

## The Gospel at Work (part 2) – Redefining Work

Colossians 3:22-4:1

### Intro

We're looking at work through the lens of Scripture, specifically through the lens of the gospel. And here's what we're seeing: All work (paid and unpaid, in and out of the home), all work, is a gift from God for our good and his glory. When we begin to see our work through the gospel, suddenly it gives us a whole new sense meaning and purpose.

Today I want to talk to you about redefining our work. We tend to see work as everything or nothing, in other words we either derive our self-worth, identity, and ultimate meaning from our work or we view it as a necessary evil. In the end, both will make you miserable. I want to talk to you about a third way... From the Scripture, I want us to redefine the way we think about work. I want us to think about our work as worship.

If you're like me, ordinarily, I think of worship as something I do when I'm not working. But what I'm talking about is offering up our work itself, whether your job is a doctor saving lives or you are a stay at home mom (which is like saving lives on steroids), I want us to think of our work itself as an act of worship.

Read Colossians

### Who you work for?

Today I have one major point. When you think about redefining work, there's one factor that changes everything (a transformative factor), and that's who you work for...

Colossians – something revolutionary about our work (structure of Paul's epistles – gospel/implications)

### ***We work for king Jesus***

Not ourselves – main way to be miserable (**the rock**)

Not your boss

Not mainly for your family

To help us get our minds around offering our work to God as worship, the Bible gives us a really helpful paradigm...

Matthew 22:37-40 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

See and think about all our work as an act of love for God

Secondly as an act of love for others

Do you see how countercultural and counterintuitive this is... Right now, your mind is racing

This is where the gospel is key – God has so loved us, that he was moved by his love to serve us, now for all who are in Christ, his radical love for us sets us free, not to self destructively focus on ourselves in our work, but focus all our energy on loving God and loving others.

### ***Implications for loving God***

1. Dignity of all work (the way the world defines dignity – status (Dr., lawyer), income

3:24 “You are serving the Lord Christ.”

Because of who we work for even the most mundane of tasks take on great meaning

Getting a pen for a Judge – Is there any errand that Christ can assign you that is below you?

\* “knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward”

2. Quality of our work – imaging forth God and his glory through our work (eliminates shoddy work)

3. Integrity of our work – Not by way of eye-service... but with sincerity of heart

In your specific line of work, what are the short cuts, where are the temptations to cheat...

\*If the quality of our work is sub par, or if we lack integrity of our work, we won't have a credible witness to the gospel. I'm not saying God can't work with imperfect people (that's our only hope)... but if you claim to be a Christian in the workplace and you don't have high standards for your own work, you might be doing more harm to the gospel than you are doing good. If your work was the doorway that was going to give you an opportunity to share the gospel, would anyone listen?

4. Passion for your work. – 3:23 “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...

Again, it's not so much the task that inspires you, but it's who you work for...

### ***Implications for loving and serving others through our work***

This is a revolutionary concept. In fact, if there is no God then we should be selfish in our work. It's survival of the fittest. In a secular construct, even the good that we do for others is a way of doing good for ourselves. Only because the gospel is true can you go to work tomorrow, and when you clock in, say, “My main job here today is to love the people around me.”

Who are your neighbors at work?

1. Boss – someone God has put in your life for you to serve (even if your boss is bad).

What inspires me is when I see the work of people I supervise, and I think, “Man, I want to be more like her or him.” Consider your boss as an object of God’s love that God wants to show his love to through you.

If you are the boss... here’s something revolutionary, If you’re in a position of leadership you have such a platform to live and love like Jesus by being a servant leader. Look at the people God has given to you as people to love and serve.

2. Coworkers – Look at your coworkers, through the gospel, not as competitors, or hurdles, or irritations, but as neighbors who are to be loved and served. I admit I struggle with this. If I love and serve my coworkers, then I’ll get the short end of the stick. Wherever you work, be a light. Be source of inspiration and joy. Every workplace has people who are either an emotional drain and downer on the work place or people who make the work place more pleasant.

My wife is the kind of person who, in the morning likes to open the blinds and let the sunshine in the house. There’s something radiant and refreshing about that. Be that kind of person. I’m not talking about being cheesy. Open the shades of your life and let the light of Christ shine through you to others.

3. Customers/Consumers – Love them through doing honest work, providing true service and quality. One of the challenges is for you to connect the dots between your work and how it blesses the creation around you. How does what you do fit into making the world a better place..

4. Family – This is the one we usually think of first. Even though our work is not primarily about providing for our families, it’s not less than that. Our vocations are an amazing way that God has given us to love our families. Providing for their needs, providing an example as a parent (my dad).

As a Christian parent – an example of someone who understands that their job is about Christ’s kingdom – so they approach their work everyday with a kingdom mindedness.

Exponential blessing of our work to others (and blessing of others’ work to us)

Sweeping the floor

### **Conclusion**

Our work is a gift of God for our good and his glory. It’s a means of grace God has given us to love him with all our hearts and our neighbors. There’s only one thing that can sever the root of our heart’s selfishness in our work. There’s only one thing that can set us free to use our work to love others instead of our selves and that’s the gospel.

***Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."***