

Intro: Everyone of us have, or have had, or will have crazy people in the workplace! They come in ALL kinds. Some are the pranksters, like the one we just saw that don't know limits. Others are sneaky, underhanded, some are lazy, others are antagonistic...the list goes on and on. No one is exempt. I have encountered many of them over the years.

- 1st paid job EVER: 15 years old: Employee appreciation cookout: BEER!
- First married: Painter: Bill: Christian in a non-Christian construction co. One weekend: Church: Next: Girl!
- Started Bible College: Got a new job: Painter: Bought car, took vacation, paid tuition: NO JOB! Told boss...he was like...Yea...that's a problem...you can be a security guard if you want! Had to take it!

We live in a fallen world, and we work with people that are fallen. I picked up a saying years ago...

"Never be surprised when non-Christian people act like non-Christians: You can be surprised...when Christians do!"

So, how do you handle Crazy at work? As we process that I'm going to do two things.

1. Look with you at the EXAMPLES of Crazy at "work" in the bible. (Do that to set the stage for principles I'll teach)
2. Look with you at the PRINCIPLES the bible offers us for loving people anyway...even when they are crazy!

1. Like The Men and Women In the Bible, We Live and Work In A Fallen, Sinful World.

As much as we wish it wasn't the case, we all live, and WORK, In a fallen sinful world. Because that is true, we are going to have to deal with the crazy! And, just so you know...working in CHURCH doesn't make it any better! Christians are still sinful, people who love Jesus sometimes do the wrong thing, make the wrong decision, act in ungodly ways. Truth! There is NO escaping it. The solution is not to run and hide from it, but rather to learn how to LOVE people anyway! And, that is possible. We see that all throughout the bible. You say: You don't know my BOSS!

Maybe not...but I know this. The biblical principles I'm going to draw upon come from some AWFUL work situations. Keep this in mind as we look at them. The biblical authors who spoke to these situations were not ENDORSING them...saying they were OK...Approving of the different situations. They were teaching us HOW to deal with the realities of life! People Be Crazy...Love Them Anyway!

- *Nehemiah served a despotic King, absolute ruler over the then known world...put to death on a word!*
- *Paul told Christians to pray for the Roman emperor...and honor him, because God allowed him to be in power*
- *Paul was thankful for vain, selfish, conceited men that were preaching the gospel to get him in trouble!*
- *Peter told slaves to honor the slaveowners and serve them well, from the heart!*
- *Joseph was put in prison falsely when he refused to commit adultery. Suffered doing right thing*
- *Jesus told us to pray for those that do evil things to us and use us in a spiteful way.*

The bible is FULL of situations equivalent to our workplaces. And just because they are full of Crazy People doesn't give us the right as followers of Jesus to do the wrong thing. We are called to be lights in a dark world. Yes, we have some freedoms the biblical authors did not have. We can leave a job. We can refuse to do something wrong probably not go to prison. We can VOTE for a different leader...But with all of those things WE are to LOVE THEM ANYWAY

So, how do we love the "Crazy People At work?"

Drawing from all of those examples, lets take a close look at some of the biblical principles that will help us love.

2. Biblical Principles For Loving "Crazy People In Your Workplace!"

Now, keep in mind...some of what we are going to cover is not a 1-1 equivalency. Following a slaveowner is NOT the same as submitting to your boss. But, if anything...we are called to higher standard BECAUSE we have more freedoms, not a lower standard! So, let's take a look at what it means to be a follower of Jesus working in tough place

- A. HOW you Work is an expression of your faith, even when, especially when you are in an awful situation. No Compartmentalization (Work....Faith) All one and the same!
How we respond to a bad situation says more about us than the situation does. Look at what bible says:
>1Co 10:31 *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."*
When you are in one of those awful situations at work, ask yourself. "How do I bring Glory to God?"
I know in some situations that is a hard question to answer. But, it is possible. Even if it comes at the cost of saying, *"You have asked me to do something immoral, and as a follower of Jesus, I can't."* And lose your job!

Now, be sure you hear me. I have known Christians that took that position and LOST their job! We continue to think to ourselves, oh, do the right thing...and it will be OK. Sometimes it works that God allows other! But, regardless of what happens, as a follower of Jesus, we have to live out the reality that what we do reflects upon Him.

Illus: Remember "Bill" the painter. I fought an ongoing, uphill battle to earn the respect and hearing of Gospel

B. How you respond in BAD situations is a reflection of your faith. (Even at work!)

1Peter 2:13-23 "Continued entrusting Himself to the One who judges justly"

You see this in Jesus, you see it in Nehemiah, Paul, Joseph, All through out the bible...trusting God is in charge! We only see a small amount of what is happening. And, we think, because it FEELS bad...it is bad...Not always the case. Sometimes God is puts us in exactly the place HE wants us to be...to accomplish His goals. When we RUN from them...we RUN from What God wants!

ILLUS: Paul's Prison Epistles: (Not in prison...busy working...not writing!)

Martin Luther's translation of the NT into German (While hiding out in exile!)

C. Look for the GOOD God wants to bring out of a BAD situation.

Phil 1:12-18 "Some preach out of envy, rivalry, selfish ambition..."

"What do I care...it Has served to advance the gospel"

God can bring good out of even the most bad situation. We just have to trust Him, wait...look...Believe

Illus: That Painting job I got "stuck" with? Incredible blessing from God!

Walk 15 mins, sit 45: Permission to study, Use typewriters, do homework...Paid to study

Opened the week I started school...closed two weeks after I finished...ready to move: God's Provision!

D. Lessons From Nehemiah: "Working for evil king...leading an incredible job in awful circumstances"

1. Approach even the worst situation with prayer and respect: Neh 2:1-5

Prayed to God and spoke to the king!

2. Refuse to let ridicule and evil words deter you from your task or cause compromise. Neh 2:19-20

Lit = to laugh in scorn, to mock, to ridicule

Even when those you work with don't understand...and ridicule you...Stay the course!

Illus: Painter @ Dallas School Board: Everyone...including Foreman, took paint! Ridiculed me: Stupid

3. Talk to God about the situation...not everyone else! Neh 4:1-5

Talking to everyone else makes matters worse. Talking to God is talking to the One that can help!

If we spent as much time talking to GOD about our situation as we do others...further ahead!

4. Take wise and adequate precautions. Neh 4:9;13;16

We prayed...and we set a guard!

Armed the workers, Worked one hand tools, other weapons!

Illus: Rick Warren: "You aren't being paranoid if they really are out to get you!"

5. Trust God for the outcome! Neh 4:20

Our God will fight for us!

Either we are people of faith...or we are not.

Over and over in the bible we see where someone intended something for evil...God used it for good

We do well in church...and in bible study...and in small group...BUT when it comes to work...Home!

6. Refuse to stop doing the right thing...even in the face of opposition and threats. Neh 6:1-3

Having said that...there is NO guarantee things will end the way you want them to.

We cannot control that...we can only control what we do...as followers of Jesus...and trust Him.

Joseph, Paul, Jesus, All ended up in Prison, Paul and Jesus eventually martyred.

Yet...God was in charge...and God used those awful situations for His Kingdom.

I know that flies in the face of "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for the rest of your life.

BUT...Let's change that...God loves you...and has a wonderful plan to use you to glorify Himself and His Son, and extend His kingdom here on Earth. And sometimes...that is a costly thing!

CONCL: So, if you are dealing with "Crazy" at work....love them anyway! Trust God to bring about the best for Himself
Come and pray...ask for Perspective...Ask for Strength...Ask for Wisdom...Ask for the one who is Crazy!
Come and commit to responding in the right way...and if you have been doing it wrong...ask for help
Come and ask God to USE you for His glory...right there in the middle of your Crazy!
Come and ask God to extend His kingdom...and ask Him to use YOU to accomplish that