

LESSON 17 Devotional

An Employer's Responsibility

"You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin."

Deuteronomy 24:14-15

This theme in the Old Testament is also found in the New Testament in Colossians 4:1, *"Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."*

In today's employment climate, employing people to work for you brings a host of challenges, issues, and questions. Many employees do not have bank accounts and simply live paycheck to paycheck. Health benefits and matching retirement benefits mean little when you cannot pay your rent, put food on the table, and gas in the car.

To complicate matters, many potential employees are guests in the United States and can work only under certain conditions and for a limited time. Employers are obligated to confirm work permits and follow the law regarding payment and tax withholding.

Garnishment of wages, drug testing, and work release programs are not uncommon. Unemployment withholdings and necessary absenteeism due to court dates and family issues have become typical.

As you look at the scriptures above, can you see what is common in our Biblical command to care for the laborers? The verses do not qualify who the laborers are and what condition we find them in. We are simply to love them and care for them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Upon receiving an employment agreement that lists all the things you, as the employer, will do for him/her, what impact might it have upon the newly hired employee?

a. Picture this same situation with the employee living in their car for over a year. How might your written commitment impact that person?

2. Should all our employment agreements for all employees be the same? Why or why not?

3. Read Ruth 2:8-12. In what ways was Boaz an agent of God to care for those who had fallen on hard times?

a. How should this apply to an employer today?

b. How might Boaz's story shape how you communicate your commitment to new hires?

4. Do you think God would agree that you are treating all your employees fairly?
