



**Sermon Series:** More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others

**To be used with Session 3:** David

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** A Christian Work Ethic

**Scripture:** Colossians 3:22-25

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the Bible study “David” this sermon builds upon today’s Bible study by examining how a follower of Christ should model work ethic to others. David was challenged by Saul in the Old Testament, yet he did not stop faithfully fulfilling his duty. We too may be in a difficult work environment, but this should not stop us either.

**Introduction:** Try to start the sermon with a story of someone you know who faithfully maintained a consistent work ethic. It may have been a parent or grandparent. It may have been someone you know that started at the bottom and is now in the corner office. Tell the congregation the impact that this person had on you. If the person was/is a follower of Jesus, talk about what they were modeling for you. The goal of today’s sermon is to learn that our place of work is an opportunity to serve the Lord and leave an impression for those around us.

**1. We are to be consistent in our work (Col. 3:22).**

We have all most likely encountered someone who starts working hard when the boss arrives. The drive behind the sudden burst of energy is to get the boss’ attention in the hopes of being noticed and earning accolades. If we are honest, we do not care for folks like this. The Lord does not want us to model this type of behavior either. Paul told the church at Colossae not to work only when others are watching and thereby be a people pleaser.

Instead, a follower of Jesus is to work wholeheartedly while fearing the Lord. To work wholeheartedly means to give complete effort to the task at hand. It should be noted that this is something that comes from the heart and not just an action. When studying Scripture, we can discern that the heart represents the core of one’s being. When we are working, we are to do so with our whole heart and not halfway. We do this out of fear of the Lord. This fear is not one of cowering in the corner expecting Him to chastise us. Instead, it is a feeling of reverence and respecting knowing that He has provided our work as a means of providing for our needs.

**2. We are serving the Lord and not man (Col. 3:23-24).**

What are some of the professions in the congregation this morning? We have teachers, stay at home moms, corporate executives, blue & white collar, and various other professionals. According to this passage, our professions are an opportunity to serve the Lord. Paul told the

**Lifeway**

church that whatever profession they had, they were to serve from the heart as unto the Lord. If we as a church decided to live out this command, would others notice? I think we would say yes. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount that we are to be salt and light in a dark and dying world (Matt. 5:13-14). Here is another example of how we can fill this out.

As we serve the Lord in our places of employment, we can trust that we will receive the reward of an inheritance. We need to understand two truths about this passage. First, it is written as a statement of fact. Paul did not say, we may receive a reward. Instead, he said we “will receive the reward”. Second, the reward is an inheritance, and this has future implications. This too should encourage us as it is pointing to eternity. If we receive a reward at work of a watch, it will eventually stop working. If, however, our reward is eternal, then it will last for eternity. The key to understanding this is found in trusting in God’s faithfulness and goodness to do what He says He will do.

### **3. The Lord is aware of our situation (Col. 3:25).**

If we are honest, we want someone to notice our work ethic. Even if we are the boss, we still want others to see our work ethic and be challenged to do the same. The encouragement from this passage is that God notices and is going to make things right. We know this to be true because the “wrongdoer will be paid back”. If God is able to see the wrongdoer, then He is able to see us serving Him wholeheartedly as an act of worship. When we understand this, then we are motivated to keep serving while trusting in the future reward.

A second means of encouragement from this passage is that God is going to make things right in that the wrongdoers will be paid back. This is yet another opportunity to trust in God’s goodness. We have a sense of fairness built within us and we do not think it is fair when those with poor work ethic receive praise and we do not. God is aware and He is going to make it right. Furthermore, Paul did not indicate to the believers that God needed any help in making things right and He still does not need our help today. Our calling is not to address the poor work ethic around us, but rather to serve the Lord and trust Him.

**Conclusion:** One of the blessings as a pastor is to see God’s children worship Him on Sunday morning. We gather in His house as brothers and sisters to praise Him and thank Him for His goodness. A truth that we can learn from today’s message is that the church building is not the only place in which we can worship God. We can worship Him when we serve Him wholeheartedly in our work and understand that we can worship Him throughout the week. If we as His church understand and apply this, we are fulfilling Jesus’ command to be salt and light and thereby influence those around us.

### **Author Bio**

*Tod Tanner has degrees from Texas A&M University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has pastored churches in Texas and Tennessee. He and his family reside in Wartrace, TN and he is serving as the Executive Vice President of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation.*

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