

Introduction

- Work has changed a lot in the last two years, hasn't it
 - Work from home vs. those who cannot work from home
- Lots of people rethinking work: the "what" and the "why"
 - Even before pandemic, the so-called "midlife crisis" | Wife - Worship - Work

Big idea: Because of Jesus, our work finds renewed meaning and joy

I. The Nature of Work

1. Work comes from God | Genesis 2:1-3
2. Work is worship | Genesis 2¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it.
 - a. Work = *Hb.* obdah (288). "Work" is 3rd most common translation. 1st is "serve" (124), and 2nd is "worship" (72)
 - b. Watch = *Hb.* shamer (466). Keep, guard, protect, watch.
 - c. Numbers 3⁵ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶"Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may **minister** to him. ⁷They shall **keep guard** over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they **minister** at the tabernacle. ⁸They shall **guard** all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and **keep guard** over the people of Israel as they **minister** at the tabernacle. ⁹And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the people of Israel. ¹⁰And you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall **guard** their priesthood. But if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to death."
 - d. Liturgy = the work of the people. Training and exercise for life "out there"
3. Work is corrupted | **Genesis 3**¹⁶ He said to the woman: I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children with painful effort. Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you. ¹⁷And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it': The ground is cursed because of you. You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life. ¹⁸It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust."
 - a. Serpent is cursed, the man and the woman are **not** | only the ground
 - b. As priests, their work was to serve and guard, and bring a blessing. But because of their failure, they unleashed curse into the world.
4. Work is redeemed in Christ | **Ephesians 2**⁸ For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—⁹not from works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For

we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

- a. Christ's work renews our work

II. The Calling of Work

*Vocation = calling (voice) | Lots of speaking and calling in Gen. 1-3

1. Humanity's calling | Bring order to chaos (Gen. 1:28)
2. Kingdom calling | Announce the new king (Matt. 28:18-20)
3. Community calling | Join together in a role (Deut. 33)
4. Individual calling | Use your gifts to build up others (1 Cor. 14:26)

Individual Calling

1. Do what is commanded
2. Do something
3. Be flexible

Finding Your Calling

Look for the overlap between gifting, passion, and opportunity

- Gifts + passion - opportunity = persevere
- Passion + opportunity - gifts = support
- Gifts + opportunity - passion = repent, or partner

III. The Limits of Work

1. Be mindful of the tension | work is a good thing, but distorted by sin
2. Obey God's limits | Sabbath rest, don't glean to the edges of the field
 - a. More on this next week
3. Celebrate and memorialize | easier when your work is seasonal
 - a. Fishing, farming, harvesting, teachers
 - b. Harder when your work is just emailing all the time
4. Worship as you work

Colossians 3 ²² Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.