

acceptable excuses for missing work why are they acceptable excuses for forsaking the assembling of the believers?

8. If relatives who do not work are in town, or maybe friend comes by who has a job different from yours, do you stay home from work so as not to offend them or so that you can catch up on chit-chat and gossip? What if relatives are in town who are not Christians or friends are visiting who do not attend church? Will you absent yourself from the place of testimony to accommodate infidels?
9. Suppose you went to work on a hit and miss basis, or when you felt like it (which wasn't too often), and when you did go it was with little or no enthusiasm. Do you think anyone would take you seriously if you tried to speak to him about his need to be a part of your company? Perhaps someone who cares more for mammon than for God can be an effective witness for Jesus Christ. But it would be the first time in the history of the church.

May God help us to faithfully carry out all our duties as saved men and women! And may He, by His grace, help us to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness more diligently than we seek mammon and the praise of men.

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# GOD OR MAMMON ???

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James W. Knox

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As we seek to live a life of devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are continually faced with tough choices. We often find ourselves pulled in opposite directions. On the one hand we have our duty to God. On the other hand we have our duty to family, society and others.

Since we are commanded to take care of our household (1 Timothy 5:8), to train our children (Proverbs 22:6), and to provide things honest in the sight of all men (Romans 12:17), we cannot go out of the world (John 17:15, 1 Corinthians 5:10) but must have some interaction with mammon (1 Corinthians 7:32-34).

Some have entered monasteries, moved to the mountains, or in other ways isolated themselves in an attempt to serve God or their family.

These self-serving extremes do not fit the overall tenor of the great commission or the victorious life exemplified in the book of Acts.

The church, by any honest definition of the word, is an assembly, a gathering, a body, a building. There is no way that one can sit alone, keep the family at home, spend “quality time with God” on the lake, etc. and be part of an assembly. An isolated church member is a contradiction in terms. A lone body part is a frightful thing. A single brick provides no shelter or security for anyone.

The fact that some take the Lord’s promise to be in the midst of two or three as an alibi to forsake their brethren, rather than a cause for rejoicing in areas where the brethren are few, is sad at best.

All sincere believers understand that salvation is wholly a matter of faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. But it is also understood that salvation makes one part of a communion, a body, an assembly.

So here are some points to ponder for those who must be in the world and not of the world. Here are some ways we may examine ourselves to see if we are serving God or mammon.

1. “I don’t have to go to church. I am free in Jesus to do what I will.” Does this principle apply to your job? Will you absent yourself from work and make the same statements with the same haughty air to your employer?
2. Are you satisfied with attending only the morning service? After all, you have been to church, done your duty, and gotten a dose of religion. Do you work until lunchtime and then go home? After all, you have been to work. There is no point in going overboard.
3. Do you plan to be at church on time or do you carelessly or deliberately come in late? Do you plan to be at work on time or do you make a habit of showing up whenever you feel like it?
4. If you had a meeting with your employer would you allow your children to talk, play, or get up and move about while he was speaking to you about an important project? Why not? Respect for him? Fear for losing your paycheck? Then why such treatment for the

members of your body? Why such disrespect for the man who is ministering the word of God?

5. Are you a part of your church’s visitation program? its public outreach? the upkeep of its building and grounds? No, of course you don’t *have* to be. But, if you are asked by your employer to work overtime, or stay late to finish a project, or come in on Saturday for a special assignment do you comply?
6. Will you plan a family outing for a day when you are supposed to be at work? Why not? You could simply tell your supervisor that you don’t have to go to work to be a worker. Will you plan a family outing on a Sunday or the day of the midweek service?

Would you skip work and tell the boss you believe that it is just as important to stay home and work with your family. Would you fail to show up on the job and tell your supervisor that it didn’t matter because you thought it was just as important to spend some time working alone? If these are not → → → →