

WORK AS WORSHIP
Wise and Wonderful Little Workers
Colossians 3:17, 23
Proverbs 6:6-11

Last week, we began a series about cultivating a new perspective about our JOBS and the WORK that we do. We introduced the concept to you that your WORK could actually be an act of WORSHIP. Many of you talked with me after the message, and it was evident that this series is really hitting home! I am so glad. I believe that these truths will be as encouraging and refreshing as they are challenging! Remember our goal: **Learn how to remove the DIVISION between work and worship that we feel.**

*Begin to SEE my work AS worship and not just as a MEANS of MAKING MONEY.

*Discover positive ways to display FAITH at my WORKPLACE.

*Make work a context for LOVING GOD and LOVING OTHERS.

Today, I want us to examine the first of many ways that we can worship Christ in our work. The Apostle Paul wrote about the importance of our work in many of his letters. [In his writings to the churches in Ephesus, Colossae, and Thessalonica, he emphasized an important truth about the CONNECTION between our WORK and our WITNESS.](#) We will look at ONE KEY ASPECT of this connection today. Here is the overarching PRINCIPLE that we will focus on throughout this entire SERIES:

Work is not about YOUR GREATNESS, but about HIS GLORY!

*Who gets the GLORY and the ATTENTION for the work that YOU do?

-Does your WORK point others to the One that you worship?

-Do you SEE your skills and abilities as GIFTS from God that you must steward?

-Do you ACKNOWLEDGE God as your SOURCE of SKILL when others praise you?

Colossians 3:17, 22-24 NIV

17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ... 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.

*We should do all of our work AS IF we are working for HIM! [Because you ARE!]

-He receives all work done in this fashion as OBEDIENCE.

-Again, this gives you an ETERNAL SENSE of PURPOSE in your job!

[\[Louie Giglio – Working alone in a basement office making copies for God!\]](#)

*We should do ALL of our work as an act of WORSHIP to the God who blessed us.

-“In the name of Jesus” = Under his AUTHORITY and for his ATTENTION.

-“Giving thanks” = Work with a constant sense of GRATITUDE. **[Job Fair]**

Your WORK ETHIC can be a WITNESS for Christ!

*Your motivation for hard work does not have to simply be money or promotion.

*Make no mistake; either way, your work ethic IS a witness . . . for good or for bad!

[ILLUSTRATION: Hold up EXAMPLES of EXCELLENT work and of BAD work.]

***Work ethic includes EXCELLENCE of PRODUCT. Exodus 31:1-6 NIV**

1 Then the LORD said to Moses, 2 "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, 3 and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills-- 4 to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, 5 to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. 6 Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you:

*Your skills are EVIDENCE of God's blessing on you!

*Your skills give you a sense of DIRECTION in determining your CALLING!

*Your skills will open doors of opportunity for you as you HONE your CRAFT!

-Note the witness of pro athletes or skilled craftsmen.

***Work ethic also involves EXCELLENCE of EFFORT! Proverbs 6:6-11 NIV**

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! 7 It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, 8 yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. 9 How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? 10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-- 11 and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.

We are INSTRUCTED to GO TO THE ANTS and OBSERVE THEM! [Behold, the ANT!]

*Everyone knows that ants can lift 10 to 20 times their weight. [Ant Man]

*DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

. . . Ants have a brain similar to humans; equal to a MAC II computer

. . . Sahara ants have an internal pedometer to #steps and measure distance

. . . These ants use the sun to navigate

. . .Ants can tunnel from two directions and meet exactly midway

*Ants have a PREDICTABLE, ESTABLISHED CHARACTER.

-Studying ants could really PAY OFF for you! [Rooibos Seeds Story]

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT ANTS:

They do not require a CHAPERONE. (vs 7-8a)

*"Not with EYESERVICE as MENPLEASERS, but as servants from the HEART!"

-Ants have INTERNAL MOTIVATION. They work without being FORCED.

- *What kind of work do YOU do when NO ONE is looking? [My son's story]
- Ants actually IMPROVE with time and practice: Climbing the ant ladder!

They work great with OTHERS.

*An ANT COLONY is called a SUPER ORGANISM. It functions as ONE UNIT! Every ant has a JOB DESCRIPTION, but they can all learn other jobs over the course of a lifetime!

*Ants learn these jobs by means of a process called TANDEM RUNNING. This is actually an ant MENTORING PROCESS in which one ant "runs" with another ant that has a different job until he learns how to do it properly! This requires HUMILITY and TEACHABILITY.

- *Ants PROTECT on another. Step on an anthill and see what happens!
[Mess with me, and you mess with the whole trailer park!]
- *They are NOT just focused on what the colony does for them!

They think beyond their IMMEDIATE NEEDS to their FUTURE. (vs. 8)

- *They PREPARE for lean days to come.
 - They live by the rule of delayed gratification.
 - They do NOT CONSUME all that they PRODUCE!
 - *Failure to do this makes our work FRANTIC and FEARFUL!**
- *Ants DIVERSIFY!
 - They not only GATHER, they GROW CROPS! [Growing fungus]
 - They are not only FARMERS; they are also RANCHERS! [Herding Aphids]

They refuse to SLEEP when they should be working. (vs. 9)

- *Ants DO SLEEP!
- *But ants are anything but lazy!

2 Thessalonians 3:10 NIV

10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

*This is NOT a condemnation of those who CANNOT work by virtue of a physical disability, but of those who CAN work but WILL NOT!

We must CONTRAST ANTS with SLUGS as Scripture does!

- This is what you are and how you affect others when you are LAZY!

ON SLUGS:

They kill the spirit of productivity. Proverbs 10:26 NIV

26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so are sluggards to those who send them.

- *They discourage and frustrate hard workers.

*They cause MORE WORK for everyone else.

They are quitters. Proverbs 12:27 NIV

27 The lazy do not roast any game, but the diligent feed on the riches of the hunt.

*They do not finish TASKS.

*They constantly rely on the success of OTHERS.

They are full of excuses. Proverbs 22:13 NLT

13 The lazy person claims, "There's a lion out there! If I go outside, I might be killed!"

*They EXPLAIN AWAY their lazy behavior.

*They can always come up with a REASON for their failure.

*They are FEARFUL without an real threats against them.

They are arrogant and defensive. Proverbs 26:16 NLT

16 Lazy people consider themselves smarter than seven wise counselors.

*Lazy people ALMOST NEVER ADMIT that they are lazy.

They are bound to “suddenly” fail. (6:10-11)

*They are always SHOCKED when they fail or lose their jobs!

Our work is a KEY CONTEXT for giving God GLORY for all that he has done in our lives. Our workspaces are CONTEXTS where people can see that LIFE is MORE than LABOR, and that WORK is another great reason for us to WORSHIP our great God!

So, do you think that God WANTS to be ASSOCIATED with your work ethic?

Are others INSPIRED by the way that you HONOR God through your work?

Is your EMPLOYER GRATEFUL for the fact that YOU are part of his team?

EVALUATE YOUR OWN WORK ETHIC:

*Are you giving full effort while at work, or are you CHEATING your boss?

-Are you wasting time? Playing on the computer? Talking on the phone?

*Are you looking for ways to IMPROVE your work skills?

*Are you working as hard when the boss is away as you are when he is present?

If you are a believer, then you MUST remember that God is your Ultimate Boss, and HE is the One that is either getting the GLORY or the BLAME for the work that you do!

Let's pray.

