



HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Every Good Endeavor Book Club

Conversation #1

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BOOK INTRODUCTION

"Leaf By Niggle"

CHAPTER ONE - THE DESIGN OF WORK

"The fact that God put work in paradise is startling to us because we so often think of work as a necessary evil or even punishment. Yet we do not see work brought into our human story after the fall of Adam, as part of the resulting brokenness and curse; it is part of the blessedness of the garden of God. Work is as much a basic human need as food, beauty, rest, friendship, prayer, and sexuality; it is not simply medicine but food for our soul. Without meaningful work we sense significant inner loss and emptiness. People who are cut off from work because of physical or other reasons quickly discover how much they need work to thrive emotionally, physically, and spiritually." - p. 36-37

"You will not have a meaningful life without work, but you cannot say that your work is the meaning of your life. If you make any work the purpose of your life - even if that work is church ministry - you create an idol that rivals God." - p. 40

CHAPTER TWO - THE DIGNITY OF WORK

"Western societies are increasingly divided between the highly remunerated 'knowledge classes' and the more poorly remunerated 'service sector,' and most of us accept and perpetuate the value judgements that attach to these categories. Another result is that many people will choose to be unemployed rather than do work that they feel is beneath them, and most service and manual labor falls into this category." - p.47

"We have an excellent foundation if we understand the goodness of creation and the dignity of work. We work in a wondrous world that is designed at least partly for our pleasure... God seems to delight in diversity and creativity. Other places in the Bible speak of God's creative activity as being motivated by the sheer delight of creating (see Prov. 8:27-31). This, too, is a part of God's plan for what our work should be about, and what it would still be about if we had not experienced the fall." - p. 52-53

CHAPTER THREE - WORK AS CULTIVATION

"We are to be gardeners... They do not leave the land as it is. They rearrange it in order to make it most fruitful, to draw the potentialities for growth and development out of the soil... this is the pattern for all work. It is creative and assertive. It is rearranging the raw material of God's creation in such a way that it helps the world in general, and people in particular, thrive and flourish." - p. 58-59

CHAPTER FOUR - WORK AS SERVICE

"We are not to choose jobs and conduct our work to fulfill ourselves and accrue power, for being called by God to do something is empowering enough. We are to see work as a way of service to God and our neighbor, and so we should both choose and conduct our work in accordance with that purpose." - p. 67

"There may be no better way to love your neighbor, whether you are writing parking tickets, software, or books, than to simply do your work. But only skillful, competent work will do." - p. 76

BOOK DISCUSSION

What were you tempted to underline, and why?

What made you want to pound your fist on the table, and why?

What left you feeling confused or wanting more?

Is there something you question or disagree with?

What is one thing you hope to take with you into your work from this section?

“This album is a humble offering to Him. An attempt to say ‘THANK YOU GOD’ through our work, even as we do in our hearts and with our tongues. May He help and strengthen all men in every good endeavor.”
- John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme* liner notes (p.80)