

## The Family Business

### Discussion Guide for Titus 2:7-10

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, 8 and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. 9 Bondservants[b] are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

One of the founders of the modern academic discipline of sociology is a German by the name of Max Weber. He's probably most famous for his social theory of "Protestant Ethic."

*Disclaimer: I am an unapologetic fan of capitalism. I believe that capitalism, when guided by the ethical commands of the Bible, has done more to improve the economic lives of people all over the world than any human innovation since the formation of agriculture. Any system that rejects the Bible (such as Communism) will ultimately end in disaster for people.*

Our form of Christianity is called Protestantism. As such, we believe the sole rational authority for faith and life is God's will which is revealed in the 66 books of the Bible.

The Protestant ethic has these basic elements:

God doesn't just call pastors, priests and monks to lives of godliness.

Prayer and study are important, but Christians are not supposed to withdraw from the world and spend their entire days in prayer and study. God calls every single man and woman to be busy working in a vocation that serves the needs of others. A baker, a brewer, a carpenter, a homemaker or a policeman has just as much calling on his or her life as a pastor.

We should work hard and honestly in this world.

**Please note.** *There was a previous misprint in this article that indicated our financial status is a sign of God's favor. This was a purely accidental misprint and does not reflect the views taught at Venture or endorsed by any of our staff. Sorry, about that!*

The quality of work we do for monetary gain is not to buy salvation or status. Instead, our character on the job serves as a sign that we are God's elect. I don't work hard in order to be paid, but in order to show that I am a child of God. Payment comes as a welcome byproduct of my hard work.

We live frugally and within our means.

Being good stewards allows us to have money to share with those in need and savings to invest

in creating jobs for other people. Benjamin Franklin's parents raised him with a Protestant ethic (even though he abandoned Protestant beliefs). That's why he coined the phrases "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise," and "a penny saved is a penny earned." He lived with the Protestant ethic to work hard as long as there is daylight and to sleep when it's dark so you don't waste money on things like burning candles.

Weber observed that when societies live by passages of the Bible such as Titus 2:7-10, the end result is a modern, market-based capitalist economy. People in those societies have the opportunity to save money, invest in means of production, and become extremely wealthy.

Sounds an awful lot like America, doesn't it?

He also observed that when the Protestant ethic is removed from otherwise Protestant societies, people quickly become slaves to their work. They begin to borrow money and consume their wealth on stupidity instead of things that are beneficial to society.

Again, sounds just like America.

### Think About It

- How have you seen Christians in business and workplaces do good for their customers, communities, employers, employees, and their families?
- Do we work as if God is our actual boss?

The Protestant Ethic demonstrates how our actual beliefs about God are MASSIVELY important in determining the way we live out the boring details of our everyday lives.

We all need to wake up every morning with the understanding that the daily details have a huge impact on the outcome of our lives. Living out these details determines whether or not we make Jesus attractive to a world that desperately NEEDS him.

Titus 2:7-10 is very practical in the way it tells us to represent God to the world around us. The world is not interested in what Christians have to say as much as it is watching to see what Christians do.

This does not mean (as some have suggested) that we shouldn't speak the Gospel. We absolutely MUST speak the Gospel, but it must also be backed up with our behavior.

### Discussion Questions

- What commands for living are found in these verses?
- How do these commands apply to being a good
  - Employee?
  - Boss?
  - Volunteer?

- Student?
- Teacher?

Think about the people who have been influential in your own life.

- Who have been the most influential people in your life? (Parents, teachers, pastors, bosses, co-workers, spouses, relatives, etc.?)
- Has your life been changed more by the things they said to you or by the way they conducted themselves on a daily basis?
- How did their conduct reflect Christ?
- What does it mean for works to “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior?”
- Have you ever had somebody talk to you about your faith in Christ because of something they saw you do?
- Are there any mundane areas of your life where you feel that you need to reflect Christ better?
- How does this passage speak to those areas?