

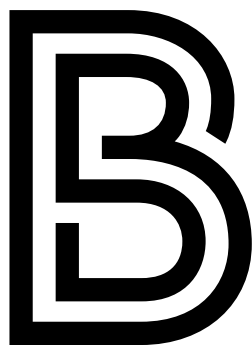
BETTERMAN DEFINED

A Real Man Excels
at God's Work



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SESSION 1



GODLY WORK



GODLY WORK

01 OUR WORK IS FROM GOD

Any attempt to talk about what it means for us to excel at God's work has to start with some basic truths about us as God's creation...

A. We are _____ by God to work.

- Because we are called by God to work, we are responsible to _____ in the work He calls us to do.

Ephesians 4:1:

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called..."

- Because God calls us to work, it matters deeply how we use our God-given time, energy, abilities, and skills. Theologically, the use of our God-given talents is called "_____."
- The Apostle Paul saw the importance of vocational stewardship, which is why he said we are to be *"making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."* (Ephesians 5:16)
- Jesus felt the weight of vocational stewardship and declared: *"We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work."* (John 9:4)

“How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.”

- ANNIE DILLARD

B. God is a _____.

- From the beginning God has been _____.

Genesis 1:1:

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Isaiah 40:28a:

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.”

“The book of Genesis leaves us with a striking truth: work was part of paradise.”

- TIM KELLER

- God’s _____ did not cease at creation. Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” (John 5:17)

Philippians 2:13:

“... for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

“In Genesis we see God as a gardener, and in the New Testament we see him as a carpenter. No task is too small a vessel to hold the immense dignity of work given by God.” - TIM KELLER

- The Bible describes God in a number of metaphors related to _____:

farmer	builder	shepherd	potter
composer	gardener	clothier	architect
judge	teacher	winemaker	metalworker

C. God _____ us as workers.

- We are made in the image of God to be workers.

“ Human beings are made in the image of God, and God is a worker. Human labor has intrinsic value because in it we ‘image,’ or reflect, our Creator.”

- AMY L. SHERMAN, *KINGDOM CALLING*, 102

“ Work is as much a basic human need as food, beauty, rest, friendship, prayer and sexuality; it is not simply medicine but food for our soul.” - TIM KELLER

- Man resembles God in that we possess an intellect, emotion, and will that allows us to be relational, responsible, and creative [unlike the rest of creation].
- We represent God by responsibly _____ over _____.

Genesis 1:28a:

“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it’...”

Genesis 2:15:

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”



- We are given inherent _____ that we carry into all of our work.

Psalm 8:5-8:

“Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.”

02

CULTURE-SHAPERS

- A.** God has given us the task of making and shaping the culture with the work we do...

“People must now carry on the work of development; by being fruitful they must fill it even more; by subduing it they must form it even more. Mankind, as God’s representatives on earth, carry on where God left off.”

– AL WOLTERS, *CREATION REGAINED*, 41

“Work is our design and our dignity; it is also a way to serve God through creativity, particularly in the creation of culture.” – TIM KELLER

- B.** We never _____ alone.

- All work is _____ and _____ by God who made us and redeemed us for work.



Ephesians 2:10:

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

“ When God made the world, he created it *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. While we don’t possess that ability, nevertheless we are created to make things out of what we find scattered on the floor of creation. So we do. But we never truly work alone.”

– RUSS RAMSEY, *REMBRANDT IS IN THE WIND*, 89

- God enables us, by His _____, to perform good work on His behalf. We work with God.

2 Corinthians 9:8:

“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

1 Corinthians 3:9:

“For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building.”

C. Not all work is God’s work.

- Man’s fall into _____ had consequences for work. Sin frustrates our work and introduces disorder into God’s created order.

Romans 8:20:

“For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it...”

- Man’s fall into sin made our work with creation harder and more frustrating because both the creature and creation are _____.

**Genesis 3:17b-19:**

“... cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

- Man’s fall opened the door for some work to become _____ work. Therefore, some work is:

1. _____ and unwise work.

Ephesians 5:15-17:

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

2. _____ work.

Ephesians 4:28:

“Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.”

3. _____ work.

Psalms 141:4:

“Do not let my heart incline to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men who work iniquity, and let me not eat of their delicacies!”



D. As men, we are to evaluate if our work is wasteful, dishonest, or destructive.

How do we discern this? The following questions will help.

1. Does my work contribute to cultural good?
 2. What are those goods?
 3. Are people's lives made better or worse on the whole by what I do?
 4. Does my job place ask me to do things against God's design and desire?
 5. Does my job put me in a spot where I am tempted to compromise God's Word?
-

03

ENDURING WORK:

A. We will spend _____ working with people forming a beautiful and _____ civilization.

Revelation 21:23-26:

"And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations."

B. Our _____ in this life will contribute to what will be taken into _____.

2 Peter 3:10:

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.”

- That which _____ the glory of God will be taken into eternity, and that which does not will be done away with.

Revelation 21:27:

“But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

“*Every faithful act of service, every honest labor to make the world a better place, which seemed to have been forever lost and forgotten in the rubble of history, will be seen on that day [at the final resurrection] to have contributed to the perfect fellowship of God’s kingdom...All who committed their work in faithfulness to God will be by Him raised up to share in the new age, and will find that their labor was not lost, but that it has found its place in the completed kingdom.*” - LESSLIE NEWBIGIN

- We will be personally rewarded in eternity for the good works we did in this life.

1 Corinthians 3:13-14:

“...each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.”

- What you do _____, so make your work _____!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was your most favorite job? Tell the men at your table why you enjoyed it.
2. Our work is meant to serve God's purposes more than our own. Think about the implications of this in our workplaces. How would God go about doing your job? What values would God bring to it? What products would God make? Which people would God serve? What standards would God use? In what ways, as an image-bearer of God, should your work display God?
3. In what ways has work [*maybe your work*] been affected by the fall? Talk about the impact with the men at your table.

YOUR BETTERMAN REFLECTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: Have you ever taken part in work that was wasteful, dishonest, or destructive? What made it so? How does the Gospel eliminate or redeem work that is wasteful, dishonest, or destructive? Write your answer in the space below!



MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: WORK & FAITH

AN INVITATION

Before coming back for Session 2, we invite you to spend some extended time with your table group members this week, talking about “*work and faith*” with one another.

Today, your table leaders will help you schedule a meeting time. This gathering is a unique opportunity to strengthen your table relationships and add depth and context to your future weekly BetterMan discussions.

WHEN YOU MEET

- Have your gathering in a private, comfortable, undisturbed setting. Provide light refreshments. A table leader’s home is an excellent option for this gathering.
- Allow at least two and a half hours for this gathering.
- Your table leaders will lead you through this time together.
- This is a time for everyone to have the opportunity to talk about his vocational journey. Each person will have up to 15 minutes to share. (Table leaders will keep time and give you a “heads up” when you need to begin wrapping up your story after 14 minutes.)
- To help prepare you for sharing your story, you will be given 5 minutes at the beginning of the gathering to write down your thoughts and answers under the three categories listed on the following page. You can prepare to share your story in advance by writing down your answers before you get there. These written reflections will help to focus and guide you as you share your story with your table-mates.
- Table leaders will share their stories first. After everyone has shared his story, take a few minutes for the group to reflect and comment on what they’ve just heard. What stood out in these stories? Did any common themes emerge? What was most impactful?
- Enjoy this unique time together!

MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: WORK & FAITH

- Briefly share about your first job. What was your view of work then?
Where do you work now? How do you view your work now?

- Briefly share about the kind of work that brings you alive. Do you feel
that way about the work you do now? Explain.

- Who has helped shape and inform your views and thoughts about work?
In what ways has this *"informing"* been helpful? In what ways has it been
harmful?

SESSION 2



GOSPEL-DRIVEN WORK



GOSPEL-DRIVEN WORK

01

GOSPEL WORK

A. As Christians, Jesus' _____ greatly impacts our work.

- Jesus' work was a _____ work.
- In what theologians call His *active obedience*, Jesus lived a perfect life, fulfilling the law of God by perfectly obeying God and doing all that God called Him to do. His *active obedience* made Jesus the only worthy substitute.

1 John 3:5:

"... in Him there is no sin."

- Jesus' *active obedience* is met by what theologians call His *passive obedience*: Jesus' work on the cross. On the cross Jesus died, suffering the penalty that our sin deserved so that we could be made right with God.

1 Peter 3:18:

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God..."



- B. Jesus' _____ was to live a righteous life and die a sinner's _____, so that we wouldn't have to.

2 Corinthians 5:21:

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

- If we trust in Jesus' work, we are _____ by His work, not by our work.

“ The grounds of your justification are the perfect works of Jesus Christ.
We're saved by works, but they're not our own.” - RC SPROUL

“ My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood.
When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh may I then in Him be found.
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.”

- THE SOLID ROCK

- C. There are two potentially destructive forces behind our work:

1. _____—the process of over-identifying with our work.
 2. _____—the process of under-identifying with our work.
- These forces manifest themselves in three ways: success, failure, and boredom.
 - Absent the gospel, success at work can go to our _____, filling us with pride and a false sense of security.

Obadiah 3:

“The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to the ground?’”

“*A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.*”

- C.S. LEWIS, *MERE CHRISTIANITY*

“*Idols of comfort and pleasure can make it impossible for a person to work hard as is necessary to have a faithful and fruitful career. Idols of power and approval, on the other hand, can lead us to overwork or to be ruthless and imbalanced in our work practices.*”

- TIM KELLER

- Absent the gospel, failure at work can go to our hearts, leading to frustration, discouragement, and _____.
- Absent the gospel, boredom at work can make us productive at all the _____ things.

2 Thessalonians 3:11:

“For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.”

D. Missing the gospel, our work can become our _____.

- What we do, and how well we do it, becomes who we are. This is called the *work-as-identity syndrome*.

- The _____ frees us from the work-as-identity syndrome.
- The gospel reminds us that God is less concerned with what we are _____, and more concerned with who we are _____.
- Those that have trusted in the Gospel work _____ their identity, not _____ their identity.

“When I made writing who I was, it was warping. It was conducive to depravity, and I mean the old Calvinist kind. When good writing was my only goal, I made the quality of my work the measure of my work... I couldn't tell whether something I wrote was good or bad because I needed it to be good to be sane.”

- NEW YORK TIMES WRITER BENJAMIN NUGENT

“The gospel frees us from the relentless pressure of having to prove ourselves and secure our identity through work, for we are already proven and secure.”

- TIM KELLER

02

GOSPEL'S IMPACT ON WORK

The _____ greatly impacts our work in three ways:

1. We have a new boss.
2. Our work has a new bent.
3. We have new benefits.

A. Trusting in King Jesus, we have a new _____.

Ephesians 1:20-21:

“...that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

- The Bible is clear; Jesus is _____ and _____ of our lives...

Philippians 2:9-11:

“Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Romans 14:8-9:

“For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.”

- This means that Jesus is the ruler, the boss, and the master of your whole life. He is not Lord of some of your life; He is Lord of all of your life, whether you acknowledge Him or not.

“*If Jesus is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all.*”

- S. M. ZWEMER



B. All areas of your life must come under Jesus' lordship; this includes your

_____.

- On average, you will spend _____ hours of your life at work [more than 1/3 of your life].
- Your work is no longer your own, for your _____. Your work is His work, for His _____. Your work has a new direction.

03

NEW BENT

A. Because we are working for the Lord, our work has a _____.

- Like an employee relying on a manager to train you well for the job, you need to rely on God's teaching [His Word] for your success.

B. Commit your work to God, and depend on _____.

- Part of how God wants us to work is by depending on Him for help.
- The _____ and _____ way we can work for the Lord, is to commit our work to Him, and depend on Him throughout the process!

Psalm 37:5-6:

"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteous as the light, and your justice as the noonday."

- You commit your work to the Lord by...
 1. _____ continually.
 2. _____ your plans to Him.
 3. _____ seeking His guidance through His Word.
- Working in a way that honors God is not always easy for us in our human weakness. But the more we depend on God, on His Word and prayer, the better workers we become.

C. Work with _____.

- Love leads us to be _____ to our co-workers.
- Love helps us to be patient with others and to treat everyone with respect.
- Even things like producing a quality product and giving great customer service are an act of _____.

1 Corinthians 13:13:

“... faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

D. Work with joy on your face and peace in your heart.

- When we work _____, without _____, we give glory to God and spread joy to those around us.



“ I just like to smile! Smiling’s my favorite.” - BUDDY THE ELF

Psalm 118:24:

“This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

- Striving to be a _____ in the workplace—slow to anger, quick to listen—is a great way to work with joy on your face and peace in your heart.
- Strive to maintain agreeable _____ with managers, coworkers, and customers.
- What does a joyful, peaceful worker look like?
 1. Sometimes, it means keeping our opinions to ourselves and responding with kindness even when others are unkind.
 2. Sometimes, it looks like avoiding controversial topics that could lead to an argument.
 3. Sometimes, it means being flexible and pragmatic in order to reach a solution that benefits everyone involved.

Matthew 5:9:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Romans 12:18:

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

04

NEW BENEFITS

A. God doesn't need any of us to do anything for Him. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient.

- God grants us the _____ of joining Him in the work of building up His Kingdom. In doing so we become more like Him.

1 Corinthians 3:9:

"For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building."

- As we strive to work for God, we reap certain _____.

B. Our faith _____.

- Working for the Lord is not easy. Sooner or later, you'll experience hardships and trials.
- The trials you face are an opportunity to draw closer to God and _____ your faith.

1 Peter 1:6-7:

"In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

“ Tough times don't last... but tough folks do...” - BJ BARHAM

C. We _____ the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23:

“As Christians, we are to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit which is “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control...”

- As we work for the Lord, the Holy Spirit works in us to exhibit the fruit of His _____.

“ *The fruit of the Spirit is not push, drive, climb, grasp and trample. Life is more than a climb to the top of the heap.*”

- RICHARD J. FOSTER

D. We learn _____.

- We are repeatedly told in the Bible that the one who endures to the end will be _____. (Matthew 24:13).
- Working for the Lord teaches us endurance which helps us to develop our _____ and endure to the end.

“ *Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.*” - BABE RUTH

“ *You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.*” - MICHAEL SCOTT

“ *You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward.*” - ROCKY BALBOA

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which danger are you most prone to in your work: *Idolatry* or *Idleness*? Why do you think that is? Explain.
2. Tell the men at your table 2-3 ways in which Jesus' work has impacted/influenced your work.
3. Because of Jesus' work in life and death, salvation is possible for all who call upon His name. Have you experienced the benefits of Jesus' Gospel work? If so, in what ways?

YOUR BETTERMAN REFLECTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What has been your main idol(s) concerning your work? Why is this dangerous and how does the gospel destroy your idol(s)? Write your answer in the space below!

SESSION 3



HONORING GOD IN OUR WORK



HONORING GOD IN OUR WORK

01

OUR “WHY” MATTERS DEEPLY

A. Godly _____ is at the heart of all good work.

- Our work is bound up in our “_____.” God is deeply interested in why we do what we do.
- Ambition is not bad. In fact, ambition is essential because God is honored by hard work.

Colossians 3:17:

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Colossians 3:23:

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...”

B. Laziness is _____ and _____.

“... the opposite of ambition is not humility; it is sloth, passivity, timidity, and complacency.”

- JAMES K. A. SMITH, *ON THE ROAD WITH ST. AUGUSTINE*

Proverbs 18:9:

“Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.”

Proverbs 13:4:

“The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied.”



- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, almost 40% of the available working age population in the United States is not working.

[Source: https://ycharts.com/indicators/labor_force_participation_rate]

- In 1950 over 85% of working age men were actively working. Currently, that number is below 65%. [Source: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2002/05/art2full.pdf>]

C. Selfish ambition is rooted in the wrong _____.

- _____ and _____ turn ambition into relational chaos in our work environments.

James 3:16:

“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

- _____ turns ambition into self-exaltation and self-seeking.

Philippians 2:3:

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

- _____ turns ambition into self-indulgence and self-destruction.

1 Timothy 6:9:

“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.”

02

DILIGENCE IS AT THE HEART OF ALL GOOD WORK

A. _____ is what occurs when we responsibly use the gifts and talents God gives us to accomplish the work we have to do.

- Paul models diligence when he speaks of his tireless work in trying to minister to the Colossians. Paul says in **Colossians 1:29**:

“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”

B. A diligent man _____ and _____ for his work.

Proverbs 21:5:

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” - ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.”
- YOGI BERRA

- This means that a diligent man does practical things like:
 - Employ a _____
 - Enhance his skills and qualifications through education and training
 - Establish reasonable but stretching goals and objectives
 - Engage in relationships that make him more effective in his work

- The diligent man is never looking for a _____, rather he is prepared for the long haul.

Ecclesiastes 9:10:

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might...”

- C.** A diligent man minds his own business and does his _____.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12:

“For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.”

- D.** A diligent man is often noted for his work and promoted in his _____.

Proverbs 12:24:

“The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor.”

Proverbs 22:29:

“Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.”



- Daniel and Joseph are great biblical examples of diligence and skill that lead to advancement:

Daniel 5:12:

“...because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.”

Daniel 6:3:

“Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.”

Genesis 39:2-4:

“The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.”

03

FAITHFULNESS IS AT THE HEART OF ALL GOOD WORK

A. Faithfulness in your work follows the following formula: _____ x _____.

- Diligence focuses on working hard during any given task.

- Faithfulness is consistently working hard through the course of the task.

B. _____ and _____ are key ingredients in *process-focused* work.

- Process-focused work helps us stay the _____ and be patient for results.

Proverbs 13:11:

“Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”

- Process-focused work helps us release expectations and _____ the Lord.

“ We make the biggest difference when we stop calculating and surrender to an inspired indifference to results.. Perhaps we can change the world when we stop trying to do so and simply offer what we have.”

- DANIEL DORIANI, *WORK THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE*, 89

- Process-focused work is work done before an audience of One, namely, _____.

“ We who live before the Audience of One can say to the world: ‘I have only one audience. Before you I have nothing to prove, nothing to gain, nothing to lose.’” - OS GUINNESS, *THE CALL*

“ Nothing is more dangerous...than to live in the temperamental atmosphere of a Gallup Poll – always feeling one’s pulse and taking one’s temperature.” - WINSTON CHURCHILL

C. Faithfulness in your work faces five deterrents that you must be aware of and be prepared to deal with:

1. _____

- To be faithful you have to be willing to stay the course and not waver.

Proverbs 12:11:

“Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.”

“ *The successful warrior is the average man, with laser-like focus.*”

- BRUCE LEE

2. _____

- To be faithful you can't cut _____ and be impatient.

Proverbs 28:20:

“A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.”

3. _____

- To be faithful you have to own the fact that you _____
God's resources.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2:

“This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”

“ *God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with.*” - BILLY GRAHAM

4. _____

- To be faithful you cannot see small tasks as “_____” or “_____.”

Luke 16:10:

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much”

5. _____

- To be faithful you need to see the grand scheme. You need to see how your work plays into the bigger picture of your life and the lives of others.

1 Corinthians 15:58:

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

04

INTEGRITY IS AT THE HEART OF ALL GOOD WORK

A. Integrity is possessing a wholeness of character.

- Integrity is the glue that holds all the good _____ of our lives together.
- Integrity is what makes us the kind of person that can be trusted with _____.

“... only constant students of Jesus will be given adequate power to fulfill their calling to be God’s person for their time and their place in this world. They are the only ones who develop the character which makes it safe to have such power.” - DALLAS WILLARD, *THE GREAT OMISSION*, 17

B. Integrity shows itself in _____ and _____
in the workplace.

Proverbs 11:1:

“A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.”

Proverbs 11:3:

“The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.”

C. A man of integrity doesn’t have to watch out for his own honor at work. He knows that God takes care of him.

Psalms 41:11-12:

“By this I know that you delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me. But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever.”

- Character matters _____. A lack of integrity will destroy all the work you, as a man, have attempted to accomplish.

“When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when _____ is lost, all is lost.” - BILLY GRAHAM

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your why? Tell the men at your table why you do what you do.
2. What does healthy ambition in the workplace look like? What does unhealthy ambition look like? Explain.
3. Who in your life has modeled faithfulness in their work? Name 2-3 traits that make them faithful.
4. Who in your life has modeled integrity in their work? What does a man of integrity look like? Explain.

YOUR BETTERMAN REFLECTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: How can you be more faithful in your work? What steps can you start taking today? Be specific and write your answer in the space below!



SESSION 4



THE PRIVILEGE OF WORK



THE PRIVILEGE OF WORK

01

WORK IS A PRIVILEGE BECAUSE WORK IS GOD-ORDAINED

- A. All well-done work that _____ the good of humanity pleases God.

“All work done well and for God’s glory is Christian work.”

- DOROTHY SAYERS

“God doesn’t need your good works, but your neighbor does...”

- MARTIN LUTHER

- All work, even the most menial tasks, has great dignity.

“The poorest ploughman is in Christ equal with the greatest prince that is.” - HUGH LATIMER

“There is no work, however vile or sordid, that does not glisten before God.” - JOHN CALVIN

- B. The Reformation of the 16th Century sought to tear down the _____ / _____ divide.

- The sacred/secular divide makes a _____ between the spiritual parts of our lives (e.g., praying, fasting, Bible reading, going to church) and the rest of our lives (e.g., work, chores, rest, fun, etc...).

- Too many of us have bought into the idea of compartmentalization—we disconnect our faith from our work.

Self Evaluation:

- Do you believe that Sunday is more significant than Monday through Saturday?
 - Do you think the only work worth doing happens in a church or ministry setting?
 - Do you see a contrast in your life between the things you do for God and the things you do everywhere else?
- Answering yes to any of these questions likely means you've bought into the sacred/secular divide.

“What you do in your house is worth as much as if you did it up in heaven for our Lord God. We should accustom ourselves to think of our position and work as sacred and well-pleasing to God, not on account of the position and work, but on account of the word and faith from which the obedience and the work flow.” - MARTIN LUTHER

- C.** In our work, we are God's managers, sustaining and carrying out His plan for the world.

Ephesians 2:10:

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

“Work is a blessing. God has so arranged the world that work is necessary, and He gives us hands and strength to do it. The enjoyment of leisure would be nothing if we had only leisure. It is the joy of work well done that enables us to enjoy rest, just as it is the experiences of hunger and thirst that make food and drink such pleasures.” - ELISABETH ELLIOT

- The garden needed someone to work it. _____ are that “someone.”

02

ALL GOOD WORK IS MEANINGFUL...

A. Meaningful work is something we all _____.

- Research has shown meaningfulness to be more important than any other aspect of work, including pay, opportunities for promotion, and working conditions.
- Meaningful work can be highly motivational, leading to improved performance, commitment, and satisfaction.

“Deprived of meaningful work, men and women lose their reason for existence; they go stark, raving mad.” - FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY

- How do we find _____ in our work?

B. Work is meaningful because _____ says it is.

- God says our work is important, and God desires our best in all of life, that we would present everything to Him in order to serve Him.

- In Colossians 3:23 Paul says, “*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...*”
- When we work we are serving the Lord. Because we are serving the Lord, our work has value—it doesn’t need some other means outside itself. God’s _____ gives our _____ value.

C. Our work is meaningful because we are to _____ it to the Lord.

- All work is _____ work that is offered to the Lord.
- Whether you are running a business or leading a mega-church, you are to honor God in what you do.
- It’s not the job itself that is holy; it is offering it to God as service that makes it holy.

03

ALL GOOD WORK IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF GOD’S CREATION

A. God created and uses your work to sustain His creation and _____ in His purposes.





- We were designed to participate in God's work of developing, maintaining, and _____ our culture and communities.
- Our work is to benefit the society in which we live and work.

“ *The business of business is to serve the world.*” - JEFF VANDUZER

B. God also calls us to be _____.

- In our lives and work, we are called to use our gifts and create new things to enhance others' lives.
- Made in God's image, we use our creativity—our gifts and abilities—to develop the potential of God's creation.
- God will not discard creation; he will restore it. Al Wolters writes, “*God does not make junk, and he does not junk what he has made.*”
- God will use you and your work as a means of life change and _____.

“ *The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet...*” - FREDERICK BUECHNER

C. Many in the church today have lost influence in the world because they've lost _____ in the world that God created.

- As Christians we should not only be interested in _____. We should be interested in everything!

“As image-bearer of God, man possesses the possibility both to create something beautiful and to delight in it. . . . The world of sounds, the world of forms, the world of tints, and the world of poetic ideas, can have no other source than God; and it is our privilege as bearers of his image, to have a perception of this beautiful world, artistically to reproduce, and humanly to enjoy it.” - ABRAHAM KUYPER; *CALVINISM*, 142, 156-157

- God gives us all creative gifts, far beyond what you normally think of as creative: painting, sculpture, singing, drawing, writing, music, dance, design, photography, and so on.
- All human endeavor involves creative gifts and abilities, from pouring concrete to performing open heart surgery; from the simple setting of the dinner table to the building of a downtown skyscraper.

D. Every person created in the image of God is a _____ person. Anytime you apply the knowledge, ability, and skill that God has given you, you are being creative.

“Passing a construction site, a pedestrian asked three bricklayers what they were doing. The first said that he was earning a living to feed and clothe his family. The second said, ‘I’m throwing these bricks together to build a wall.’ The third responded, ‘I am helping create a cathedral for the glory and worship of God.’”

- What a difference your perspective makes in giving meaning to your work!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The sacred/secular divide is a real thing. How has this divide affected the way you look at your work? How will learning that *all good work is holy* affect your work moving forward? Explain.
2. What is meaningful work? What makes work meaningful? Do you find meaning in your work? Why or why not?
3. It was said, “*God will use you and your work as a means of life change and community restoration.*” How is God using you and your work to impact your community? Explain.

YOUR BETTERMAN REFLECTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: Where have you seen the secular/sacred divide play out in your work? In your life? What steps can you take to break down those barriers? Write your answers in the space below!



SESSION 5



OUR RESPONSE TO WORK





OUR RESPONSE TO WORK

01

GOD IS THE OWNER

A. God is the creator and sustainer of all things. Because He created all things, He owns all things.

Psalms 24:1:

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein...”

Psalms 50:10:

“For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.”

Exodus 19:5:

“...for all the earth is mine...”

Deuteronomy 10:14:

“Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that is in it.”

Job 41:11:

“...Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.”

1 Corinthians 6:19:

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own...”

1 Corinthians 7:23:

“You were bought with a price...”

1 Timothy 6:7:

“for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.”

- Since God owns everything, you own _____.
- All of us have heard something similar to this statement, *“What I have, I have worked for and earned! I did not get any gifts or handouts... all this was my work... my HARD work!”*
- We need to remember **Deuteronomy 8:17-18:**

“Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth...”
- You worked hard. You saved diligently. You put in some very long hours. Well done! But remember that God, your creator, gave you the ability, thinking, processing, talent, and strength to get you to where you are today, to make the money you have.

02

WE ARE STEWARDS

A. We are not called to be _____. We are called to be _____.

“When the Possessor of heaven and earth brought you into being, and placed you in this world, he placed you here not as a proprietor, but a steward.” - JOHN WESLEY

- There are two types of stewards: good stewards and bad stewards.
- Good stewardship is managing God's _____ in God's _____, for God's purposes, and always for God's glory.

B. We begin life with our hands wide open and nothing in them. As we mature, by the grace of God, He allows certain things to be placed into our possession.

- A good steward lives with open hands. We dare not think of gripping the things God entrusts to us. We hold everything loosely.

“The one principle that surrounds everything else is that of stewardship; that we are the managers of everything that God has given us.”

- LARRY BURKETT

- A good steward not only maintains what God entrusts to us, he also _____ them wisely.

“Investing should be more like watching paint dry or watching grass grow. If you want excitement, take \$800 and go to Las Vegas.”

- PAUL SAMUELSON

- If God wants to remove His gifts from us, it is His sovereign right.





C. So, a _____ steward can be summed up as:

- One who recognizes that God owns everything.
 - One who _____ manages resources according to biblical principles.
 - One who intentionally multiplies resources and uses them for God's glory.
 - One who gives cheerfully, saves consistently, invests wisely, and avoids debt.
 - One who works _____ as unto the Lord.
-

03

INCREASING RESPONSIBILITY

A. Hard work and diligence pay off.

- The greatest ability that you can have is _____.
- When people can count on you to do what they need you to do or what you have promised to do, they will take interest in your services and abilities.
- Dependability, _____, and diligence in doing a good job cannot go ignored for long. Often, these traits will lead to a promotion.
- Dependability, _____, and diligence are traits important to employers, but they are also important to God. If you prove to be consistently dependable, disciplined, and diligent, don't be surprised when you are "promoted" by God.

- B.** Your faithfulness with what God has entrusted to you will determine the responsibilities He rewards you with, both in this life and the life to come.

“With great power comes great responsibility.” - SPIDERMAN

- Those who pursue God’s work God’s _____, will eventually experience God’s _____.
- The world’s success is always more money. Kingdom success is about becoming more like Jesus.
- Kingdom success could look like more financial rewards, but it could also look like:
 - Greater peace and contentment in life.
 - More opportunities to share our faith with others.
 - Greater influence.

1 Chronicles 4:10:

“Jabez called upon the God of Israel, saying, ‘Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from harm so that it might not bring me pain!’ And God granted what he asked.”

- C.** Remember, _____ don’t determine faithfulness, _____ does.

Luke 16:10:

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much”

- It is a man's character that affects the way he handles responsibility.
- Men of strong character are _____ stewards, and their reward will be great.

Matthew 25:21:

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'"

04

MANAGING THE INCREASE

- A.** Remember, God owns everything. You are His steward. J.C. Ryle puts it so comprehensively:

“ Our gifts, our influence, our money, our knowledge, our health, our strength, our time, our senses, our reason, our intellect, our memory, our affections, our privileges as members of Christ's Church, our advantages as possessors of the Bible, all of these are talents. All of these are endowments given to us by God. From whence came these things. There is only one answer to that question. All that we have is alone from God. We are God's stewards.”

- If and when God blesses you for your hard work, it is not only for your benefit. God _____ you so that you can be a _____ to others.

“The way to bless God is to bless someone He loves. Bless someone in need.” - JAMES ROBINSON

“When God blesses you financially, don't raise your standard of living. Raise your standard of giving.” - MARK BATTERSON

Hebrews 13:16:

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

- B.** The end goal in life is not a successful career that leads to a relaxing retirement. The end goal is to glorify God by loving Him and serving others.

Luke 12:16-21:

“And he told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, “What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?” And he said, “I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’” But God said to him, “Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.’”





Proverbs 11:24-26:

“One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched; and one who waters will himself be watered. The people curse him who holds back grain, but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.”

- A good steward shares his faith, his _____, and his gifts with others.
- Success has never been an issue of how much; it has always been a matter of _____.

C. Stewardship is a cycle of _____ and giving, resting and working, praying and doing.

- Perhaps the question isn't, *"How much should I give?"* Perhaps the question is, *"How much should I keep?"*.
 - How will you respond to your financial increase?
-

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ownership and stewardship are mindsets. How does *owning* something differ from being a steward *over* something? Explain.
2. In what ways has God prospered you in your career/at work? What was your response? Explain.
3. It was said, "*Stewardship is a cycle of receiving and giving, resting and working, praying and doing.*" What does this cycle look like in your life? How should it look?

YOUR BETTERMAN REFLECTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: The Lord has blessed you, far more than you need or deserve. What is one step you can take toward greater generosity in your life. Write your answer in the space below and then do it!



ANSWER KEY

SESSION 1: GODLY WORK

1. Our Work Is from God

- A. called
 - excel
 - vocational stewardship
- B. worker
 - working
 - work
 - work
- C. designed
 - ruling, creation
 - dignity

2. Culture-Shapers

- A.
- B. work
 - gifted, fueled
 - grace
- C.
 - sin
 - fallen
 - evil
 1. Wasteful
 2. Dishonest
 3. Destructive

3. Enduring Work

- A. eternity, holy
- B. works, eternity
 - exalts
 - matters, count

SESSION 2: GOSPEL-DRIVEN WORK

1. Gospel Work

- A. work
 - perfect
- B. work, death
 - saved
- C.
 1. Idolatry
 2. Idleness
 - head
 - resignation
 - wrong
- D. identity
 - gospel
 - doing, becoming
 - from, for

2. Gospel's Impact On Work

- Gospel
- A. boss
 - Savior, Lord
- B. work
 - 90,000
 - glory, glory

ANSWER KEY

3. New Bent

- A. new bent
- B. Him
 - first, foremost
 - 1. Praying
 2. Entrusting
 3. Daily
- C. love
 - kind
 - love
- D.
 - cheerfully, complaining
 - peacemaker
 - relationships

4. New Benefits

- A.
 - privilege
 - benefits
- B. increases
 - increase
- C. cultivate
 - spirit
- D. perseverance
 - saved
 - character

SESSION 3: HONORING GOD IN OUR WORK

1. Our “Why” Matters Deeply

- A. ambition
 - why
- B. destructive, unprofitable
- C. values
 - Comparison, jealousy
 - Pride
 - Greed

2. Diligence Is at the Heart of All Good Work

- A. Diligence
- B. plans, prepares
 - - calendar
 - shortcut
- C. job
- D. work

3. Faithfulness Is at the Heart of All Good Work

- A. DILIGENCE, TIME
- B. Faithfulness, commitment
 - course
 - trust
 - God
- C.
 1. Distraction
 2. Haste
 - corners
 3. Waste
 - steward

ANSWER KEY

- 4. Triviality
 - menial, insignificant
- 5. Short Sighted

4. Integrity Is at the Heart of All Good Work

- A.
 - attributes
 - responsibility
- B. honesty, consistency
- C.
 - deeply
 - character

SESSION 4: THE PRIVILEGE OF WORK

1. Work Is a Privilege Because Work Is God-Ordained

- A. serves
- B. sacred, secular
 - distinction
- C.
 - You

2. All Good Work Is Meaningful...

- A. want
 - meaning
- B. God
 - Word, work
- C. offer
 - holy

3. All Good Work Is for the Benefit of God's Creation

- A. participate
 - enhancing
- B. creative
 - community restoration.
- C. interest
 - Christianity
- D. creative

SESSION 5: OUR RESPONSE TO WORK

1. God Is the Owner

- A.
 - nothing

2. We Are Stewards

- A. owners, stewards
 - treasures, way,
- B.
 - invests
- C. good
 - faithfully
 - diligently

3. Increasing Responsibility

- A.
 - dependability
 - discipline
 - discipline
- B.
 - way, success

ANSWER KEY

- C. circumstances, character
 - faithful

4. Managing the Increase

- A.
 - blesses, blessing
- B.
 - life
 - faithfulness
- C. receiving

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Leader Survey



Attendee Survey



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