how you can change that other person and bring out the best in them.

When you're dealing with someone who is angry or upset, your goal should be to bring out the best in that person. You can do that by being empathetic and sympathetic: "I'm so sorry you've had a problem." Or "I can certainly understand how you feel." You can help to calm someone down by controlling the tone of your voice, keeping it calm and kind. You can bring out the best in an angry person sometimes by simply listening and caring about the problem. Those are little things that bring out the best in people.

Don't you think we could impact our worlds for Jesus Christ if we more and more became people who bring out the best in others? Ask God to make you that kind of Christian.