

Brainstorm with others what our five general principles might look like in your specific work. Be aspirational and prayerful!

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

- 4) _____

- 5) _____

WORK

Week 13: Principles for Representative Professions (Part 2)¹

*“To learn Christian doctrine only from textbooks rather than from participating in the communion of the saints is like reading Shakespeare but never encountering a live performance: it may be informative, but it is rarely transformative. Disciples best learn how to **practice** doctrinal truth through . . . an apprentice-based [teaching method] that involves following the examples of (i.e., imitating) other who are further along.” –Kevin J. Vanhoozer*

As important as it is for us to learn about working, it’s even more important for us to get to work. **In what specific ways are you planning to work differently after this study?**

By the end of this week’s study, you will be crafting your own work-specific principles. Here are our general guidelines for review:

- 1) We will strive for godlike justice, faithfulness, and love.
- 2) We will apply God’s law, especially the Ten Commandments, to all work.
- 3) We will promote worthy causes and goals.
- 4) We will look for people we can serve, develop, and protect.
- 5) We will follow the examples of heroes at work.

ARMED FORCES

Christians have served in combat since the days of Rome. However, soldiers must be careful to avoid blind obedience to the state or allegiances that pervert their devotion to Christ. **How would you define a “just war”?**

- 1) Combat missions must be the result of **just** causes—real injury to peaceful nations or the protection of the vulnerable. Armed services must be **faithful** to treaties and see armed aggression as a last resort when negotiations and nonlethal pressure fails.

¹ This study is a distillation of Daniel Doriani’s *Work: Its Purpose, Dignity and Transformation* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2019). It is meant to be taught in conjunction with the book, not as a replacement.

- 2) Military force must not be exercised to **steal** lands or possessions from weaker sovereigns. **Lethal** force should be used only against combatants, and only with the intent to reestablish safety and peace. Soldiers must **honor** their superiors, and recognized they will answer to **God** for their actions.
- 3) Making and protecting peace is the **goal**. Technological **advancement** in weapons serves as a deterrent to war.
- 4) The armed forces **serve** and **protect** the citizens of their own nation—and at times, the vulnerable and defenseless of other nations.
- 5) Armed forces will not seek to supplant but **champion** the sovereignty of foreign nations.

MANAGERS

Retail, factory, and sales managers often work with employees living paycheck to paycheck without much mobility. While stress, production numbers, and corporate politics can cloud a manager’s headspace, they must always remember, “Every business is a people business” (202).

- 1) Good managers will be **fair** in scheduling employees, but not unbending. They will have their employees’ back: “Low level workers . . . love managers who **respect** everyone in the workplace” (202).
- 2) They will not **rob** employees of their dignity but honor them with genuine questions, smiles, and personal interest. Managers will encourage employees to **honor** God and family, **not to idolize** the job.
- 3) The greatest **goals** and **causes** will not involve numbers and sales, but people.
- 4) Managers will **develop** the skillsets of employees, forgive minor mistakes, and cultivate an environment of **safety** for employees who may have volatile or unsteady lives outside of work.
- 5) Good managers will **celebrate** small victories and make much of the **success** of their people.

Have you worked for a good manager? What characteristics did you appreciate about them?

ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS

Certainly, builders should not be scoundrels or swindlers. **Thinking positively, how might designers and contractors be agents of reform in their field?**

- 1) Builders will be trustworthy in their contracts, and their projects will have **faithful** foundations. They will **keep their commitments** and deadlines regardless of the size of the project or importance of the client. They will give attention to detail, seeking to execute a client’s vision to meet the client’s needs.
- 2) “Architects long to innovate—to stretch, even to defy, conventions—yet their first concern is **safety**” (205). Builders will maintain a worksite that promotes **honor** and respect, refuse to **steal** from clients, and **never hide the truth** from inspectors.
- 3) Builders and designers **aim** for results that are both beautiful and functional. They build structures that will **improve** the community.
- 4) Builders and designers will be patient with clients, teaching them how to understand and **improve** their vision. They will also **cultivate** relationships with good subcontractors who can benefit from their success.
- 5) Ultimately, architects and contractors will delight in well-built, beautiful buildings, not in recognition or accolades. They will **champion** structures that serve and shape communities, families, and businesses in edifying ways.

YOUR TURN!

Whether you work in a field we have discussed or not, your work presents unique challenges and opportunities. God has planted you in a specific corner of his Kingdom so that you might bear fruit through your work there (Romans 7:4).

“What the Church should be telling [the carpenter] is this: that the very first demand that his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables. . . . No piety in the worker will compensate for work that is not true to itself; for any work that is untrue to its own technique is a living lie.” – Dorothy Sayers