

# LABOR DAY 2017

## *Finding joy on the job!*

Ecclesiastes 2, September 3, 2017, Pastor Bill Russell

🌀 **THE QUESTION:** How do you feel about work  
and even more specifically your job?

I wonder this morning how you feel about work and even more specifically your job? Maybe for some of you the question is how you felt about work, as by now you are retired. I wonder if any of us feel like Bill Hansen who worked at Hutchinson Plumbing?

This story comes from the associated press.

### **RETIRED MAN RETURNS TO WORK TO CELEBRATE 100TH BIRTHDAY**

Many people try to get away from their day job to celebrate their birthday. One New Jersey man, however, decided to do exactly the opposite. Bill Hansen celebrated his 100th birthday by returning to the job he worked diligently for 32 years. Fred Hutchinson, CEO of Hutchinson Plumbing, Heating and Cooling, who signed Hansen back on with the company for one day, welcomed him with a birthday cake and a full day of assignments.

"He took off about 15 minutes after we signed that agreement to get to work," said Hutchinson. Hansen, who had spent as much time as he could at the company before retiring at age 97, did not have much to say for retired life. "I hate being retired ... I never had a job where I didn't want to go to work in the morning." Hansen said he attributes much of his happiness in life to his love of his work, his wife, and his family.

*Ethan Adams, PreachingToday.com; source: Associated Press "New Jersey man gets wish, returns to work on 100th birthday," Yahoo! News (3-28-17)*

I find the story fascinating in a few ways. While I don't know what kind of relationship this man had with the Lord, he certainly had a healthy attitude towards work. Did you catch that this man retired from Hutchinson Plumbing at the age of 97. He worked for them for 32 years meaning he started with this company when he was 65. Most people retire at age 65 they don't start a whole new career. The fact that he went back to work on his 100th birthday is probably the least interesting thing about the story.

This man found what many people struggle to find today. In fact I want to talk about it. This morning I want to talk about “finding joy on the job” or “finding the joy in your work.” Now I could give a great talk this morning, and share some really good pointers as well as advice on how to find the joy in your job.

- *Find something you love to do!*
- *Don't let people steal your joy! and so on...*

The thing is that is not my calling. My calling is to preach The Word, to preach the Scriptures, not just give a good inspirational ted talk. This morning then I want to take you to the Bible, Ecclesiastes 2, and I want to show you what God has to say about finding joy on the job! YES! It is possible! **Regardless of the job you have, the people you work with or the person you work for, you can find joy on the job.**

Lets turn our attention then to the Book of Ecclesiastes.

The author off the Book is King Solomon. If you remember, apart from Jesus, King Solomon was the wisest and quite possibly the wealthiest man to ever live. The problem for Solomon was that his wealth eventually corrupted His wisdom and caused him to do some pretty stupid things.

In Ecclesiastes then Solomon shares some of the lessons that He learned the hard way. Lessons that we need to learn because the book of Ecclesiastes is a very timely and relevant book.

Let me give you then the BIG IDEA behind this mornings message.

## TODAY'S BIG IDEA

THE WISEST AND WEALTHIEST MAN TO EVER LIVE, KING SOLOMON, CAN TEACH US HOW TO FIND THE JOY IN OUR WORK, BUT NOT BECAUSE HE DID. INSTEAD SPEAKING THROUGH HIS FAILURES HE CAN TELL US HOW TO APPROACH AND HOW NOT TO APPROACH OUR WORK. YOU SEE, THERE IS A JOY TO BE FOUND IN OUR WORK, EVEN THOUGH SOLOMON STRUGGLED TO FIND HIS.

Let me also give you verse 18 as sort of a tone-setting verse for the passage. It shows us the dark side of this chapter.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:18 ESV**

I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun

So clearly Solomon was not one who enjoyed his work. He was not going to go back to his last job at 100 years of age and reminisce on how much he loved working. His attitude is just the opposite. He will be able to show us though, what we can do to enjoy our job, if we look at his mistakes and try to avoid them.

One other thing about Solomon's attitude towards work, it also shows how sin has corrupted work. Work is not a bad thing. We will work in eternity, in heaven. God worked as he created the earth. What happened is, when man sinned, work was corrupted like everything else and work became labor or toil. Is it not interesting that childbearing, which was also cursed by sin, is now called labor.

*The issue we face is not letting the labor,  
or the curse of sin, steal the joy from our work.*

Let's start then with the first 3 verses. We will walk through this passage today and unpack it as we go. Solomon has 3 specific pieces of advice for us this morning. Let's see what they are.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:1-3 ESV**

I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" 3 I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life.

The thing is, it all starts with the heart. It starts with the desires of the heart. Solomon's troubles begin because he didn't cultivate a heart with the right desires. In short Solomon worked for the wrong reasons.

Here then is the first lesson we can learn from Solomon.

## **To find the joy on and in the job...**

### **1. Don't work to ACQUIRE (or even RETIRE.) V1**

*I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself."  
But behold, this also was vanity. v1*

Solomon learned that working to acquire was clearly NOT the way to find joy in your job. It was in fact the path to hating your job. You see whenever we start attempting to simply acquire more, we end up finding that we never have enough. We will always need just a little bit more.

Now Solomon though, gets even more specific for us. He gives three very specific warnings about working to simply acquire.

#### **Ecclesiastes 2:4-6 ESV**

4 I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. 5 I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6 I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees.



Accomplishing much does not necessarily equal SUCCESS **v4-6**

Now it can, it just depends on what you are accomplishing and what your goals are. God worked 6 days created the earth and His accomplishment was a huge success. Solomon accomplished some incredible things as well and according to the world's standards, he may have seemed like a great success. The thing is though, as impressive as some of his accomplishments were, Solomon did not feel successful. Why might that be? There is another verse in Ecclesiastes that has the answer for us.

#### **Ecclesiastes 3:9-11ESV**

What gain has the worker from his toil? 10 I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Solomon did some great works, houses, vineyards, gardens and parks. yet it did not leave him feeling successful and fulfilled. That's because true success and true beauty is measured by eternity, not this world. God makes all things beautiful in HIS time. In part God takes the great works we do and in his time and maybe not until eternity, will the true significance of our life and our life's work be realized.

At the same time God has placed that eternal perspective in our heart and that is what we are always attempting to satisfy. Our work is truly successful when it can stand up to the test of eternity. When we see the eternal implication in the work we do, then and only then will we feel truly successful.

So, accomplishing much does not necessarily equal SUCCESS

### **Ecclesiastes 2:7-8 ESV**

7 I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. 8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man.

 Accumulating much **never** equals JOY **v7-8**

There is this natural inclination to think that the more we accumulate or possess, the happier we will be. The problem is, it's not true. in fact often the more we acquire the less happier we are.

I may have shared this story before, not sure, but when I was in 3rd grade I lived in Ohio but went to camp at what is now Grace Adventures on Silver Lake in Mears Michigan. Now don't get me wrong, camp was great there. It was a blast. I loved it. Eventually though, my dad started a camp, Ohio Grace Youth Camp, and grace churches from around Ohio sent kids to the camp. We had 2 weeks of camp, that was it. Grade School and Junior High-High School.

Now we did not even have our own camp grounds. We rented a facility that had a lake, a field, a basketball court, cabins and a mess hall for eating. It was not fancy. We didn't have any of the fancy things that the camp in Michigan had. Yet I remember one pastor coming into to speak to the week, in fact it was Dan Reed our missionary. He told me while many camps were program driven our was people driven and it was the best week of camp he experienced. That's not to brag about our camp. Probably if we could have gotten a fancier facility we would have jumped at the chance. The lesson I learned though, and I was directing that week of camp that Dan spoke of, I in fact had asked him to come speak that week, and the lesson I learned was a lesson we may all do well to learn. Sometimes less is more.

## *Sometimes less is more!*

*Accumulating much **never** equals JOY.*

One of the problems that many Americans live with today, is that they have put themselves and their families into a position ruled by debt, where they are working to pay OFF the debt. This is when you acquire something before you can pay for it, but then you HAVE to work to pay for it. You HAVE to work overtime. You HAVE to work harder. You are working for what you HAVE already acquired.

It is one thing to work harder for a season to earn the money to purchase a blessing, like a family trip or some other item you can all enjoy. It is another thing to work harder because you HAVE to, to pay for something you bought on debt and then it broke to boot.

The Bible, and Solomon in particular, has much to say about the downside of debt and the negative force it can be in your life.

In the end... to find joy in your job don't work simply to acquire.

One last warning that Solomon give us in verses 9-11.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:9-11 ESV**

9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. 10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. 11 Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

 Acclamation from many does not equal FULFILLMENT **v9-11**

The thing is you can climb the corporate ladder, you can find all sorts of worldly success and gain all kinds of personal admirers but that doesn't automatically equate to true fulfillment. Just take all of the Hollywood celebrities who have acquired all sorts of accolades throughout their careers and have countless followers and yet in moments of brutal honesty they will admit they are unfulfilled. In fact those who are the most brutally honest are probably the ones who commit suicide. Nothing screams louder I am unfulfilled than someone who takes their own life.

***Steve DeWitt, in his book Eyes Wide Open: Enjoying God in Everything, shares the following illustration...***

### **ACTOR HEATH LEDGER STILL NEEDED GOD**

Every year there are a few shocking celebrity deaths in the world of entertainment that create brief searches for meaning among their fans. After one recent high-profile example, movie critic Roger Friedman expressed his bewilderment that actor Heath Ledger, while seemingly at the peak of his career, died from a drug overdose in his Manhattan apartment in January 2008. Friedman wrote, "It's hard for the average movie fan, including yours truly, to totally grasp why a guy like Heath Ledger—drop-dead handsome, popular, incredibly talented—could be depressed about anything."

It's hard to grasp if you think image-bearers of God could ever find meaning in good looks and fame. But clearly those things are not enough for an image-bearer of God. We want him, and all our wonder moments are a search for God.

*Steve DeWitt, Eyes Wide Open: Enjoying God in Everything (Credo House Publishers, 2012)*

In the end if we work merely to acquire or simply to retire, we will not find joy in our work. We will not find joy on the job!

Jesus tells a story one time about a man who had a great crop, a great harvest. It was so great he didn't have enough room in the barn to store it all. What did he do? He tore down his barn and built a bigger barn and then he stored up all his harvest and he simply retired to the good life. Jesus said he was foolish. He was foolish on several levels. Mostly he was foolish for being so selfish and short-sided. He was foolish for not investing anything in eternity.

Jesus told that story though, to make this point, a lesson that we all need to remember today.

**Luke 12:15 ESV**

And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

It is so easy to define ourselves by our possessions, by what we accomplish, accumulate and all of the acclamation it can bring us from others. Tim Keller nailed it with this quote on MSNBC's Morning Joe show. He offered the following advice on work, careers, and success:

**TIM KELLER ON WORK AS SERVICE VS. IDOLATRY**

When you make your work your identity ... if you're successful it destroys you because it goes to your head. If you're not successful it destroys you because it goes to your heart—it destroys your self-worth. [Faith in Christ] gives you an identity that's not in work or accomplishment, and that gives you insulation against the weather changes. If you're successful, you stay humble. If you're not successful, you have some ballast .... Work is a great thing when it is a servant instead of a lord.

*Joseph Sunde, "Timothy Keller on Work as Service vs. Idolatry,"  
Acton Institute blog (12-12-12)*

***So the first piece of wisdom today is this. To find joy on and in the job...***

**1. DON'T WORK TO MERELY AQUIRE (OR SIMPLY RETIRE.) V1**



Let's look at verses 18-26 for a second piece of wisdom

### **Ecclesiastes 2:18-26 ESV**

I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, 19 and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. 20 So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, 21 because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. 22 What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? 23 For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

***To find the joy on and in the job...***

**2. LEARN TO ENJOY YOUR REST. (Look at verse 23)**

***For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation.***

***Even in the night his heart does not rest.***

►► **There is a relationship between work and rest that is essential.** It is essential to a healthy life and it is essential if we are going to enjoy our work and find joy on and in the job.

Now note that Solomon has a rather sour attitude about one thing in particular in these verses. He raises it twice. It is the idea that a person works really hard with his skill, wisdom and knowledge, earns something or makes something and then he dies and leaves it to someone who enjoys all of his hard work.

Now I will deal with this objection again in point three, but I want us to understand the importance of rest here as it pertains to our work. The words here by Solomon are both powerful and insightful. Even in the night his heart does not rest. Even when his head hits the pillow and he falls asleep he doesn't really rest? The question is why? What makes it hard to really rest?

We can come up with all kinds of excuses but I think at the heart it goes back to understanding the importance of rest. I believe Solomon can't rest because Solomon never stops working. Oh he may physically stop, he may lay down on the bed, but his mind is still engaged, his thoughts are still racing, he is still preoccupied with worry. Worry about what he has made, worry about what he is in the process of making, and worry about what he will make next. Solomon never follows the example of the Heavenly Father and learns to rest.

►► We need to learn the rhythms of rest from Jesus.

What do I mean by that? Let me explain. Look at Genesis 2 a moment...

### **Genesis 2:1-3 ESV**

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Have you ever asked yourself why God created the world in 6 days?

Pastor Colin Smith, recently on Moody radio shared at least two reasons that I found insightful.

#### ***Pattern and Priority.***

God in creating the world demonstrated pattern and priority.

**A. The pattern is seen in how He broke up His work into 6 days.**

Do you ever feel overwhelmed with all you have to do? You go into the office and there is a stack of papers to process, a list of people to call, meetings to attend, reports to file and all sorts of other jobs to get done. It can all be so overwhelming at times.

Or you have your stuff at work all day and yet you get home and there is a laundry list of things to do including the laundry itself. Jesus shows us how He did His work. He divided His work over 6 days.

Did Jesus need to stretch His work over 6 days? No. Why did he? There may have been other reasons but one big one is that it shows us how to divide our work over 6 days. Work some each day and rest some each day. That is the Rhythm of rest. Work 6 days and then take one day completely off to do something restful. Work a year but take a week off a couple of times during the year to rest and refresh yourself. It is the cycle of rest that we see throughout the Bible.

Even in the Jewish law there were periods of rest and celebration known as the various feasts. Then every 7 years they were to give the land a rest. For the land to produce at its best, for the land to do its best work for you, it needed to rest.

- *Rest is good.*
- *Rest is healthy.*
- *Rest is necessary.*
- *Rest is Biblical.*
- *Rest is essential to enjoying our work.*

We can be so unlike God at times. We can try to get all of our work done in one day. Or we can take pride in how many days we have gone without rest because of our hard work. While there may be occasions where this is necessary, it should never be our norm.

**B.** Along with **Pattern** comes **Priority**. God created the earth in 6 days to show us priority. God gives priority to rest. Again, did Jesus need to take a day off to rest? Of course not he is God. But WE need to take that a day off to rest and God showed us that taking that day was indeed a priority. Now we know that God made us in His Image, but that doesn't mean that God made us His equal. One way in which God created us differently is that we need to rest.

►► Resting allows time for **RECHARGING**. We are not like God with an infinite amount of physical, emotional and mental power, at least NOT in our flesh. We need to recharge our batteries and resting does that for us.

Andy Crouch, in The Tech-Wise Family has this to offer...

### **TRUE REST ELUDES MOST OF US**

True rest seems to be elusive for most Americans. Only one in seven adults (14 percent) set aside a day a week for rest. And on that one day a week, what do they do? Mostly, they work. Only one in five (19 percent) of this small group say they don't do any work at all. Even fewer Americans commit to daily time alone (16 percent) or with God (21 percent) or to activities that recharge them (12 percent). Only 12 percent of American adults say that they intentionally set aside a time of day when they don't use electronic devices.

*Andy Crouch, The Tech-Wise Family (Baker Books, 2017), page 104*

*Then there is Christopher Wanjek "Sleep Shrinks the Brain ... and That's a Good Thing*

### **STUDY SHOWS THAT SLEEP ACTUALLY SHRINKS OUR BRAINS**

Proper sleep habits have long been understood as essential to physical and mental health, but the exact reasons why have still remained a matter of scientific intrigue. Recently, however, a research team released findings that shine some more light on the natural processes our bodies undergo during sleep. They found that during the hours we are unconscious, the brain takes advantage of the opportunity and actually shrinks the synapses that connect the brain's neurons by up to 20%.

The reason, the researchers presume, is to remove inconsequential information and make room for new memories to be made. Without this process, the synapses would become overloaded with information and not be able to cope. "It is critical to have pruning back at night, so that the huge amount of information encoded by temporary synapses during the day won't overwhelm the brain," says Russell Foster, a sleep researcher at the University of Oxford. "Pruning ensures that only the most important information is retained." The study also noted that this neurological activity is likely only one of many "housekeeping" items that take place during a good night's sleep, emphasizing how important rest truly is.

***We may often consider the theological implications of regular Sabbath and rest, but it can be fascinating to consider that God actually built humans to rest regularly.***

*Ethan Adams, PreachingToday.com; source: Christopher Wanjek "Sleep Shrinks the Brain ... and That's a Good Thing," Yahoo! News (2-06-17).*

Rest is indeed Healthy!

Now we see something else as we look at God's approach to rest.

One thing that God did as He came to the end of His work each day and approached his rest, is that he took the time to enjoy what He accomplished that day. The Bible says that He looked back over His work and exclaimed that His work was "GOOD!" On the last day after creating you and me and as He looked at ALL of his work for the week in totality, He exclaimed that it was indeed "VERY GOOD!"

What we see from God, is that

►► Resting allows time for **REFLECTING**. If you want to find joy on the job you have to learn to rest and spend some time reflecting on what you have accomplished and yet not just from merely a materialistic view.

Look back at verse 21 again and take note of something Solomon missed.

***21 because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it.***

Solomon looked at his work strictly from what he produced in a materialistic way and not what was produced in Him or how God even used what was in Him. Solomon failed to celebrate the wisdom, knowledge and skill that God had blessed him with. The wisdom and knowledge and skill that God was developing within him and that could bring God glory. Solomon's work was simply too self-serving and not God-glorifying.

The thing is resting should involve reflecting or reflection.

For God it wasn't about simply the great works he had created. Remember, Solomon himself says he created some great works but it did not leave him feeling successful or fulfilled. For God I believe His daily reflection was about how He had expressed Himself through His work. It was about what His work said about Him and how it brought Him glory.

Also as God reflected on His work he understood the overall purpose behind it all. He knew each day he was building a world that we would inhabit where we could bring Him glory and live in fellowship with Him. The point here and we will see this more in a moment, but God reflected on the work as it glorified him. Our work likewise needs to be rooted in a desire to bring glory to God. Consider it this way...

*We need to reflect His glory **IN** our work  
so we can then reflect **ON** His Glory after our work.*

Moving forward though...

►► Rest should lead into **WORSHIP**. Now of course we need to worship God ALL of the time, but there is something about the worship that should be a part of our rest and reflection. In the Bible rest and worship always seem to be close companions. One could almost say that the Jewish people worshipped God through their rest.

Now there is also an interesting shift in the Bible that is worth noting here.

**A.** OT Paradigm: We Work to REST! In the O.T. the Jewish people looked at work and rest from this perspective. They worked to rest! Abraham Heschel, Jewish Rabbi and author makes this very point. They worked 6 days and rested on the 7th! They kept Saturday, the Sabbath Holy and rested and worshipped on that day. They had the understanding that they worked to rest, with rest also involving in their worship.

**B.** NT Paradigm: We Work from our REST.

Today because of the resurrection of Christ and because He has fulfilled the law, we are no longer under the law, we gather for worship and hopefully are able to rest on there first day of the week not the last! In this paradigm we don't work to enter our rest, we rest in order to carry out our work.

If we want to find more Joy on the Job...

*We need to learn to work from our rest.*

You see the Gospel speaks of a different rest today. The Gospel speaks of a rest that Christ Provides in the sense that He has finished the ultimate work. Remember what He said on the cross.

**John 19:30 ESV**

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The most important work of the Gospel and the cross has been done, completed by Christ. As we take a day to rest and reflect, our reflection should lead into worship as we reflect on what Christ has done for us, the work He has completed that we never could. As we rest in His finished work each day and every week, we should then be empowered to do ours.

We need to see the union of our sabbath and our worship and how they work together. In fact consider the words of Jesus in Matthew. What if these were words we attached to our gathering here as a church each week.

**Matthew 11:28-30 ESV**

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

We come and we learn the rhythms of Rest and Grace each Sunday, so we can leave empowered to do the work that God has for us. Empowered by the ultimate work of the cross that He has completed for us and in us.

To find joy on the Job...

Don't work merely to acquire or simply to retire, and then

Learn to enjoy your rest!

Let's look at the final section of verses in chapter 2 then. Verses 24-26. One last piece of wisdom from Solomon.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:24-26 ESV**

24 There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, 25 for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? 26 For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Solomon realizes that to find any pleasure in your work, to find any joy on the job, you have to stay close to God. Here is His third piece of wisdom and I have already hinted at this, this morning...

### **3. YOU MUST WORK FOR GOD'S GLORY NOT YOUR PLEASURE.**

To find job on the job, to find pleasure in your work, you have to be working FOR the right reason. You have to be working FOR the glory of God!

It really is as simple as this, we were created for this purpose.

The reality is take almost anything and you can probably agree that that item brings its the most pleasure when we use it for its purpose. Imagine playing basketball with a football. It wouldn't bounce very well and it would be a lot harder to make a basket. In the end footballs are designed for football and basketballs for basketballs.

We were designed to bring God glory not ourselves glory. This was in part Solomons' problem. He lived a self-serving life not a God-glorifying life. In the end, he was unhappy, unsatisfied, unfulfilled.

Now let me end then with three simple lessons here...

First we have to know that...

** Our greatest satisfaction and highest pleasure is found in bringing God glory.**



### **1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV**

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,  
do all to the glory of God.

There is nothing that we should do for any other purpose than to bring God glory. Everything I do can serve a secondary purpose but the first purpose is to glorify God.

### **SERVING GOD IN YOUR WORK**

Martin Luther was approached by a working man who wanted to know how he could serve God. Luther asked him, "What is your work now?" The man said, "I'm a shoemaker."

Much to the cobbler's surprise, Luther replied, "Then make good shoes and sell them at a fair price."

Luther didn't tell the man to make "Christian shoes." He didn't tell the man to leave his shoe business and become a monk.

As Christians, we can faithfully serve God in a variety of vocations and jobs. And we don't need to justify that work in terms of its "spiritual" value or evangelistic usefulness. We simply pursue our calling with new God-glorifying motives, goals, and standards.

Tullian Tchividjian, "Our Calling, Our Spheres," Leadership journal (Summer 2010), p. 98

Remember what I said a few moments ago...

*We need to reflect His glory **IN** our work*

*So we can then reflect **ON** His Glory after our work.*

You see... then there is this lesson...

**⚙️ God can bring a deeper joy  
and greater satisfaction to your work.**

God says that your job and the personal interactions that exist there have a deeper meaning and go beyond the work you produce and the paycheck you earn. That deeper meaning is the higher purpose of bringing glory to God!

*If you want to find the Joy in your Job,  
find the Deeper Meaning in the Higher Purpose.*

**Colossians 3:23-24 ESV**

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Then one last lesson here...

**⚙️ God can bring an eternal perspective to our work.**

Thinking of the deeper meaning and higher purpose consider this, the glory you bring to God is not just limited to this world but the honest. The glory you bring God through your job will last for all of eternity. Now I would say that is a rather powerful investment.

**Revelations 4:13 ESV**

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

**1. DON'T WORK TO AQUIRE (OR RETIRE.) V1**

**2. LEARN TO ENJOY YOUR REST. V18-23**

**3. YOU MUST WORK FOR GOD'S GLORY NOT YOUR PLEASURE V24-26**

## **'GIVERS' AT WORK GET MORE SATISFACTION**

Nearly 70 of Americans cite work as a major source of stress in their lives; over half of Americans report being unsatisfied and unhappy with their jobs. How can the typical worker find a little more satisfaction in work? Adam Grant, a researcher at the Wharton School of Business, offers some simple advice: become a giver at work.

Based on his research, Grant has identified three basic kinds of workers: takers, matchers, and givers. Takers see the workplace as a competitive, dog-eat-dog place. "If I don't look out for myself first," takers think, "no one will." Matchers believe that work relationships are governed by even exchanges of favors. In contrast, givers are other-focused, paying more attention to what other people need from them. Their hallmark is generosity at work.

Surprisingly, Grant has found that only 8 percent of people describe themselves as givers at work. That's because most people assume that in the workplace givers will never get ahead in their career. Also, when people are stressed out at work, their first instinct is to retreat into a taker mentality. But Grant's research consistently shows that givers are among the most successful people in business. They may also be the happiest.

In one study, Grant found that givers who were high school teachers were less vulnerable to stress and exhaustion if they saw the impact their giving was having on their students. Being a giver at work also has lasting benefits on well-being outside of work. In a study of 68 firefighters, those who helped others on the job felt happier at home at bedtime than those who did not.

Grant asks a question that's relevant to every follower of Christ: "Would you rather achieve success [at work] that comes at the expense of others or in ways that lift other people up?"

*Adapted from Emily Esfahani Smith, "Career Advice: Give," The Atlantic (4-30-13)*

## **APPLICATION & TRANSFORMATION**

- What verse or thought spoke to me the most this morning?
- Could I do a better job resting, reflecting and worshipping? In what ways?
- What does "working from your rest" mean to you?
- In what way can I express more of God's Glory on the job!