

Work: as a Sphere of Ministry

Reaching for that alarm on Monday mornings can really be tough. It's probably during the middle of what is commonly termed the "Blue Monday" that our true attitude toward our work comes to mind.

What is your attitude toward your job? Toward work in general and your particular job? Probably you will realize with me that often Christians have a horrible attitude toward their work. In fact, we often have a sub-Biblical attitude and this keeps us from entering into some of the satisfaction we could have from our work.

One reason for this sad state of affairs is our tendency to think of fulltime ministry as the only truly God-called vocation. Therefore, we divorce our Christian faith from our walk in the world. The next step is adopting the view of the world toward work. Usually, the man on the street regards work as a necessary evil to earn money, to have possessions, and enjoy leisure time. That's a sub-Biblical view.

The place to begin a Biblical doctrine of work is in the Garden of Eden. Listen to Genesis 2:15, *The LORD God took the man (Adam) and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.* Later when God gave the Ten Words or Commandants to Israel, work was included. Before there is a day to cease work there is the commandment to work. *Six days you shall labor and do all your work.* Thus productive work is part of our purpose and it is God ordained. In fact, it is essential. When people become unemployed or retire from work, they often feel a sense of worthlessness that effects their mental wellbeing.

God wants His people to think and act Christianly about their jobs, whatever they may be, and the place to begin is in our thinking. God wants us to view our jobs, or work task, the daily grind, if you please, as the altar of service to Him during the week. Whatever your position in society, as long as it is not immoral, God has

put you there for the time being. Remember, Jesus worked for years as probably the best carpenter in Nazareth before he left home on his preaching mission.

Paul, though he was the greatest missionary, often worked to support his own ministry by making tents. Peter was a fisherman as well as a preacher. Their having secular jobs did not divorce them from God's call to minister. Whatever they did, it was done as a service of praise to God.

For us to obtain the maximum mileage from our work hours as believers, we must obey the Scriptural principles. This will result in our glorifying God in the daily grind, and our own spiritual life experiencing a spiritual increase.

Martin Luther wrote:

“An unexpected power flows forth in work when a man knows that he is truly under divine command in discharging the vocation at hand, a power greater than any to be found in the words of orators” (212).

According to God's Word, work or labor is sacred. Therefore, *whatever we have to do, we must do it heartedly as unto the Lord and not unto men*. It doesn't matter what the job or the boss's personality – we are to do our work - not with our eyes fixed on men but fixed on the Lord Jesus.

Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters (Colossians 3:23).

Then, whatever we do for Him, we must do it with singleness of heart. This is why it is so important that we remember that we are God's priests in the world every day and not just in church on Sunday. He calls us to be his representatives and to be salt and light in our society.

Christians, therefore, should be the best employees possible: conscientious and honest; likewise, Christian employers must be compassionate, fair and just in their dealings with their employees.

You see, Christians are not just ordinary workers or employees. They are a special breed because they are representatives to the world of the King, Jesus Christ. Therefore, they offer to God the sacrifice of “a job well done” to the glory of their Savior.

Christian employee – as one of God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with compassion, humility, kindness, gentleness and patience. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.... Do your assigned job with sincerity of heart and reverence for the LORD. *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Let us join the psalmist in this prayer.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands! Psalm 90:17

Wayne Conrad
October 7, 2021
Dallas, TX 75228