

WEEK 1 (August 16-22) ORDINARY SAINTS—FOLLOWING JESUS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

(Genesis 2:15; Ephesians 2:4-10; Romans 12:1-8)

Starting the Conversation (Read Genesis 2:15)

Work is not a punishment but an important part of God's design for humanity. Long before sin entered the world, God gave people meaningful work to do. Whether someone is a teacher, musician, parent, student, mechanic, nurse, or business owner, our work becomes holy when it is offered faithfully to God. When we are reminded that there is no division between the sacred and the secular, we begin to see that our Monday calling matters just as much as our Sunday worship and our labor can both glorify God and serve others.

Let's Read Ephesians 2:4-10— You are God's Masterpiece

Leader: Understanding work begins with understanding purpose. Each of us is created to join with God to make an eternal impact, and work becomes a platform to do that.

- We often do not see work as an enjoyable and meaningful part of life. We live for rest, play, and distraction. Why is work so difficult to enjoy?
 - Should I avoid the least enjoyable elements of work?
 - Where is it easier to see and experience the meaningfulness of work?
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Let's Read Romans 12:1-8— Give Your Life as an Offering to God

Leader: Our lives don't belong to us. We are created by God, forgiven and saved by God, and redeemed by God. We receive this by faith, but it was paid for by God's sacrifice in Jesus. We don't truly start to live with abundance until we learn that we belong to God.

- Sometimes we don't enjoy work because we have the wrong mindset. Sometimes I don't enjoy work because I am not doing the work God has for me to do. How do I know the difference?
 - Where do passion and responsibility in work overlap? What do I do when responsibility does NOT overlap with passion?
 - How do I adopt a mindset of work as a platform to worship God and serve others?
 - Sometimes God waits to give us the next step in our calling until we commit to do the hard things with our best effort and proper mindset to worship God and serve others. Have you seen or experienced this? How?
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Closing—

- In my current work, what opportunities do I have to worship God?
 - What opportunities do I have to serve others?
 - In what ways can I utilize my gifts, talents, passion, education, and experiences?
 - In what ways am I missing joy that could be experienced in my work?
 - What is my next step in my work and why?
 - Recommit to my work as a calling?
 - Step into a new kind of work that God is calling me to?
 - Pray for clarity?
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PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the gift of work and the opportunity to serve You and others through it. When work feels difficult, frustrating, or meaningless, remind us that You are present even in ordinary tasks. Help us to see our work not just as responsibility, but as worship. Give us wisdom to know when You are calling us to persevere and teach us to honor You with our attitude, effort, and faithfulness, even in the parts of work we do not enjoy. Show us how to use our gifts, passions, and experiences to serve others well, and open our eyes to the joy and purpose we may be missing and give us clarity for whatever next step You are calling us to take. Let everything we do reflect Your goodness and bring glory to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.