

# **BETTERING LIFE SITUATIONS**

## **Innovation and Hard Work**

Based on an old storey P. Ribes, s.j.

### **COTTON CROPS**

An enthusiastic agriculturist wanted to help some poor farmers by teaching them how to grow high-yield crops, thus raising their standards of living.

Voluntarily, bearing up with lots of hardships and discomforts, he settled in a remote village and secured a little plot of land. There he experimented on various types of crops and methods of cultivation. He found out that the most promising yield in those fields was cotton crops.

One day he called the oldest and most respected farmers of the village and asked them; “Have you ever thought of growing cotton in your soil? See my garden. Cotton seems to grow very well here”.

The farmers shrugged their shoulders and in disbelief they replied: Cotton? But, we never grew cotton in our fields? No! No! We shall never succeed!”

Patiently, the agriculturist kept telling them:” I am sure that that if we work very hard, sloughing the fields properly, using good manure and watering the soil generously, we should be able to get rich cotton crops here! Look at my field

Shrugging their shoulders, the farmers replied: “Well, may be, if some one works hard, ploughs the soil properly, waters the fields regularly and uses good seed, God knows, he might get rich cotton crops here. **But, who will do all this for us?”**

### **POINTS FOR REFLECTION**

1. What was the attitude of the farmers? Is it common? What are its results?
2. How shall we be able to secure better results?
3. Why we are not prepared to try new ways of doing old things?\_
4. If we keep always doing the same things, we shall never get better results.
5. Fear of change is the enemy of progress.
6. There is no substitute for hard work and enthusiasm
7. Old habits are ruts not new roads to the better future.
8. Can you give the parable a spiritual meaning too? In this case: what does the field stand for? And the farmers? And the agriculturist? And the cotton crops? Why?

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

- Many of us want to reap rich crops without work?
- To have rich crops, we have to plough the ground, water the soil and work hard.

- Many complain about how badly things go, yet, they are not ready to make serious efforts to remedy them.
- The old saying: ""Old is gold" is just a half truth
- To help others to work hard, we have to show them a sample of our work.
- If today, we can enjoy so many comforts and facilities is because so many people – generation after generation – have been working hard before us. We reap the fruits of their labors.
- In turn, and out of gratefulness, we have to work hard to make our world a better place for those still to come after us. They should enjoy the fruits of our labors.
- Not because a thing has never been done before, it should not be tried today. It is by trying over and over again that things improve.

### **LAZINESS MASQUERADES ITSELF WITH PHRASES LIKE;**

- ✓ It was never done before
- ✓ It cannot be done
- ✓ Why do you want to try again?
- ✓ Why to try new things? !
- ✓ Who will do it?
- ✓ How can we do it?
- ✓ We do not know how to do it?
- ✓ Let someone else do it?

### **BIBLE TEXTS BEARING ON WORK AND LABOR**

Gen 3/17-19	Labor is a law of God, "in the sweat of your brow, you will eat your bread."
Job 5/6-7	"Man is born to work..."?
Ps 104/23	"Man goes out to his work and into his labor till evening."
Ecc 5/18	"It is good for one to eat and drink the fruit of his work
Prov 10/5	"He that gathers in the harvest, is a wise man. He who snores in the summer is the son of confusion."
Prov 10/26;13/4;15/19, 18/8,19/24; 21/25-26; 22/13; 26/13-16	All these texts are about hard work, praising the diligent and condemning the lazy
Prov. 10/4; 12; 24; 19/15/20/4; 21/5; 24/30-34;	All these texts are about the consequences of laziness and sloth
2 The 3/6-15	Warning against idleness. "He who does not work, should not eat!:"
1 Th 4/11	Work hard "that you too aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you."
Ps 128/2	"When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy and it shall be well with you."
1 Th 2/9	"For you, brethren, remember our work and toil; for laboring night and day that we might not be a burden to anyone of you.."
Eph 4/28	"Let him who stole, steal no longer, but rather let him work with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him, who has need."
Mt 25/14-30	The Parable of the Three Servants
Lk 6/46-48	Parable of the two builders

