

How Can I Serve God at Work? Pt. 1 (2022.04.03 Sabbath school Class)

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"How Can I Serve God at Work?" (1 of 2)
in the RHB series, "Cultivating Biblical Godliness."

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The book this morning is how can I serve God at work?

By ray skins.

I've thought a good bit about how I got.

To be the one that.

I presented this book.

So I'll have to thank Elder Mangum for.

Plugging me into this.

Role I was.

I was hanging out trying to figure out which one I might do, and he said.

I think you should.

Do this one so OK.

I've I do have a.

Lot of experience, as it turns out, working and.

So maybe maybe we can consider a few points here this morning.

One of the.

Early points to make is understanding.

Human work begins with God.

Can everybody hear me OK?

To be human.

It is an image bearer of the divine is to be called to work.

What is work is work about us.

Some of us would like to think so I think.

I'm afraid that I have succumbed to that from time to time.

One of the things that we learn in this book is.

About our gifts.

How to take inventory of the things that we can do?

It's a very difficult thing to do without succumbing to pride or public ishness

Let's see.

As we both as we consider.

Just how good we are or how less than good we are.

The road to the biblical perspective.

On work has a number of pitfalls.

One of them is miss evaluating or misdirecting the good gifts that God has given us.

Sure, you all have examples of those folks around you.

One of

In Matthew 2237 through 40.

Jesus said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like it.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

On these two commandments hang all the law in the pocket.

We'll come back to that in.

A few minutes.

Then if loving God above all and our neighbor as ourselves, is the summary.

Of the law.

Most of us will readily admit.

That the work workplace is an especially difficult place to obey.

In Genesis 319, God told Adam after the fall.

In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground.

For out of it you were taken.

For dust you are and to dust you shall return.

All Adam's offspring.

Know something of Labor hall?

Literal and figurative thorns and thistles.

Prick us daily.

Most of us spend about 1/3 to 1/2 of our waking lives working.

I can tell you when I took.

My job at Dixie Diesel.

38 1/2 years ago.

My boss told me then that you would spend 3/4 of your life or your waking life working.

And I had to agree, that's about right.

The Reformation recovered one of the biblical truths that are, regardless of our vocation.

The gospel impacts our work.

The Roman Catholic Church made a stark distinction between sacred and secular work.

And that with common folks having a clear perception that God received much greater glory from the work

of a priest or monk.

Than from a Palmer or Carpenter.

So Proverbs 11-1 says dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord.

But just weight is his delight.

We can be sure that whatever part of God's creation and occupation gives us to engage.

The God who delights in a working scale.

Is more knowledgeable and interested in it than we are.

So what is work?

The definition in the book says job or labor.

All that we are obliged to do to meet our physical and social needs.

Effort directed towards some purpose or end.

Clashes 323.

And you are Christ and Christ as gods.

Applies to whatever occupies our time in our present stage of life.

Caring for children.

Or retiree?

Not just formal workplace, when we do our jobs well.

Still, we are bringing glory to our creator.

I've known that my whole life and I continue to have to remind.

Myself of that.

I think we all probably fall into that.

It's it's easy to get caught up in the day to day and forget who we're working for and why.

And that sums it up very nicely.

We're doing it for our creator to him.

So God works and we are called to.

Bear his image.

Genesis 11, which is in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth.

All the way to revelations 2221. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.

In between these two scriptures.

It reveals to us a God who is active in his works of creation.

Providence and redemption.

Verbs to use God to describe God's activities.

He is busy creating, speaking, showing.

Judging planning.

And the cream.

The scriptures portray him as actively working using human analogies such as the Potter Isaiah 64, eight.

But now, oh Lord.

You are our father.

We are the clay.

And you are our powder and we are the work of your hand.

As a shepherd.

God works in Psalm 23. One the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

Matthew 630 says he's a garment maker.

Now God so closed the grass grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven.

Will he not much more clothe you?

Oh you of little faith.

Builder Hebrews 3-4 says.

For every house is built by someone.

But he who built all things is God.

Then in Zephaniah 317.

God is a composer.

The Lord your God and your mist, the mighty one will save.

He will rejoice over you with gladness.

He will quiet you with his love.

He will rejoice over you with singing.

To help our finite minds understand something of what he is doing.

As God's image bearer.

It is allowed to emulate.

This characteristic.

Genesis 126, then God said.

Let us make man in our image according to our likeness.

Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea over the birds of the air, and over the cattle.

Overall, the Earth Andover, every creeping thing that.

Creeps on earth.

The connection between human work and divine work is made explicit when God gives the law on Mount Sinai.

Exodus 29 says.

Six days you shall labor.

Do all your work.

To be human, an image bearer of God is to be called to work.

Who asking you to go back a couple of weeks to March 20th? We heard in the morning sermon from Acts 423 through 21.

Excuse me 23 to 31 now. I've asked Mr Phil if he would.

Read that course.

And being let go.

They went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

And when they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with Blackboard, and said, Lord, thou art God which has made heaven and earth and the sea and all that in them is who by the mouth of my search David had said, why did the heathen rage from the people imagine band?

The kings of the Earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against this price.

Wherever truth against the Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.

For to do whatsoever by hand and that Council determined reform to be done.

And now Lord behold their threatenings and granted to last servants, that with all boldness they may speak nine word.

By stretching forth on hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of my Holy Child, Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken, where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they speak the word of.

God with motives.

Thank you.

So we hear about the power of God's hand.

His almighty power and determination to redeem his own.

His works.

The greatest good.

Devil and the redemption of the cost.

That the greatest evil ever committed.

Against him and.

The greatest act of wickedness on the part of those who crucified Christ.

Verse 28 God greatest work.

His plan of redemption and carrying out his plan.

So what are we called to do in light?

Of hearing this.

It's being good and faithful image bearers and I would challenge each of you to do that.

Next, we have God derives satisfaction.

From his work.

It is clear from the scriptures that God does not work because he has to to fill his time.

For some other reason of necessity.

God derives satisfaction and pleasure from the work of his hands.

His work is fulfilling and meaningful.

Let's go back to the Creation account in Genesis again.

Chapter one, verses three and four.

Then God said, let there be light and there was light.

And God saw the light that it was good.

God divided the light from the darkness.

Genesis 110 says, and God called the Dry Land earth.

The Gathering together of the waters he called seas.

And God saw that it was good.

In Genesis 131 then God saw everything he had made.

And indeed, it was very good.

So the evening and the morning were the 6th day.

Each step of the way we are told that God completed a task.

And took satisfaction from a job well done.

So I was thinking about this.

This is going to be an imperfect.

But many years ago.

No, and I will probably been married two years.

So that would have been in 1988, probably.

My old truck I was driving back forth.

To work, the motor blew up.

So I decided to build it and was excited about building it.

Got somewhere about halfway done.

It was probably about a month project in between everything else I was doing and I was having a good time.

Is really the maybe the second engine I'd ever built without much help from anybody.

So so I was.

Building on this engine and several things came along.

Of course it costs more than I wanted it to.

Also, somewhere along the way, my brother Craig was helping me.

And as we were getting ready to put it back in, we had a bolt fail and dropped the motor.

Wait, but

We were blasted, it didn't hug it too bad.

Hopefully we didn't know it's time.

Put it all together.

Put it in.

It was good and fairly late in the afternoon and we were inside an.

Old dark shed.

We're trying to wire things up.

We've had the battery life and we were looking around and trying to get it wired up.

Greg and I.

Were both all bent down.

Under the hood, suddenly.

This huge flash of blue light just blew up in our faces and.

Oh well, we both just about ran out building.

It turns out dollars over taking pictures.

We still have that picture, I just couldn't find it.

So after our nerves settled down.

We finally got where we could fired up.

We fired it up and amazingly enough it sounded really good and so y'all know me.

I'm a motive here.

I couldn't help but enjoy how good that sounded.

So again, it's an imperfect analogy, but we all get to enjoy things we do.

One of the things that I would like to encourage each of you.

Especially young folks if you're trying to.

Figure out what to.

Do to, you know, I think.

The Lord will bless you, blessed be.

And dumb.

I feel like that he will bless you with the ability to work and do something that makes you living that you can enjoy because not so much work if you enjoy it.

If you like doing it.

The analogy does break down at this point.

Because of sin.

And even our best work still is not.

Anything near compared to what God called Good.

In Psalm one oh 423 two through 31.

Man goes out to his work into his labor until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are your works?

In wisdom, you have made them all.

The Earth is full of your possessions.

This great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things.

Living things both great and small.

There are the ships sail about.

There is that Leviathan which you have made to play there.

These all wait.

For you that you may give them their food and juice season.

What you give them, they gather in your open hand.

They are filled with good.

You've had your face.

They are troubled.

You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

You send forth your spirit.

They are created.

And you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever.

May the Lord rejoice in his works.

All these make note.

Of God's pleasure in his work.

God's work, whether Creation, Providence or redemption?

Is not a work of beauty.

But rather a work of pleasure.

From which he derives satisfaction and glory.

Our next heading is God provides for us through our work.

There is a tangible.

In practical labor

And the creation is structured in such a way that through our work.

Our daily needs are met.

The class Ecclesiastes 5:18 and 19.

Here is what I have seen.

It is good and.

Fitting for one to eat and drink and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun.

All the days of his life which God gives him.

For it is his heritage.

As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth.

And given him power to eat of it.

To receive his heritage.

And to rejoice in his labor.

This is the gift of God.

There is a connection between our work and receiving the necessities.

That it provides for us.

Heidelberg Catechism question 27 ask.

What does thou mean by the Providence of God?

The answer.

The Almighty and everywhere present got a.

Power of God.

Whereby as it were by his hand.

He upholds and governs heaven and Earth and all creatures.

So that herbs and grass.

Rain and drought.

Fruitful and barren years.

Meat and drink.

Health and sickness.

Riches and poverty.

Yay, and all things come not by chance.

But by his fatherly hand.

That ties back into the sovereignty of God that we just heard.

Oh, two or three weeks ago.

And it's, uh.

That answers for me a good bit of comfort in times when I'm considering my work in those unknowns and.

Especially if I am facing an hour rate customer, how?

How do you present God?

In the face of a highly customer.

It's a little easier after 38 years. I can tell you that.

God is sovereign and he is pleased to deal differently with our effort.

Sometimes we are richly rewarded.

While other times it seems that we work really hard with little reward.

Either way, we must remember that it is only God who can provide blessings upon our laborers.

The tensions and anxieties that we face in connection with work belong to this life.

But this does not mean that the connection between work and our provisions will not continue.

In the new earth.

Isaiah 65:21 through 23 provides a hint of this.

They shall build houses and inhabit them.

They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

They shall not build, and another in habit.

They shall not plant and another eat.

Or as the days of a tree, they shall not build another in habit.

They shall not plant and another eat.

Those are days I well, I did that twice.

You know, sorry, maybe we needed to hear that twice.

For as the days of a tree, so shall the days of my people, in my legs shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labor in vain.

Nor bring forth children for trouble.

Or they shall be the descendants of the blessing of the Lord.

And their offspring with them.

Man works in obedience to God's commands.

So 5th heading.

An important point to recognize that we must work because God commanded us to.

Simple, right?

The Scriptures not only tell us we must work, but how?

We must work.

The command of work must be followed within the framework of God's other commands.

Since we were called to a

Life of complete obedience.

The command of work.

Is captured in the summary of the law.

That we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

And that we love our

Neighbors as ourselves.

In the context of.

Exodus 31

Where Moses is leading something over a million Israelites.

Into the wilderness.

Put through the wilderness, all of the things that he has to deal with.

On that scale.

This is where God directs him to build the Tabernacle.

In the midst of all of these things that Moses is doing.

And he gives him the specs.

And the artisans which he has filled with the spirit God.

In wisdom and understanding.

And in knowledge and all manner of workmanship.

Exodus 31:15 through 17

Work shall be done for six days, but the 7th is the Sabbath of rest.

Holy to the Lord.

Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day.

He shall surely be put to death.

It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever.

For in six days the Lord made the heavens in the Earth.

And on the 7th day he rested and he was refreshed.

So remember the context the people were to understand and obey God's specific command to build a Tabernacle within the more general framework regarding work.

And the rest that God had established at Creation.

For me it's a little easier to look at that and see how Moses did that and how the children of Israel did.

That as to opposed to how we do it.

And when you bring it into your own context.

In our world today, there's no question that Christians are pressured.

To work on the Sabbath.

And one of the things that's been especially refreshing for me is to have Pastor James.

With his

Abilities of communicating how important it is to have the Lord state it says.

Worship the Lord.

Oh, as he set forth in Scripture.

Moving on to our next.

Hiding is God holds us accountable for our work.

God gives each of us our task and the ability to complete those tasks.

The only way there will be fruits.

And our laborers will be blessed is if God blesses us.

Deuteronomy 8:12/17 and 18.

When you have eaten enough oil and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them.

Then you say in your heart.

My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.

And you shall remember the Lord your God.

For this he who gives you power to get well.

That he may establish his covenant which he swore.

To your father.

As it is to this day.

Warns the children of Israel not to succumb to the temptation of thinking that their work had earned all the material blessings they might enjoy.

Acknowledging that God.

Rather than our.

Efforts is the reason for earthly success.

Is contrary to human nature.

So much of our identity is caught up in our profession.

Happy to take credit for the things we accomplish.

In our work.

We need to own our work.

All the gifts that we used to work.

Nor the rewards that we are able to accumulate through work.

They are gifts of God.

I know for myself.

I have to remind myself of that regular, fairly regular.

Suspect that there's other people that have to.

Have to remind themselves of that also is a good reminder.

God provides gifts to meet particular needs.

There are no gifts that God gives to you.

Or me by accident.

Even if the purpose of the gift may not always be immediately obvious to us.

They are given with a providential insight.

We are called use them in the service of God and his Kingdom.

I consider on that, but y'all all know I'm not particularly given to public speaking.

And I feel that very strongly, but with encouragement from.

Pastor James and the elders and from each of y'all.

Uh, the Lord has given me grace to do so, so I like to speak to our young folks that are considering themselves to be too shy to get up and speak or just not interested in it for whatever reason.

The Lord does give you the gift to be able to do what he sets for you to do.

So I'd like to encourage you.

It's not as hard as it looks.

Thank God it's good.

Good to see.

Y'all back by the way.

Alright, our next subject is the fall's impact.

On our work.

Genesis 3:17 through 19 says.

Because you have heeded this as God speaking to Adam because you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying you shall not eat of it.

Accursed as the ground for your sake and toil, you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

Both thorns and thistles it shall bring.

Forth for you.

You shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground.

For out of it you were taken or dust you are, and to dust you shall return.

So with the fall came the curses like everything else.

Work is another one of the many things that sin impacts, and the effect of it on work is profound.

The curse of the fall does not just contribute to the drudgery.

And the tediousness of work.

It also has resulted in various vices and temptations, particularly in the workplace.

And covetousness.

Then all rear their ugly heads.

Most of us can testify to what Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 1:14.

I have seen all the works that are done under the Sun and indeed all is vanity, vanity and grasping for the wind.

Sin is particularly evident in our daily work.

Where we might often let our guard down.

We realize how much the Holy Spirit needs to do his sanctifying work in us as we do our work.

In the face of the curse.

Work is both individual and social.

God has designed the world.

So that human work.

Is an essential part of the process of each generation learning from the previous one.

Luke 24:45 says, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.

He learned from those around him how to use the technology of the day.

It's one of the things that helped us to understand that the work that we do does not take place.

In a vacuum.

Work is generally accomplished in partnership with others.

Adam receives Eve as a helpmeet in Eden.

And this pattern of working together is established in Scripture.

One of the many things that the Lord has taught us to teach our children and our children children.

God takes pleasure in the.

Beauty of work.

Scripture does not frame our work in the calling to work simply in terms of functional utility.

We are complex human beings.

With various interests, aptitudes and passions.

So the work we're called to is multi dimensional.

Pay attention to the complexity that God is built into creation.

Which he describes is very good.

If we are to praise and glorify God as he deserves.

We would do well to open our eyes to the various dimensions that are part.

Of our daily work.

We serve a God who desires to be worshipped.

In the beauty of holiness.

And we are instructed whether you eat or drink.

Or this or whatsoever you do do all to the glory of God.

1st Corinthians 10:31.

Christ worked as part of his obedience as part of his active obedience.