

Intro: I REALLY wanted the job working with the Safety Engineer the summer I was in Bible College and working on Dredge I was earning money for college...and the more I could make the better...and he worked 60-80 hours a week!
I was working as a deckhand...told the mate, "I want to transfer" he said...no you don't...he is AWFUL to work with I still remember what I told him... "For that much money...I can stand on my head for the next 6 weeks!"
I got the job...and it was the worst 6 weeks of my life! Miserable man to be around...Rattlesnake, Micro, Mosquito's
WORK CAN BE A BLESSING OR WORK CAN BE A CURSE!

Today I want to look at Work again. This time I want to examine what God has to say about Problems and Potentials of work

Remember where we are in our Series: Living UP in A DOWN World! We don't Fit! 1 Peter 1:1-3
We must get our priorities in order...live according to word of God, and not the culture around us!
Peter has been telling us HOW to do that: Live such good lives! 1Peter 2:11 Pg 858

Last week we said:

The WAY we work reflects on the Character of God and the Quality of our Relationship With Him! 1 Cor 10:31 Glory of God
5 Problem Areas With Work That We Need To Avoid.

- Work can DISTRACT you from Spending Time with Jesus. Luke 10:40
This is Martha, but it certainly isn't something that is limited to her! Many of us are WAY too much like her!
Distracted: Lit = *to be surrounded!* We would say she was overwhelmed! Every feel that way at work!
So much going on...work...life...kids...school...sports...that you feel like one more piece and you will collapse!
When that happens to us...what is usually one of if not the FIRST thing to go? Time with Christ!!! I'll do it later!

- Work can TEMPT You to Invest in Working for the Wrong Things. John 6:27
In this teaching Jesus elevates work to an entirely different and spiritual place for those that know Him
Work He says isn't about pursuing the things that will never last! Food, House, Vacation, Car, Boat, Latest Toy
We hear that call every single day of our lives. Something captures our eye...and our heart...and we sacrifice for it!
Mt 6:19-22 Jesus tells us just the opposite! *Don't store up treasures on earth...Don't let them capture heart, eye...*
Stay focused on Him!

Illus: I REGULARLY talk with husbands and wives who say. I am SO unhappy! My spouse, all about house, car, Vaca
I don't care about those things...they don't matter to me...I just want THEM!
But...their spouse is so focused on the things that will not last...that they sacrifice the things that will!

- Working in the Wrong Way DISHONORS God!
The problem for many of us at work is that we are allowing the culture around us...work culture...or world culture
To define how we work, instead of allowing God to inform our choices. 3 Quick Concerns..See if you find yourself
 1. *We don't work at all!* We take the easy way out, and don't do anything!
Remember what I said last week. If you think staying at home with kids not work...
2 Thess 3:10 "If a man will not work don't let him eat!"
 2. *We hardly work instead of working hard!*
1 Cor 4:12 "we work hard with our own hands!"
Paul says to his readers, work hard, invest yourself, pour yourself out
All too often we fall into the trap of saying, "How little can I do?"
We try to do the LEAST and get paid the MOST! That doesn't honor God
 3. *We Work halfheartedly*
We are there...but we don't put our heart into what we are doing
We are just punching a time clock, doing what we have to do, bare minimum
Neh 5:16 "I devoted myself to the work on the wall!" Devoted: lit =seize, bind

Col 3:23: "Whatever you do work at it with all your heart"

- We Work W/O GOD'S HELP Sometimes we "Go it Alone" and separate our Work from our Relationship w/God
God NEVER intended us to do that! Remember last week: Partners with Him!
We should never compartmentalize God...relegate Him to Sunday only
Eph 3:20 "To Him who is able to do immeasurably more"....according to His power at work in you!
Asking God for help at work shouldn't be reserved for when it all falls apart!
We should be praying that every single day on the way in!
- We Work W/O STOPPING This is probably the largest abuse of work in our culture. We simply don't Sabbath
We have 1000's excuses, but none of them measure up
Lev 23:3 "There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest..."
When we don't Sabbath...when we don't take time to relax, refresh, renew, worship
We dishonor God. We in effect tell Him, "I know you said it, I don't trust you to do it!"

The good news about the bible is that it doesn't just warn us away from the PROBLEMS...but it instructs us about Potential
Look with me at a couple of the important things that the bible tells us we need to be engaged in with work!

4 Potential Blessings Of Work We Need To Embrace

- We Are To Work AS IF We Work For Christ! Col 3:23
Whatever we do we do it as if we were working for Jesus
Remember what we said earlier. The WAY we work is a reflection of the Character of God and our Relationship
Illus: So here is what I want you to do this afternoon.
Take a piece of paper. Write each day of the week. And then, Look at it through God's eyes!
Imagine HE is your boss, and that HE is going to write your review based on your work last week
What does that look like? If you find that it doesn't look so good...then perhaps you need to rethink work!
There are a LOT of things in the bible that tell us what that kind of work should look like

1. Diligent	2 Ch 24:13	Lit = to apply yourself with intensity, effort, and sacrifice
2. Faithful	2Ch 34:12	Lit = to be steady and firm, to be committed and reliable
3. Hard	Rom 16:12	Lit = to labor or toil, to grow weary or fatigued
4. Devoted	Neh 5:16	Lit = to fasten upon, to grab hold not let go, to refuse to stop
5. Prepared	2Tim 2:21	Lit = to be in a constant state of readiness

- We Are To Work To BLESS OTHERS As Well As Ourselves Acts 20:25
We regularly think of working in order to provide for ourselves. That isn't an issue for most of us
But, it is uncommon for us to think of working in order to be able to bless others with what we are blessed with!
Over the years I have known a number of people with the gift of giving. I have been amazed at it every time I see it
Illus: Check for 100,000 "That's not up to me!" That is God's money. My job is to earn it and give it...
You and the leaders of the Church are responsible to use it for Him!
If you have the gift of giving...and some people do...then you use it to bless others...

- We Are See Our Work As A MISSION FIELD!
1 Cor 9:1 "Are you not the result of my work in the Lord?"
Can you say that? Can you look at those that you work with and say...This is how God is using me in His work
Acts 18:1-3 Paul was a tentmaker, stayed and worked in Corinth with Priscila and Aquila
While he was there...he taught and trained them, so that later when Apollos came, they trained him!
Apollos became known as one of the greatest leaders of the early church!
All because Paul was willing to work...and because he did more than work...
Work was a mission field!
Q: When you leave the job that you have now...will it be better prepared for the Gospel?
Will others know...be closer...understand better...Will they be able to see who and what God wants them to be?

- We are to Work as a TESTIMONY To Others that Don't Know Jesus. 1 Peter 2:11
Live such good lives....that is the whole focus of what we are to be doing
The way that we work is a tremendous plus...or awful minus...to the people we work with!
Old Saying: "Your life is the only bible some people will ever read!"
Think about it: What does the way you do your job say to others about your faith...your God..your relationship

CONCL

Sometimes we forget that God is interested in EVERY area of our lives
It isn't enough to just get it "Right" on Sunday! And at small group. And at City Serve or Winter Relief
All of those things are wonderful...and right...and absolutely essential.

BUT

God is vitally interested in HOW you work every day...9-5
Because
The way you work reflects upon Him...and His Character...and Your Relationship with Him

Work can be a blessing...or it can be a curse...it all depends upon how you choose to address it

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