

Lesson 5-3 Robert
Problems and Opportunities

1. We are examining the life of Robert who moved to the big city to live with his Uncle Leo. Robert is 18 years old and has found a part-time job in a department store. He is learning about honesty and many other things. He gets paid every two weeks and now has some money to spend. He has saved \$250 (FD)*, more money than he has ever had in his life. What should Robert do to continue his path to success? Name three things.

2. One day Robert shops for a pair of shoes at a shoe store. He finds a nice pair and buys them for \$19 (FD). The shoe store employee gives Robert too much change back - 5 dollars too much. Is this God repaying Robert for his past honesty?

3. What is the right thing to do? Return the \$5 or keep it?

4. Robert decides to return the money to the shoe store employee and Robert feels very good about it; he feels very honest. How does the shoe store employee feel about it?

5. If Robert hadn't returned the 5 dollars, who would have suffered the loss?

6. Robert tells his friend Maynard about it. Maynard is the one who is stealing from the department store. Maynard said that he would have kept the 5 dollars since the shoe store has plenty of money and Maynard doesn't. What do you think?

7. It was Friday, payday, and Robert has been employed for 3 months. The boss asked Robert to come into his office for a chat. The boss tells Robert that he was doing a very good job and that they liked him; unfortunately, they had to lay off Robert and another two employees. The boss went on to say that the store had a bad quarter due to poor sales and loss of inventory. Robert asked what he meant by "loss of inventory." The boss said that it meant theft, both from customers and employees. The boss told him that they lay off those last hired, so it had nothing to do with Robert's job performance. As he left the store, he picked up his lunchbox and walked out the door; he was devastated. He also found that Maynard and the others who were stealing kept their jobs. So, Robert, the innocent suffered due to the sins of the guilty. How do you feel about that?

8. Can you think of anyone in the Bible who was innocent, but suffered for the sins of the guilty?

9. Robert told Uncle Leo what had happened. Leo told Robert that in life there are many problems and that he has found that many times problems are opportunities sent from God. How could this be an opportunity?

10. Is it possible that this event was used by the Holy Spirit to teach Robert things he needed to know and then get him a better job? What lessons did Robert learn from his time at the department store? (Name three)

11. Uncle Leo also told Robert that he was confident that a better job would be provided for Robert. Do you think Robert feels like a failure? How important is faith in a time like this? Is this an opportunity to believe?

12. Uncle Leo told Robert that he (Leo) would help him succeed by giving him a list of secrets to success. Uncle Leo said the first four secrets had to do with how to have a good job interview. Here they are:

1. Smile
2. Dress appropriately, clean and neat
3. Think/prepare for an interview
4. Acknowledge your plan before God (Proverbs 3:6).

Take a few minutes and practice your smile on one another and compare it to a frown or serious look. How do you feel when you see a smile?

How does a smile affect your perception of the person smiling?

13. So, Robert starts looking for another job with his new shoes and neat and clean clothes. He thought about all the potential questions they could ask him and how he should answer them. What should he say about his past employment if asked?

14. Robert found a factory looking for help; the factory made stringed musical instruments. Robert took Uncle Leo's advice and he was prepared for the interview. Robert was hired. He was to be a full time employee. His job was to sweep the floors; clean the restrooms; take out trash; keep the coffee pot full; and during his spare time help the 20 workers on the assembly line as needed. He was also told that someday, if he did well, he would be on the assembly line. Robert was on the top of the world. Why do you think Robert got the job? Give five reasons:

15. Robert went home to Uncle Leo and told him the good news. Robert said, "Your ideas worked and I got this very good job;

how can I be sure to keep it?" Uncle Leo revealed the next three secrets to success:

5. Keep a positive attitude.

6. Be faithful/reliable.

7. Trust in God for help and guidance in all things. (Proverbs 3:5)

Robert was very thankful and anxious to work on his next three secrets to success. He was aware of the importance of a positive attitude in that in his last job many of the employees were so negative and constantly grumbling.

16. why is a positive attitude important? (List 3 reasons)

17. For those of you who presently have jobs, what percent of the employees with whom you work have positive attitudes? Please give your answers to the class.

18. If you were a business owner, would you want employees with positive attitudes or would you not care as long as they did their jobs? Please explain.

19. what does it mean to be a faithful/reliable employee?

20. How important is it to be faithful/reliable in a secular job? Does this faithfulness carry over into our spiritual lives?

Consider the scripture:

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, (1 Timothy 1:12 ESV - words of Paul)

Additional scriptures to look up: Matthew 24:45; 25:21; and 25:23; Numbers 12:7; Nehemiah 7:2; Revelation 2:10; Luke 19:17

21. Break up into groups and discuss the importance of faithfulness in your secular and spiritual life. Have one person represent the group and report the findings. Please pick someone who hasn't reported before.

22. Robert has decided to have a good attitude, to be a faithful/reliable employee, and to trust God in all things. We will see how he implements these secrets to success in the following lessons. Also, in the next lesson, Leo gives Robert a very powerful tool that he can use to succeed in his present job.

*Note (FD) means fictitious dollars. The teacher should use reasonable numbers in their country's currency.