

Lesson 4: A Goal of Work – Giving

Review

Vocation – internal/external, many possible occupations

Dominion Mandate – to tame the wild, to cultivate the potential – where is your “Garden of Eden”?

Psalm 8 – Adams fails, Jesus fulfills

Charles E. Hummel, *Tyranny of the Urgent* – how did Jesus act under His vocation while on earth?

John Piper, *Risk Is Right* – what is an unavoidable aspect of all work, even in faith and love?

Purpose of Work – always to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17, 23) – but how specifically?

Goal #1: Provision – God does not need our work to provide, but provision usually comes through working.

Goal #2: Giving – God provides *our* living, and then for *others* through our giving.

Giving is not natural, unless we give to those who give to us or belong to us (cf. Luke 6:32-34; 11:13).

The world often commends the man who works hard for his family and does not hurt anyone.

Jesus commends those who *actively* do good, and actively do good to *all* men, even their enemies (Mt. 5-7).

He Himself “did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mt. 20:28).

How does this personal transformation happen from self-serving to others-giving?

The Bible describes three steps of personal transformation for those who are in Christ:



The language of “put off” and “put on” is clothing (cf. *habit*).

Step 1: Put off the bad habit (v. 22).

We often think this is all that needs to be done (“I’ve gotta quit...”), but that is not enough for *real* change.

Illus. The Parable of the Empty House (Mt. 12:43-45)

Step 3: Put on Christ (the New Man vs. Adam) as our new clothing (v. 24, cf. Rom. 13:14).

Real change is not complete until our habitual sins are replaced with Christ.

Examples are given in the rest of the chapter:

E.g. Lying with truth-telling, not just silence (v. 25).

E.g. Bitterness with tenderhearted forgiveness, not just tolerance (vv. 31-32).

Therefore, it is so important to ask, “What positive action replaces the negative?” (e.g. 2 Tim. 2:22).

But even knowing what replaces the sin is not enough until we know what first displaces the sin.

Step 2: In order to put on Christ, we must first be “renewed in the spirit of our mind” (v. 23).

Whether initially at salvation or incrementally in sanctification, it is the *truth* that sets us free (Jn. 8:32)!

And not just *knowing* the truth, but *believing* the truth until it renews our very spirit in outlook and attitude.

Cf. Nouthetic Counseling (a.k.a. Biblical Counseling) – more than mere thinking (cf. Rom. 12:2)

How do these principles apply to work?

To answer this question, let us ask, “***When is a thief is no longer a thief?***”

“He who steals must steal no longer,
but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good,
so that he will have something to share with one who has need” (v. 28).

Put off *stealing*, and put on *working*—but not *just* working...

It is not enough for a thief to start earning a living—that is still self-centered.

He stole for himself, and now he works for himself—nothing truly has changed.

In putting on Christ, his mind is renewed to live for others—he works in order to give!

Instead of creating need, he now meets needs (illus. Luke 19:1-10 – Zaccheus).

Therefore, God intends us to work both for our *living* and for our *giving*.