

THE GIFT OF WORK

(Genesis 1:26-2:2)

What thoughts and feelings come to mind when you hear the word, **work**?

Why?

*Then God said, “**Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness**, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule** over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”²⁹ Then God said, “I give you **every seed-bearing plant** on the face of the whole earth and **every tree that has fruit** with seed in it. They **will be yours for food**.”³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give **every green plant for food**.” And it was so.³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.² By the seventh day God had finished the **work** he had been doing; so, on the seventh day he rested from all his **work**.*

WORK PROVIDES US WITH GOD-GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES

- **Work is an opportunity for CREATIVITY**

...because we reflect God’s image as **CREATORS**

What am I creating/making today?

- **Work is an opportunity for MINISTRY**

...because all work is **SACRED**

How can I serve God/others today?

- **Work is an opportunity for DISCLOSURE**

...because it reveals who and what the worker **SERVES**

What will my work reveal today?

QUOTES OF NOTE

It is true that everybody is a “maker” in the simplest meaning of the term. We spend our lives putting matter together in new patterns and so “creating” new forms which were not there before. This is so intimate and universal a function that we scarcely ever think about it. In a sense, even this kind of creation is “creation out of nothing.” Though we cannot create matter, we continually, by rearrangement, create new and unique entities. (Dorothy Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker*)

Let the Church remember this: that every maker and worker is called to serve God in his profession or trade—not outside it. The Apostles complained rightly when they said it wasn’t meet they should leave the word of God and serve tables; their vocation was to preach the word (Acts 6:1-6). But the person whose vocation it is to prepare meals beautifully might with equal justice protest: It is not meet for us to leave the service of our tables to preach the word. (Dorothy Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker*)

It is as great and as difficult a *spiritual* work to run the factories and the mines, the banks and the department stores, the schools and government agencies for the Kingdom of God as it is to pastor a church or work as an evangelist. There truly is no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to the cause of Christ. Holy people must stop going into “church work” as their natural course of action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking, and journalism with the same zeal previously given to evangelism or to pastoral and ministry work. (Dallas Willard, *Spirit of the Disciplines*)

If we go to work and don’t love our jobs, quitting is not the only option. We can choose to commit ourselves to ensuring that our colleagues love coming to work. Our work becomes helping them to find their calling. That act of service not only changes the way coworkers feel about their job; it actually changes the way we feel about ours. That act of service is called leadership. (Simon Sinek, *Together is Better*)

How can anyone remain interested in a religion which seems to have no concern for nine-tenths of his life? The Church’s approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to exhorting him not to be drunk or disorderly in his leisurely hours, and to come to church on Sundays. What the Church should be telling him is this: that the very first demand that his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables. Church, by all means, and decent forms of amusement, certainly—but what use is all that if in the very center of his life and occupation he is insulting God with bad carpentry? No crooked table legs or ill-fitting drawers ever, I dare swear, came out of the carpenter’s shop at Nazareth. Nor, if they did, could anyone believe that they were made by the same hand that made Heaven and earth. (Dorothy Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker*)

As a response to this world’s problems, the gospel of the Kingdom of God will never make sense except as it is incarnated—we say “fleshed out” in ordinary human beings in all ordinary human conditions of human life. But it will make sense when janitors and storekeepers, carpenters and secretaries, businessmen and university professors, bankers and government officials brim with the degree of holiness and power formerly thought appropriate to apostles and martyrs. (Dallas Willard, *Spirit of the Disciplines*)

During the year 1957, I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music. I feel this has been granted through His grace. ALL PRAISE TO GOD.... This album is a humble offering to Him. An attempt to say, “THANK YOU GOD” through our work, even as we do in our hearts with our tongues. May He help and strengthen all men in every good endeavor. (John Coltrane, liner notes to *A Love Supreme*)