



International Fellowship of Christian Businessmen

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Round Table Topic

The Works of the Flesh

by Os Hillman

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” - Deuteronomy 8:17

We’ve all heard someone say, “He’s a self-made man.” What are they saying in this statement? Are they saying that this individual achieved success by his hard work and sweat? Many a person has achieved success through honest hard work. There is a danger for any of us who may have achieved significance through our work. That danger is the belief that we achieved it through our own efforts apart from God’s grace and mercy. When we live in this belief, we assert that we are entitled to certain rights and privileges because of the position we have earned and feel we deserve.

The prodigal son’s brother who refused to celebrate the wayward son’s return was a man who felt he was entitled to certain rights. He saw himself as one who had been faithful to his responsibilities and deserving of more attention.

He could not appreciate his brother’s failure and the pain of falling into a sinful life because, in his mind, he had never failed. This pride kept him from experiencing God’s real grace. This is how legalism develops in believers. It grows into a cold heart and an insensitive attitude toward others who may have stumbled in their lives. This same brother did not truly understand the love of his father apart from works; for he felt he gained acceptance only by doing his job.

Do you feel accepted by God, regardless of what you do? Have you wrongfully viewed your works as something you alone have achieved? These are the minefields of which each of us in business must be aware. God has gifted us to accomplish anything through His grace, not by our works.