

## Working at Winning Waving

Blaise (14) just started his first real job a couple of weeks ago. He is a Liberty Tax waver. You know those guys who stand on the sidewalk dressed as the Statue of Liberty and wave at the passing cars? That's his job. He does it for eight hours every Saturday.

It's an obnoxious job and we were a little worried that a full shift might be too much for him. Just having your arm raised for a couple of minutes is painful. I can't imagine a full day of waving. After his first shift, we drove by and he was still smiling waving. I was proud of my son...standing there in a dress...still smiling and waving vigorously at the passing cars.

This event has made us think a lot about work and how to equip our kids. Over the years we've tried to instill a good work ethic in our kids. It is very important in life. They are all still growing in it, as are we, but I thought I'd share with you some of the principles we've been meditating on recently.

### **Work hard.**

When you are on the clock you are getting paid for working. If you are not working and you are still getting paid then you are essentially stealing, and you will bring misfortune on both you and your employer.

*Proverbs 18:9 One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys. NIV*

### **Don't talk too much.**

It is good to be friendly and sociable, but you are not at work to socialize.

*Proverbs 14:23 All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. NIV*

### **Be the best at what you do.**

If you're gonna wave at cars, then wave until your arm falls off. Jump up and down, dance, smile, sing, and draw attention to yourself. That is your job. One of Blaise's coworkers is also in our church and is known for being the best waver. I half-jokingly told Blaise, "I want you to learn everything Ryan does, and do it better." It's not that it's a competition. I really don't care who the best is (as long as it is Blaise ;-)), but I do want my kids to be skilled at what they do. And you might as well strive to be the best.

*Proverbs 22:29 Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men. NIV*

### **Earn your wages.**

If you're not making money for the company you are a liability. If Blaise's employer is not making money off of Blaise's efforts, then there is no point in employing him. Many of the people I've worked with over the years don't seem to grasp this concept. If a worker doesn't earn his wages, he won't be a worker for very long.

*Luke 10:7b "for the worker deserves his wages." NIV*

**Work as if your employer is always watching.**

A good worker is always working to bless his employer, whether or not he is being watched.

*Colossians 3:22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. NIV*

**Don't think you are too good for a job.**

In the passage below, slaves are told that they should work as if working for the Lord. I'm sure most slaves were asked to do things that were beneath them. They get all the undesirable jobs. If it is between God and me, it's clear that any jobs that need to be done should be done by me, not God. When I am in this mindset of "working for the Lord," all jobs, no matter how nasty or menial should fall to me. I am not above any task.

*Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. NIV*

**Don't complain and grumble.**

Have you ever seen the "No whining" signs? Those were invented for a good reason! *Ecclesiastes 3:22a So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot. NIV*

*Philippians 2:14 Do everything without complaining or arguing. NIV*

**Don't treat adults as peers.**

Humble yourself before your employer, coworkers, and customers. Say 'sir' and 'ma'am'. Be a servant. Don't tease or take too casual of a tone with adults as if relating to peers.

*Romans 13:7 Give everyone what you owe him: If ... respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. NIV*

*1 Peter 5:5a Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. NIV*

**Be faithful in the little things**

Be on time. Work hard right until the end of your shift. Don't goof off. Take short breaks.

*Luke 16:10 "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much." NASU*

Of course these are not lessons for a 14-year-old. These lessons start early and need lots of reinforcement. Their first job needs to be a time of fine-tuning, not foundations.

In our next article we'll look at some practical ways to help our children develop good work habits.