



Week 5 – A New Perspective

1. Jesus is the **anchor** who secures all of our hopes. Through our faith in him, we are reconciled to God, forgiven of our sins, have received a new identity, are adopted into God's family, have an imperishable inheritance, and so much more. Just because this Gospel hope is largely unseen by us right now, does not make it any less real! That takes the **pressure off** of work.

“...we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” 2 Cor. 4:18

2. When Christians see their work **disconnected** from the Gospel, they tend to adopt secular worldviews concerning work. This usually means that work becomes **self-focused**. It becomes our identity and our means for security. But the Christian worldview is oriented toward the values of Christ's kingdom. Because Christ has secured for us all that we genuinely need, we are freed to see our work as a way to display **Christ's values** (love God, love others). (Mark 12:30-31).

3. When we see our work as a means to “love God” we:

- **Worship God**, not our work (Exodus 20:3)
- Are motivated to **glorify** God in our work, recognizing that our work is ultimately an **offering** we make to him (1 Cor. 10:31, Ephes. 6:7)

4. When we see our work as a means to “love others” we:

- **Submit** to the leadership of those over us with a glad heart (Ephes. 6:5)
- Have **compassion** for those we lead (Ephes. 6:9; Matt. 20:25-28)
- Draw attention to the contributions of **others** and place ourselves in the background (Phil. 2:3)

5. We also “love others” by valuing their work as a **means** that God uses to care for the world.

“God milks the cows through the vocation of the milk maids.” Martin Luther

6. God “works all things according to the counsel of his will” (Ephes. 1:11). Therefore, all work is significant to God because he is **accomplishing** his purposes through it. Even work done in obscurity is important to him, so it should be important to us.

7. God's care for the world is a **“common grace”** that involves the work of Christians and non-Christians alike. “Common grace,” while not sufficient to save, is God's **blessing** of all people by enabling them to accomplish a **common good** and by restraining the evil that they could otherwise do.



“For [God] makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matthew 5:45

8. When we realize that God is **guiding** the work of non-believers, we are freed to celebrate them as his image-bearers and resist the urge to only do business in a **Christian bubble**. We must also be ready to share with our non-believing co-workers and business associates the hope we have in Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:15)

Small Group Questions

1. In what ways do you overemphasize the importance of worldly things you can see and discount the eternal things you cannot see? What occupies your thoughts more – the eternal things of God or the temporary things in the here and now?
2. Once we make God the priority in our work, our selfishness decreases and our concern for loving others increases. Where do you need to grow most in loving others – submitting to your leaders, being an compassionate leader yourself, drawing attention to the contributions of teammates, shaping and caring for others? Share some recent examples of when you loved others well in the workplace and when you struggled to love others well.
3. Think about specific co-workers, customers, and vendors who may not be followers of Jesus. How is their work a gift of God’s grace to you and others?
4. Our culture celebrates the powerful and the wealthy, but Jesus was known for spending time with those the culture rejected. What are some ways that you can communicate to lesser-paid co-workers and service industry workers (like wait-staff, custodial staff, etc.) that their work is meaningful to you?

Homework

Using the various elements of this week’s topic, write out a statement that summarizes your worldview concerning work based on the Gospel. Think of this as a mission statement for your work. Include the importance of being grounded in who you are in Christ, how you can use your job to love God and love others. Make it as specific as you can.