

Title: The Gospel at Work (Part 2)

Passage: Ephesians 6:5-9

Introduction:

Questions for consideration:

- Is my work shaping my character in a godly direction?
- How can I do my work as a full-dedicated disciple of Jesus Christ?
- How can I do my work to advance God's kingdom?

Culture

- Secular distinction between church and work.

Contrast

- The Bible does speak about work and how we are to do so.

Passage: Ephesians 6:5-9

Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Initial Observations

- Work is to 1) shape our character and 2) the way God advances His Gospel
- Slavery reference
 - Slavery mentioned in Bible is distinct than slavery in American history (American: race-based).
 - Slavery is never endorsed in the Bible. In fact, Christians helped abolish slavery.
 - Not to equate workplace as slavery nor make light of slavery but there are some applications can be made in employer-employee context.
- Context of passage: audience were believers meeting in households.
- Main point: the Gospel should affect everything you are doing no matter the relational context you are in.

Biblical Exhortations for Employees

Obey your employers

- About you being under their leadership as long as not being disobedient to God

Work Respectfully

- "in fear and trembling" = having respect for the office.

Work Sincerely

- assume the best, not the worst

Work Being Loyal and Wholeheartedly

- work all the time and give your best

Work Expectedly

- Out of good will (not begrudgingly) knowing eternal rewards will come if done to God.

Biblical Exhortation for Employers

“Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.”

I. Practice mutuality

- “Do the same to them”
- Treat others as you would like to be treated

II. Avoid Hostility

- “stop your threatening”
- Do not lead or instill by fear

III. Christ-centered accountability

- “knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven”
- God sees all things

Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.

Hebrews 4:13

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

IV. Show no partiality

- “that there is no partiality with him.”
- treat all with respect and honor.

Application

Employees: Work through Christ, like Christ, and for Christ alone

Work through Christ

- How? Empowered by the Holy Spirit
- Ask God to give you grace to be a light in the workplace, to have supernatural love for those there.

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, *for apart from me you can do nothing.*

- Your peace does not come from your work performance but rather your identity in Christ.

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God who works in you*, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Work like Christ

- follow His example
- Jesus lived intentionally by putting His deity aside and always under the influence of the Holy Spirit

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

- Likewise, you have the Holy Spirit in you.

John 14:16-17

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, *to be with you forever*, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, *for he dwells with you and will be in you*.

Work for Christ

- Your motivation is Him

2 Corinthians 5:15

and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves *but for him* who for their sake died and was raised.

- When you are working, you are working for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

- Don't be concerned about overworking when working for the King of Kings. Work all things for His glory.
- In each case, you are serving Jesus. Work for Him, and He will reward you.
- Have the bigger picture in mind. Your work matters!
- Your work can validate your credibility to speak to others about the Gospel.

Misperception: Share the Gospel, and if necessary, use words.

- If people don't know why you do what you do and how, then may be misinterpreted or resented.
- You need to be discerning but certainly be courageous in sharing the Gospel.

Employers: Lead through Christ, like Christ, and for Christ

Lead through Christ

- be dependent on God.
- humility is the key characteristic of good leadership.
- Remind yourself everyday of the Gospel. See yourself as Christ see you (without Jesus Christ, you are a sinner and lost in your sins)
- Anything good you have or could do is only from God.

Lead like Christ

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Lead for Christ

- you are held accountable to God in your leadership.

All: Think differently

- All have intrinsic value and worth regardless of position or what you do.
- This passage should change how you relate to people

James 2

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory....Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

- do not idolize people nor put people down.

All: Passage should change the way we value what is important to us.

- Our most important calling: being a child of God.
- Jesus - is He your master, ultimate boss?
- How do you respond to Jesus?

Mark 8:36-37

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?

- If you have Christ, you have everything. If you do not have Christ, you do not have anything.

Philippians 1:21

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

- Serve the Master who gave His life for you. He is worthy to be served.