



Week 4 – Work Redeemed

1. God has made creation, including our work in creation, futile so that we will not be satisfied with a broken world. He uses “thorns and thistles” to make us long for **redemption**. Bad news makes us want good news. The Good News is that God is rescuing the world from sin through the saving work of Jesus.
2. As a man, Jesus worked as a **carpenter** and a **builder**. He had to face all the thorns and thistles we face. He sweated, got tired, had blisters, sore muscles, difficult customers and disappointment with work not turning out the way he wanted. While work never caused him to sin, he still understands how hard work is.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

3. Jesus’s greatest and most difficult work was redeeming a world of sinners, through his perfect life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection. Work, while still subject to the curse, is no longer completely **enslaved** to sin. The Gospel is restoring work to what it once was!
4. In their work, the redeemed people of God show a **watching** world God’s glorious plan for making all things new.

Work Under the Fall

- Is hard and often pointless
- Makes us anxious and exhausted
- Becomes a way to make a name for ourselves
- Creates a sense of envy and competition with others
- Exploits creation
- Becomes an idol

Work Renewed by the Gospel

- We are sustained by God’s grace, even when work disappoints us
- We can cast our cares upon Christ and find rest in him
- We work out of our identity in Christ, not to improve upon it
- Is a means to bless others
- Stewards creation for God’s purposes
- Is an opportunity to glorify God and display his kingdom values to a broken world

5. While through the Gospel Christ has already **defeated** sin, we live in a world that is still subject to futility. The Kingdom of God has come, but it is not yet reached its fullest expression.



Small Group Questions

1. On whose righteousness do you stand? What do you rely upon to validate your life? About what do you say, "if only I had _____, I would be fulfilled and happy?"
2. In what ways might you limit the Gospel to future "benefits" after you die (like spending eternity with Jesus, avoiding hell, etc.) and minimize how it applies right now? Have you ever thought about how the Gospel applies to your work right now? How do the present benefits of the Gospel change your view of work today?
3. The Son of God is eternal, but took on flesh as the man Jesus. He is now, and forever will be, fully God and fully man. And as a man, Jesus worked. He labored physically in a fallen world. How might this shape your view of Jesus?
4. Hebrews 4:15 promises us that Jesus can sympathize with all the thorns and thistles we experience in our work (but unlike us he never sinned). With which thorns and thistles that you wrestle with the most do you need Jesus's loving sympathy?
5. The Kingdom of God is both "now" and "not yet." The Kingdom has come, but has not yet fully overcome all the brokenness in our world (but one day it will). In what ways has the Gospel already changed how you approach your work?
6. The unbelieving world watches believers as they go about life (including in their work). What would you want unbelievers to see in you as you work?

Homework

One of the implications of the Gospel is that God gives us an all-sufficient grace at all times (2 Cor. 9:8). While grace is multi-faceted, one aspect of God's grace is that it is the power of God made available to those who have faith in Jesus. God's grace can be a transforming power (maturing us and enabling us to overcome sin) and a sustaining power (keeping us in the faith and enabling us to bear the hardships of a fallen world with a glad heart). As you think about your relationship with work, how do you need Jesus's grace to change you? In what ways do you need God's grace to get you through difficulties at work? 2 Cor. 12:9-10 promises that God's power in us is perfected when we are weak. That means when we don't trust in our own strength we become aware of God's strength that is available to us. What would it look like for you to be weak in yourself but strong in God while you work?