

God in the Everyday

Part 1 - Work

Two approaches to work

1. Work as an idol
 - a. Expression – hours, cannot NOT respond, never present
 - b. Motivation – most typically money or prestige/power
 - c. Just remember, there are things better than gold and silver (16.16)
2. Work as an irritation
 - a. Expression – laziness, irresponsibility, myopic approach to work
 - b. Motivation – “have to,” no joy or purpose, no sense of character formation, greater good, service to neighbor
 - c. Just remember, sometimes it’s a pain but it’s worth it (14.4 Ox)

God gives work as a calling

- It’s not a curse – before fall, after return of Christ
 - Calling is a better motivation
 - How do we determine what ours is? Passion – Experiences – Gifts – Strengths
 - We have a way “we should go” – not everyone goes the same way or needs to
 - 22.6 – Way he *should* go (applied to marriage, parenting and joy that comes from seeing them succeed)
- No matter our work, we see God commanding diligence in it because it leads to fulfilment of our calling
- Diligence: persistent application and careful attention to one’s work
- If we work with diligence, how do we see God and meet God in our everyday life?

Character (6.6)

- Sluggard / wise
- Our character is both revealed and shaped by our diligence
 - 10.5 – the one who gathers in summer is a prudent son
- This isn’t just work, it’s soul work

Activity (6.7)

- The ant works without chief or officer – sees what needs to be done and does it
- This is a work ethic that produces even without supervision or accountability because they see the bigger picture and are releasing good in the world
- What does this look like – 12.11, 20.4, 28.19, 22.29
- Important especially for those who don’t love their jobs
- Important for people trying to find what they are to do

- Luther: “God is milking the cows through the hands of the milkmaid. At night, we pray our prayers for bread and in the morning the bakers arise and bake it. God doesn’t need our good works, but our neighbor does.”

Result (6.8)

- Not just good for single ant but good for colony – everyone benefits
- Diligence -> Generosity
 - Why? Because it doesn’t satisfy anyway (18.11 – a high wall in imagination)
 - Lets us honor Him with our firstfruits (3.9-10) – are you trustworthy?
- It’s better to bring something to the party than only attending
 - Ephesians 4.20-24, 28 – not an invitation to moralism, the result of transformation

Questions for Discussion

1. If you could do absolutely any job in the entire world, what would it be? Why?
2. In the sermon, we argued that God gives work as a calling. The four ingredients of calling (as Trent described it) are: passions, experiences, gifts, and strengths. Thinking about your spouse, kids, or another person close to you, how would you describe their calling? How do you think that person would describe yours? Broad terms like “a servant” aren’t as helpful as “a do-anything person who loves kids.”
3. Think of any job you have had and answer how diligence (or lack of it) shaped your character. What came out of that work environment?
4. Read Colossians 3.17 and 3.23-24. How does this shape the diligence of our work?
5. In the sermon, we argued that diligence leads to generosity. How have you seen this happen in your life or the lives of those around you? What motivates it? Read Proverbs 3.9-10. How does it instruct us to pursue generosity toward God and the Kingdom of God?