Meeting Notes – Jul. 23, 2024

The LaFayette Rotary Club met on Tuesday, July 23 for its weekly meeting. Rotarian Steven Dobbs, Jr., invited his father, Steven Dobbs, Sr., to be our speaker. Steven Sr. spoke on changes in corporate America over the last 30 + years.

Mr. Dobbs, Sr. has been employed with Milliken carpets for 37 years. He hopes to retire next year, but the company has had difficulty finding someone to take his place due to changes in employees' attitude and work ethic over the years. People of integrity are needed. Dobbs, Sr., spoke of the hardships required of his job, namely large amounts of time spent away from his family. He admitted that at times he felt the company owed him more than what they gave, then he was reminded that he had agreed to work for the specified wage. He referenced a scripture, found in Matthew 20:16. In this parable, a master hires five groups of workers at different times throughout the day, and pays them all the same amount. In Matthew 20:16, it says, "So the last will be first and the first last." Workers with this type of attitude have become more difficult to find.

Mr. Dobbs, Sr., also expressed the opinion that in more recent years corporate America has seemingly lost concern for its workers. He recounted a time when his wife had become gravely ill and he felt very hopeless, as if the Lord had turned His back on him. His employer, Milliken, did research and helped him to find a doctor to successfully treat her (after eight previously failed attempts) and also covered the cost of out-of-state travel to the doctor. It is very unusual now to find a company who would walk beside one of their employees as Milliken did for him. That is one reason he still works for Milliken. Now the emphasis is typically on making a profit rather than nurturing the employer/employee relationship. Dobbs, Sr., again referenced scripture, reminding us that we should work foremost for the Lord. Colossians 3:23-24 states, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward."

Diane Sherriff