# Avoiding a "Survival of the Fittest" Mentality

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THE SMALL TOWN IN TENNESSEE WAS DEVASTATED by news the textile firm was moving its manufacturing operations overseas. This wasn't just any old tune of corporate chess moves, though. The owners, Bill and Tina, lived right here in the town their move would disrupt.

Nearly 200 workers made their living at the plant, and most of them were second-generation workers, having followed parents, uncles and aunts into the job. While not getting rich, the plant workers made a comfortable living and enjoyed both admirable working conditions and respectable benefits.
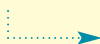
Lately, though, the plant's regular buyers had been pressing Bill and Tina to match the lower costs of competitors overseas. At risk themselves, the couple quietly negotiated with an experienced broker to find an overseas location to handle their production at a competitive price.

When the announcement was made public the community was stunned, and the workers felt betrayed. Many older workers knew this was the death knell for their productive work lives. They were too old and too far from other job opportunities to start all over again. Security and even contentment disappeared in that small town.

Even government training initiatives didn't help most, and by the end of five years after the plant move, the area had sunk deep into the ranks of the poorest areas of the state.

Everyone in town pointed to that day, and to Bill and Tina, as the agents of their own demise.

Are they right?

## Scripture Passages

Micah 6:8
James 2:1-9

## Study

In a society where survival of the fittest is as much a marketplace phrase as one for sociologists, who looks out for the disenfranchised and less fortunate in the workplace? Christians can and must!

*"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"* Micah 6:8

So much energy is spent on competing in the marketplace that little time is left for us to care for our co-workers, especially the disenfranchised and less fortunate ones.

Who are the "disenfranchised and less fortunate members of society" in the workplace?

Who are the "disenfranchised and less fortunate members of society" in *your* workplace?

How does your attitude, demeanor and actions reflect Christ's love to them?

What does Micah 6:8 teach us? Let's break it down into sections:

*Do justice:*  What would "doing justice" look like in your work world? Focus specifically on how you might "do justice" to the disenfranchised and less fortunate among your customers, coworkers, vendors and investors.

*Love kindness:*  "Justice" requires an action, "do."  "Kindness" calls not only for action, but also for an attitude, "love."  How does this speak to our motives in the workplace?

*Walk humbly with your God:*  Justice calls for action, and love speaks to motive. What does "walking humbly with your God" have to do with any of this?

Managers and workers will sometimes pay deference to their peers and superiors but be disrespectful to people in positions below them on the organization chart. What does James 2:1-9 have to say about that particular behavior?

Can you think of times you may have been guilty of this?

In every area of our lives, we are called to "love others as we love ourselves," and this includes the workplace. There is no place in a Christian's life for a survival-of-the-fittest mentality. We must be about our Father's business, and that business in tending His Creation and His sheep.

### For further consideration
The Gospel can often get lost in a focus on good works, but good works can also often serve as a bridge to the Savior. Only when we understand what Jesus was saying in Luke 22:24-26 can we be most effective in serving others on behalf of Christ.