

Warm-up

- What is the worst (or the best) job that you've ever had?
- What percent of your time do you spend at work?

Regular Questions

1. The average American Christians spend an estimated 40% of their waking hours at work (including homemaking) and only 4% in a church building. And yet, the average church spends most of its time equipping its members for the 4%. Do you agree? Even if this is somewhat true. What kind of message are we sending to people?
2. Read the following verses out loud – Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25 and 31. What do these verses tell you about God? Since we are made in God's image (Genesis 1:27), it seems natural to ask, "When do I or have I responded in a God-like delight in work?"
3. Read Genesis 2:15 and 19-20; 3:20-21; 4:2. What were the first jobs given in the Bible? What did it mean for Adam to "work it (the Garden) and take care of it?" What is the significance of Adam's naming of the animals? Why didn't God do that Himself? What does that tell you about how God sees our work?
4. Of course we know that work isn't always a taste of paradise. After Adam and Eve fell into sin and rebelled against God, our work would be under a curse. Read Genesis 3:17-19. How do you experience the reality of this curse in your work? (You can be specific; it might help your small group to pray more specifically for you).
5. What is the theological and practical significance of the fact that God gave humans work prior to our fall into sin? What does that say about the dignity of work?
6. "Workaholism" seems to be a concern in our culture. For one theologian's take on workaholism, read quote #1 on the "Quote Sheet." Read Genesis 2:1-2. What is one big safeguard that God gives against workaholism? Again, since we are made in God's image, it also seems natural to ask, "When do I respond in a God-like manner in my rest?"
7. The following are just a few key New Testament verses about work (please read them at one time): 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:22-23 and Ephesians 6:5-9. What do these verses tell you about work?

Action Points

Action Point #1 – Read the story from the writer Calvin Seerveld about his father (see Quote #2). How did Calvin's father live the truths we've been discussing in this study? How can we pray for you so that you approach your work with the same spirit of faith, hope and love?

Or if you're short on time, use Action Point #2

Action Point #2 – Henri Nouwen once said, "If I cannot find God in the middle of my work – where my concerns and worries, pains and joys are – it does not make sense to find Him in the hours set free at the periphery of life." How are you doing at finding God in the middle of your work? How can we pray for you?