

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA
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Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with "work"! The Scriptures not only command a day of rest but also **"Six days you shall labor and do all your work" (Ex. 20:8)**. God placed Adam in the Garden to work and take care of it. Paul wrote: **"If a man will not work, he shall not eat" (2 Thess. 3:10)**. Unfortunately many have never learned to work. Robert Lupton, in his book *Toxic Charity*, makes the following observations about giving money to people who don't work (p. 130):

- Give once and you elicit **appreciation**.
- Give twice and you create **anticipation**.
- Give three times and you create **expectation**.
- Give four times and it becomes an **entitlement**.
- Give five times and you establish **dependency**.

On Wed. Jan. 8, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a war on poverty. Writing 50 years later Lloyd Billingsley quipped that poverty won the war. The Heritage Foundation observed: *"In the 50 years since that time, U.S. taxpayers have spent over \$22 trillion on anti-poverty programs. Adjusted for inflation, this spending (which does not include Social Security or Medicare) is three times the cost of all U.S. military wars since the American Revolution. Yet progress against poverty, as measured by the U.S. Census Bureau, has been minimal, and in terms of President Johnson's main goal of reducing the "causes" rather than the mere "consequences" of poverty, the War on Poverty has failed completely. In fact, a significant portion of the population is now less capable of self-sufficiency than it was when the War on Poverty began."* Unfortunately "work" was not a part of this war.

You may resent your parents teaching you to work, but work is a godly thing to do. Be thankful for the ability to work, for some day you will be too old or infirm to do so. Here are Lupton's recommendations for government and poverty, which we have adapted for parents and children;

- Never do for "your child" what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.
- Limit one-way giving to emergency situations.
- Strive to teach "your child" to succeed through work . . . and remember to reward them.
- Subordinate your self-interests to the needs of "your children".
- Listen closely to "your children", especially to what is not being said—unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to developing their self sufficiency.
- Above all, do no harm.

Now you know why your parents are teaching you to work! Fifty years ago a poster made the rounds of a teen age boy in a wheel chair being pushed by his mother. The caption read: "Of course he can walk, but thank God he doesn't have to"! How sad!

We are honored to have had the late Judge Herbert Casteel as a part of our family. As an attorney Herb was doing estate planning for some very wealthy people. His clients spent a life time gathering wealth only to realize that giving this money to their children might do more harm than good.

This fact played a pivotal role in Herb's prayerful decision to become a judge. Herb told me that as a judge he felt could help more people than he could as an attorney. I think he was right!

Timothy was a young evangelist and traveling companion of Paul. His work was so special that Paul wrote: **"I have no one else like him who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interest not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel" (Phil. 2:20-22).** How did Timothy develop such a godly work ethic when he was raised in the pagan city of Lystra. He grew up in a bad environment! The temple of Zeus was just outside the city (Acts 14:3). His mother was a Jewess who believed, but his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). We assume, therefore, that Timothy received no Christian training from his father. Somehow, however, even in this pagan environment, Timothy grew up to be such a good worker that Paul knew "no one else like him".

The Scriptures point out that Timothy's remarkable faith started early. It dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5). These godly women began training Timothy before he was even born. This is evident from what Paul wrote to Timothy: **"But as for you continue in what you have learned and become convinced of, because you know those from whom you have learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:12-15).** The word translated as "infancy" is "brephos" which refers to a child in the womb (Lk. 1:41,44) or an infant at the time of birth (Lk. 2:16). It seems that Timothy's training probably began while he was in the womb, and certainly from the day he was born. We can learn to "play" by ourselves, but "work" needs to be taught.

If Lois and Eunice could raise a godly worker in a pagan environment, with the help of God so can we! Jesus said it like this: **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn. 9:4).** What do you say?

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce