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Covington Aircraft Engines

Center for Faith & Work at LeTourneau University

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Covington Aircraft Engines



Paul Abbott takes Matthew 6:33 to heart as he fulfills his calling to be a Christian businessman: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.” (Click [here](#) to explore what this verse says about work.) Since 1972, he and his wife, Betty, have been working at Covington Aircraft Engines, a company of 65 employees that runs on four core principles: integrity, dependability, affordability, and quality service. Since people’s lives are at stake, integrity is essential to their business.

This video was made possible by the [Center for Faith & Work at LeTourneau University](#) and produced by Small Business School.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

PAUL ABBOTT: God does own this business and we’re all here working for him. It teaches that in Psalms -- that the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.

My name is Paul Abbott and I’m the CEO of Covington Aircraft Engines.

We have 65 employees. We sell engines all over the world.

We are presently a DDOF which is a distributor and designated overhaul facility for Pratt & Whitney Canada. There are only 2 DDOFs in the United States so we feel privileged to be one of them.

The key to our success has been probably finding our niche in the business and we did that in 1972 when we started working on the Pratt & Whitney radial engines. That has worked for us for many years. Then, in 1995, we started overhauling and repairing the turbine engine, the PT 6 turbine.

We also found a niche in that area. There are a lot of those engines in service. They are used on a lot of corporate aircraft, Beechcraft, King Air. A basic engine that comes into our shop would have a value of anywhere from \$250,000 on up to a million dollars per engine. The reason these engines are so

expensive is because of the parts in the engine. There are some parts that run anywhere from \$40,000 to \$60,000 dollars per part.

My wife Betty has worked at Covington since 1972. If we were formal, today we'd call her the CFO.

Matthew 6:33 is a verse that Betty and I really claimed back when we were at LeTourneau and we surrendered our lives. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." We were very poor back then. And we depended on God. There were times when we just really wondered where the next meal was coming from. We were that poor.

We depended on God and he never did let us down. Generally we had enough macaroni in the house but that was about all.

Our son Luke is now president. He is an A&P mechanic and he runs our new facility in Mississippi.

LUKE ABBOTT: I think the Christian values that were introduced to the company by my parents Paul and Betty are great and I think they are very necessary. The integrity and the trust and honesty are values that are necessary to do business in today's world.

PAUL ABBOTT: Our son Aaron is Executive Vice President and that means he runs the Oklahoma operation.

AARON ABBOTT: We've got four core values here at Covington Air: integrity, dependability, affordability and quality service.

The most important one is integrity. If we don't get this one right the other three really don't matter. Integrity is we will treat people fairly, like we want to be treated and we're going to do what we say and we're going to do it all with a Christlike attitude.

One of the big reasons we have to be Christlike in dealing with employees is some of them will never set foot inside of a church. We are the church or try to be the church to the employees.

PAUL ABBOTT: We have chapel once a week for our employees and we have a pastor or missionary come in and speak to our people and we've done that for close to 40 years now.

You can have buildings, the tools, the equipment, but if you don't have good employees you don't really have anything. The customers hear about the good work we do and they want us to service product or overhaul their engines.

Their life can be at stake or the life of their family or the passengers.

It's not something, they can just pull over next to a cloud and stop. It's different than being in a car. It's very, very important. It's serious business and our employees all know that.

There's no doubt that God called me into business to be a business man. Our desire has been to make

money and take the majority of our profits and put that into ministry work and missions around the world.

What we've often done over the years is we have made commitments when we did not even have the money but we've just depended on God to provide the money.

We also have boots on the ground occasionally.

A few weeks ago our son Aaron traveled to Nigeria to work on a hospital.

In 2011 Luke turned 40 years old and we gave him a year's sabbatical but it had to be a working sabbatical. He chose to go with Missionary Aviation Fellowship. He and his family moved to the Congo.

Also in 2011 I took a trip to China with a group of 10 other business men. A lot of Chinese men have come to know Christ. They had a lot of questions and they were interested in seeing our businesses. We each showed our businesses on power point and then we talked about how we use Biblical principles to operate our businesses.

I pray for wisdom on a daily basis. I'm not smart enough to run this business by myself and I know that but I believe God can sure help me.

Everything we have now is just because of God's blessing. It isn't anything we have necessarily done on our own but God has truly blessed us above and beyond what we ever thought or expected.
