

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday September 5, 2021. "How I work for my Lord."

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this Sunday. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We're pushing through 2021, and in spite of the current situation we're still fully committed to gathering in person. A growing group of familiar and new faces join us each Sunday. Our children's, youth areas and coffee spot have been fully open also and we're seeing a good response. We're so encouraged by your love and presence when you gather with us. If you're still joining us online, we love and so appreciate your presence also. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We still are your church family, and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions, please pass them our way. We know the future is still uncertain, but we are committed to making our virtual congregation as central to NCC as our in person group.

II Sunday.

We finally finished our series about seeking God, and this Sunday, and next Sunday, we'll be doing a one off for each one. The two Sundays will have somewhat of a connection about what type of person we want to be. This Sunday being Labor Day weekend, we talked about who we are where we work. This isn't about hustling or DOING. This is about BEING. And how to be a person who reflects the nature of the God we serve no matter what our work is. And it's on us to do this well.

So, some fun questions to start things off.

What is the hardest job you ever had?

What was the most fun job you ever had?

If money or education didn't matter, what would be your dream job?

Our scripture was out of Colossians 3, but we read it in a different order so we want to repeat that here. And we're going to ask the same questions for each passage.

1. Read Colossians 3:23-24 first.

What jumped to you about this passage?

How do you understand and practice "willingly"?

"Willingly" implies being all there because you want to do the better thing even if it's tough. This is a choice you are intentionally making so there's no reluctance or holding back. The whatever you do, may be tough, or at a really difficult place to work, but there is this spirit within you that shines above the difficulty of the place. "Willingly" doesn't mean easy or desirable. It means you accept the realities of where you happen to be and do your best to BE your best.

What makes this hard?

What could you do, think, believe to help you practice "willingly" wherever you are?

2. Now read **Colossians 3:1-3**.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

“Set” means to make your default response. What does that look like for you?

The “set” in this passage is about setting your sights, and is based on a previous “since”. And this “since” is reaffirming the truth that we have an old selfish, The Ego self, that is dying and being replaced with a new self, centered in Christ. Doing the work of “setting” is the key in wherever we are, we are “*working for the Lord*”. It won’t come from ‘trying’ but rather resetting our defaults.

Where do you struggle in “setting” yourself to BE better?

What helps, or could help, you to stick to whatever values or beliefs you “set”?

3. Now read **Colossians 3:12-15**.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

This is not a list to do, but rather traits that should be growing within you when you “set” your mind on Christ. **Where are you strong in some of those traits? Where do you need to grow some?**

Lists like these are always tough. We want to turn them into some workout routine of things to ‘try’ to be more like. And if you’ve ever ‘tried’ to be more kind, humble, gentle...and even worse...patient, you realize those things do not grow from ‘trying’ harder. They grow from within the process of being transformed. We want those traits to be experienced by others around us. That’s how we “*work for the Lord*”. But they are grown WHEN we die to our old self, (a daily process), and are being reborn to our new self, (through setting our mind).

So, here is the obvious. **What could you practice, believe, hold as true, to die to self, and “set” anew to help you grow in the areas you find yourself weaker in?**

III Challenge.

So, what does all of this mean?

We know we often find ourselves in really tough places. Dealing with really tough situations. And even worse, having to be around...you know...really tough people. As much as we ‘try’, we’ve talked about that, it is so difficult to consistently remember and practice that wherever we are, whatever it is we find ourselves doing, we remember we are “*working for the Lord*”.

If you watch the service, you will see three regular people who shared their personal understanding of what “*working for the Lord*” looks like in practice. I encourage you to watch it. It gives the perspective of real people, out in the real world, “*working for the Lord*” in their ordinary, everyday, walking around life. And what it means and looks like for them to live this way.

What are some specific practices could you “set” to grow this same desire within you?