

What does God absolutely hate in business? (20:23)

Differing weights are an abomination to the LORD and a false scale is not good.

THE TEXT (NASB)

Differing weights are an abomination to the LORD and a false scale is not good.

Diverse weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good. KJV - Proverbs 20:23

INTRODUCTION



God hates dishonesty.

It's disgusting to the LORD, when unreliable measures are used in trade—they are the ruin of commerce.

God is not anti-capitalist, but He is clearly anti-corruption.



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COMMENTARY

Multiplied Mistrust



Why is it vicious to use a false scale? A lying scale multiplies its falsehood each time it is used and undermines confidence in a business. It is a hidden form of theft, a combination of lying and stealing. So, for example, a vendor may weigh and charge for a kilogram of flour, but hand over only 995 grams, keeping the extra five grams. Nobody notices each tiny shortfall, but this tiny cheat, multiplied hundreds or thousands of times, can generate a big return for the vendor. The vendor gains. Win-win transactions becomes win-lose, and over time, no matter how “clever” the vendor, the customers begin to sense his atmosphere of dishonesty. Over time, bad business practice multiplies into a climate of mistrust throughout the marketplace.

God’s Mandate for Commerce

We read about God’s requirement for accuracy in commercial standards in Leviticus 19:35-36: “You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity. You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah (about 40 liters), and a just hin (about 6 litres); I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt.”

God expects business to be conducted with utmost honesty. How did this once become a practical reality in North America?

Champions in North American Commerce

God’s standards in retail commerce were introduced in North America in the mid 1800s largely through the efforts of John Wanamaker. He pioneered the price tag, the money back guarantee, employee health care, paid vacations, and—most important of all—truthful advertising. His business policies and procedures reflected his confidence in God and set high standards for retailing in North America for decades to come. In Canada, Timothy Eaton (1834-1907), founder of Eaton’s Department Stores in Toronto, played a similar role.

Read more about him by viewing this Internet link: [John Wanamaker](#). Also see Proverbs 11:1 on this site.



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OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus once met a crooked businessman named Zaccheus. He had cheated many by charging them excess taxes. His tariffs were inconsistent. Yet after he recognized who Jesus really was, "Zaccheus stood and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house,' " Luke 19:9.

Salvation came to a dishonest businessman who, when he met and recognized Jesus' authority, stopped his cheating and made restitution for all he had stolen.

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Study the life of John Wanamaker, especially his early years.
- Be truthful in business.
- If you have defrauded anyone in business make proper restitution.

Which of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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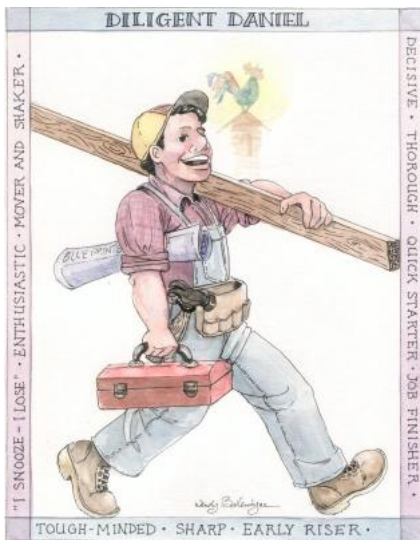
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KEY WORDS

immorality, deceit, dishonesty, good, honesty, less assets (quantity), LORD, business, standards, measurement

ILLUSTRATION

Who is Diligent Daniel?



Diligent Daniel is a friend of Steady Eddie. Whereas Steady Eddie is known for his staying power, Diligent Daniel is known for his decisiveness and thoroughness. He is an early riser, a quick starter, and a job finisher. There's no room for procrastination here.

Daniel is tough-minded and sharp. He tells himself each day, "I snooze- I lose." He pushes himself and calls himself lazy. He is tough on himself—not rough.

He's the one Benjamin Franklin was thinking about two hundred years ago when he came up with the maxim, "Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, WEALTHY, and wise." Daniel's also the one the author Oswald Chambers described with the words, "The heights by great men reached and kept, were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night."

Daniel is more of a thinker than Steady Eddie, but is known for his enthusiastic work capacity, not his brilliance. He's a mover and a shaker. He's not afraid to get his hands dirty and is in good physical condition. He's a builder. He starts the job right away and gets it DONE. He doesn't flip-flop in this thinking. He is not double-minded. He remains humble while exuding confidence.



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One of his favourite financial tools is the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP).

