

Discovery Group - Gospel Living

Work

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Ephesians 6:5-9 & 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- What is the climate of your work situation? How would you describe your attitude in it? What are the implications of doing your work as if it is for Jesus?
- How would you describe the work ethic of your generation? How would you compare your work ethic to this? How would you compare these with the work ethic to which the Bible is calling us?
- Summarize the biblical teaching about work, and how that applies to your specific situation.

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read and meditate on the following passages this week:

Colossians 3:1 - 4:1 Philippians 1:12-30

Work

Ephesians 6:5-9. This passage addresses slaves and masters, giving them instructions regarding the attitude they should have towards one another and their work. In our current context, the principles given are directly applicable. If even slaves and their masters were expected by God to adhere to these standards, how much more workers today who enjoy such greater freedom and advantage.

The basic principle is simple and all-encompassing. Whoever your employer may be, do your work as if your boss is Jesus Himself. In so doing, treat your earthly boss with respect and sincerity, knowing that your true reward will come from Christ. Bosses, treat your workers in the same way - in other words, with respect and sincerity, as if they were Jesus Himself.

This is a brief passage with a simple command, but it is worth taking time to mine out the implications for yourself. This is essentially about attitude. It is very possible that your work situation - or school - is not ideal. Perhaps the boss is not a believer, the coworkers are jealous and lazy, the culture is saturated with complaining and disrespect, with rudeness and strife. Still, work in that place with those people as if for Jesus. Remember that it matters. This is bigger than you. Even in the midst of your hurts and challenges and feelings, you are there to advance God's Kingdom. Your specific situation affords you the opportunity to reveal the glory of Jesus in a unique way.

There are other implications, of course, that come out of working as unto Jesus. Work cannot be your idol - the thing you put your trust in or the top priority of life. Your work must not keep you from fully engaging in pursuing Christ and participating in the life of His church. Also, working for Jesus means that working in His way is more important than being 'successful' at work - making lots of money, being promoted, etc. He is honored rather through your compassion, diligence, generosity, integrity, etc.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15. Paul is very concerned about an unfortunate issue settling into the young Thessalonian church. Apparently some - perhaps many - are idle. Lazy. Busybodies. Although they have overcome a lot already, this failure to work appropriately could have far-reaching negative effects. In his exhortation, Paul reminds his flock about the example he had set for them and about the teaching they had received. This teaching was clearly part of the authoritative instructions Paul had provided when the church was first being formed. His reference to it here reveals that a strong work ethic was part of the foundational teachings - or doctrine - of the early Jesus followers. God is calling us to (1) work hard; (2) provide for our own sustenance; (3) Enforce this standard in our churches; (4) not tire in doing good.