

May 17, 2020
"Work, in the Name of Jesus"

Pastor Andy McClellan
Colossians 3:22-4:1

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:15-23 ESV

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Outline:

1. Do your work *for* others **HONESTLY**...because you work for Jesus **FIRST**, vv. 22-24 (cf. Col. 1:7, 23; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 6:5-7; 1 Corinthians 7:22; Titus 2:9-10; 1 Peter 2:18).
2. Do your work *for* others **COMPLETELY**...because your work will be **EVALUATED** by Jesus, vv. 23-25 (cf. Eph. 6:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Timothy 6:1-2; 1 Peter 1:17).
3. Do your work *over* others **RIGHTLY**...because you have Jesus **OVER** you, 4:1 (cf. Eph. 6:9; Titus 2:11-14; Jude 1:4; James 5:4; Deuteronomy 24:14-18; Leviticus 19:13; Revelation 20:12-13).

Family Time:

"Work" is often regarded in our culture as a necessary evil in order to provide for later pleasure. Ponder together the meaning behind the once-popular phrase "workin' for the weekend." Given the place of work in God's good creation (cf. Genesis 2:15), how is that actually an unbiblical view of work? How should we view work from biblical perspective? Now apply that to household chores, mom or dad's employment, the family business, etc. Does your family have a biblical perspective on work? If so, pray together as a family that God would continue that in your home. If not, what changes need to be made so that you do have a biblical perspective? Pray for God to help you make those changes.

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion:

1. When you think of “slavery,” what images come to mind? Slavery in the Roman Empire really has no parallel in our context, though the relationship of employer to employee comes the closest. With that in mind, read Colossians 3:22-4:1, and replace “bondservant” for “employee” and “master” for “employer.” Spend some time thinking about the application of this passage to your own work/job scenario.
2. In Col. 3:22-23, Paul describes the way that a servant should serve his master by using two phrases that are translated in the ESV as “with sincerity of heart” and “heartily.” Compare the ESV with other English translations. What do these two concepts mean? Now apply them to your work environment. What would it look like for you to work “with sincerity of heart” and “heartily?” Do you do that?
3. Read Titus 2:9-14. While the context is slaves and masters, if you were to apply it to your job and your relationships with supervisors and fellow employees, how is your working hard, doing a good job, and putting on the virtues described in Col. 3:12-15 a service to the Gospel of Jesus? How could not putting off the characteristics of the old self (Col. 3:5-9) be harmful to the Gospel of Jesus?
4. Make a list of the roles or jobs that come to mind when you think of “full-time vocational ministry?” On the basis of your list, are you in “full-time vocational ministry?” Now, break down the words, noting that a “vocation” is another word for your occupation, trade or profession, and “ministry” simply means service (in this context service to Jesus). Do you live your life in full-time in service to Jesus in your occupation, trade or profession? If so, are you in “full-time vocational ministry?” If not, how is Colossians 3:17, 22-25 a helpful corrective for you?

NEXT WEEK: Philemon
Damascus Community Church
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