

Theme: As those made in God's image, we were created and called to work, serving God and others through our labors in every realm of life and every corner of creation.

## I. Intro – Story or Topic

- A. Poll data on increasing dissatisfaction with work
- B. Americans work more hours than ever before
- C. But we are less satisfied than ever
- D. Many reasons for this in our post-industrial revolution world
- E. How do we find favor in our work?
- F. How can our work line up with God's intent for work?

## II. God's Favor On Our Work

- A. Review - our call to work
  - 1. Ps. 90 - reflection on Genesis 1-3 & life under curse
  - 2. Psalm 90:16 - God is a worker (Gen 1-3)
  - 3. Psalm 90:16-17 - we are called to work (Gen 1-3)
  - 4. True even under the curse - we are made to work
- B. God's favor and our work
  - 1. In face of curse and death we need God's favor
  - 2. Psalm 90:17 - God's favor includes our work
  - 3. It is also more than this - but it is not less than this!
  - 4. Colossians 3:23-24 - inheritance for our work
    - a. This is not "Christian/church" work - daily labor

- b. Reward for more than this - but not less than this!
- 5. God's favor on our work is not automatic
  - a. Psalm 90:17 - May - praying for it to happen
  - b. This means it is not automatic

## III. Finding God's Favor In Our Work

- A. Favor is not job specific
  - 1. Col 3:23-24 - whatever slaves do; reward
  - 2. Not related to 'glamor' of the work - slaves work!
  - 3. The work of slaves and masters equal before God
  - 4. Not related to 'spiritual' nature of work (slaves; Tyndale)
    - a. This has been a MAJOR error in history of Church
    - b. Favor NOT related to church work unless that is our call
    - c. Christians do the same jobs as others - unless sinful
  - 5. Favor in whatever job we have [also 1 Cor 7:17-24]
- B. Favor usually found in line with our gifts
  - 1. We administer gifts God gives us (1 Peter 4:10)
  - 2. Favor found in fulfilling our calling/gifts (Perkins, Sayers)
  - 3. We have freedom to choose - & responsibility!
  - 4. Don't waste your life doing something you hate!
- C. Favor comes in a job well done - for Christ's approval
  - 1. Col 3:23-24 - all your heart for Christ, serving Him

2. Work for Christ must be done well (Sayers 2 quotes)
3. Christians don't do their job with different techniques
4. Christians must labor hard to learn their jobs
5. If we do poor work - there will be no satisfaction
6. For poor work favor would be a sham - & we know it

D. Favor comes as we serve others through our work

1. Col 3:18-4:1 - called to serve others
2. In our work we serve many others
  - a. Includes boss, workers under me, and customer
  - b. Parent serves child, their spouse and society
  - c. The key is we always look to serve others - not self
3. This is why some jobs are unacceptable for Christians
  - a. Porn star - no legitimate service of common good
  - b. Thief - stealing rather than helping common good
4. But any task that legitimately helps others is open
  - a. Carpenter, teacher, scientist, entertainer, banker
  - b. Politician, stay at home parent, advertiser
  - c. But must be done in a way that helps others

E. Favor comes as we ask God for it! (Psalm 90:17)

#### IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I know my work - daily tasks - are important to God?

1. Work includes how I contribute to society
2. May be paid or volunteer, any type of task
3. Do I know God calls me to this?
4. Do I think God is only interested in 'spiritual' work?
5. Don't fall for this lie!

B. Are you experiencing God's favor in your work life?

1. We should find God's favor in our daily activities
2. Do I know favor isn't found in the type of work I do?
  - a. Favor can be found in prestigious well paying jobs - or not
  - b. Favor can be found in despised low paying jobs - or not
3. Am I doing my daily tasks well - or just getting by?
4. Am I doing my daily tasks for God's glory & good of others?
5. Am I doing that for which God has fitted me?

C. Prayer for God's favor on our daily work

#### Called To Work (Part 2)

Psalm 90:16-17; Colossians 3:23-24

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Prayer

Psalm 90:17

16 May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. 17  
May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for  
us — yes, establish the work of our hands. Psalms 90:16–17

23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for  
men, 24since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a  
reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23–24

Recent poll - less than 50% are satisfied in their jobs  
Another poll - more Americans hate their jobs now than 20 years ago  
Gallup poll - 77% hate their jobs today  
All quoted in *How Then Should We Work* - Hugh Whelchel

Between the washing of dishes and the preaching of the Word, there is a difference;  
concerning pleasing God there is no difference at all. - William Tyndale

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully  
administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

Vocation or calling is a kind of life imposed on man by God for the common good.  
William Perkins

Work is not, primarily, a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do. It is, or  
should be, the full expression of the worker's faculties, the thing in which he finds  
spiritual, mental, and bodily satisfaction, and the medium in which he offers himself  
to God. Dorothy Sayers

Let the Church remember this: that every maker and worker is called to serve God  
in his profession or trade - not outside it... The only Christian work is work well  
done. - Dorothy Sayers, quoted in *Work Matters*, 29.

The Church's approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to exhorting  
him not to be drunk and disorderly in his leisure hours, and to come to church on  
Sundays. What the Church should be telling him is this: that the very first demand  
that his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables. Church by all  
means, and decent forms of amusement, certainly – but what use is all that if in the  
very center of his life and occupation he is insulting God with bad carpentry? -  
Dorothy Sayers - *Why Work?*

18 Wives, submit to your husbands...

19 Husbands, love your wives...

20 Children, obey your parents...

21 Fathers, do not embitter your children...

22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters...

4:1 Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair...

Colossians 3:18–4:1