

THE GOSPEL AT WORK

Session 1 | Jeff Purswell

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I. Introduction

- Our culture's bleak view of work
- Scripture's perspective transforms our view of work from a necessary evil into a noble, attractive, motivating opportunity to bring God glory in our lives.

II. The Purposes of Work

A. Work is a primary way we imitate God.

- Genesis 1:26-28
- Part of our creation in God's image is the calling to exercise dominion over creation.
- The "cultural mandate": God's command to mankind to rule the earth for him, caring for it, developing its potential, and developing a God-glorifying culture.
- In exercising dominion, humanity is called to rule over the earth as God's vice-regents, stewarding creation in His stead and for His glory.

Expressions of this dominion:

- Sovereignty
- Wisdom & Intelligence
- Mercy & Care
- Creativity
- Justice
- Defense & Protection

B. Work is a primary way we serve God.

- Genesis 2:15
- Mankind is called to "work" and "keep" ("cultivate & guard") the natural world.

- Although all that God created was “very good” (Gen. 1:31), it wasn’t *complete*; God delegated the development of his good creation—the earth and its vast array of cultural possibilities—to his image-bearers.
- Our work is not a distraction from serving God—it *is* serving God.
- The “sacred/secular distinction”
- Colossians 1:19-20: All creation is the object of God’s governing, preserving, and redemptive activity.
- “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry, ‘Mine!’” (Abraham Kuyper)
- The entrance of sin into the world did not introduce work, but it did introduce frustration to our work.
- The fall introduces a new dimension to our labor: to work against the effects of the fall in our work, bending our jobs to forward God’s purposes & to reflect his character.

C. Work is a primary way we’re used by God.

- Martin Luther: a person’s vocation is a “mask of God”
- God works in the world, & he cares for his creation, & he provides for the needs of his creatures, *through* the hands & labors & efforts of people.
- Your work is one of the primary ways in which you fulfill the Great Commandment.

III. Conclusion

*Only One Life,
Twill Soon Be Past
Only What's Done
For Christ Will Last*

Yes, but . . .

- Colossians 3:23-24: “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”