



At church the other weekend, the sermon was a great one. It was about students being afraid to be "A" students because they didn't want to be made fun of. It was slightly eye opening but seemed to make sense. At an age of such acceptance, being too smart or "nerdy" is a very touchy subject.

Imagine having this option on your first day of school: either sit at a table with ten of your new friends or sit in the corner with only one other person. It's tempting to sit with ten friends, right? Now imagine the same scenario where the ten people at the table are being disciplined for bullying another student and the one student by himself is getting praised for sticking up for the bullied kid. Now which group do you want to be in? It's tempting to fit in, but it isn't always the right thing to do. The sermon stated that we are always doing God's work no matter what we do (as long as not illegal or immoral) so lacking in school, especially on purpose, was lacking in our duty to God. Again, great message, it but got me thinking.

This doesn't just apply to school. This applies to everyday life, and in particular, to work. Some people don't want to "over achieve" or go the extra mile because they don't want to be a "brown noser." They don't want others whispering – which is realistically out of jealousy or spite. To be the worker that goes the extra mile may feel great internally, but external pressure doesn't allow us to be

that person. I won't go into this being the definition of America or the lazy workforce that inhabits many companies across America - but I will say this: No matter what you may believe, no matter who you may do it for, be the best.

If you're doing God's work, do the best work you've ever done. If you're doing it for your company, do the right thing. And if you're doing it for you - by all means do the best YOU can do. You are the only person who prevents you from achieving greatness - achieving the best. If you're scared of being talked about at work, then you're afraid to be the best. The best get criticized, the best get talked about both positively and negatively, and most importantly, the best take these negative things and turn them into something positive.

If you're in the workforce long enough you'll see great examples of both of these things. I've had managers who have backed down and expected less of themselves just to "fit in." I've also seen people excel and do their best no matter what is being said about them. You have to decide which person you want to be. You have to make that choice. Sticking out in a large workforce could be the difference in your life. It doesn't make you snooty. It doesn't make you fake. It makes you a hard worker. It means you cherish what you do and you believe in what you stand for. It means you're doing the best job that you can - whether it be for God, for your company, or simply for you.

I'll leave you with a couple of my favorite quotes:

"If you're the smartest person in the room, you're in the wrong room."

"To be successful in life, make yourself irreplaceable."

Guest Post written by Luke Mauer, RMP Senior Financial Analyst

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