

Beautiful By Design Seminar: Thank God It's Monday 11 October 2015

Do we work to live, or live to work?

Work is noble, and yet broken.

Is it worth it
A new winter coat and shoes for the wife
And a bicycle on the boy's birthday
It's just a rumour that was spread around town
By the women and children
Soon we'll be shipbuilding
Well I ask you
The boy said 'DAD THEY'RE GOING TO TAKE ME TO TASK
BUT I'LL BE BACK BY CHRISTMAS'
It's just a rumour that was spread around town
Somebody said that someone got filled in
For saying that people get killed in
The result of this shipbuilding
(From Shipbuilding by Elvis Costello)

A. God The Father's Plan For Work

"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." (Genesis 1:28)

"To rearrange the raw material of God's creation in such a way that it helps the world in general, and people in particular to thrive and flourish." (Keller, 59)

"The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.
The LORD upholds all who fall
And lifts up all who are bowed down.
The eyes of all look to you,
And you give them their food at the proper time.
You open your hand
And satisfy the desires of every living thing." (Psalm 145:13-16)

Martin Luther: "God milks the cows through the vocation (the calling!) of the milk maids."

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.
It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
And you will eat the plants of the field.
By the sweat of your brow
You will eat your food
Until you return to the ground,
Since from it you were taken;
For dust you are
And to dust you will return." Genesis 3:17-19

1. Work Becomes Frustrating

2. Work Becomes Pointless

3. Work Becomes Selfish

“Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”
(Genesis 11:4)

B. God The Son’s Provision For Workers

Toil is: What we Do Defining Who We Are

“I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.” (Ecc 2:17)

Because of Jesus: Who we are Now Defines What We Do

Romans 5:17-19

Death becomes Life

Condemnation becomes Justification

Sinners become Righteous

“Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” (Rom 8:14-16)

What is the difference between slavery and sonship?

Not No More Work, but a New Way of Working

Romans 12:1 “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.”

C. God The Holy Spirit’s Power for the Workplace

1. A New Goal

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” (Col 3:23-24)

2. A New Attitude

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Gal 5:22-23)

Contentment – are we able to see the good in what we are doing right now?

Humility – how often do we find ourselves thinking, what’s in it for me?

Generosity – do we have blessing others as our goal?

Joy – what are we thankful for today?

3. A New Balance

“We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat.” (2 Thess 3:11-12)

“Sabbath is a disciplined and faithful way to remember that you are not the one who keeps the world running, who provides for your family, not even the one who keeps your work projects moving forward.” (Keller)

We work and rest, trusting God in both, recognising that we are living for a future hope.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Cor 10:31)

Discuss:

What does work look like for you?

It may be a job you are paid for, it may be a family focussed, or the ongoing responsibilities in retirement or unemployment, or the school or college environment.

Are there particular ways you experience the frustrations of Genesis 3?

How might the new identity you have in Jesus help you approach your work in a healthy way?

In what ways do you need the Holy Spirit’s power for the workplace?