

Your Work Under God's Work

Good Work

Ephesians 6:5-9

I was planning on running a half marathon in Louisville this weekend, my father-in-law signed me up with my sister-in-law, and we were going to do it. I started training, and if you've ever run a half marathon you know a lot of work goes into it, a lot of training and running long distances. About two months ago I just stopped running long distance altogether, stopped the training, stopped the work that goes into it. Then last night, I got sort of shamed by my father-in-law and sister-in-law into running the half marathon, so I thought hey, let's do this. So I ran a half marathon and let's just say, without the work you put into it, this is what you get as a result of it. It's kind of funny though because we are preaching about work this morning, so please don't be like I do and skip out on the work because you will end up limping around. I guess that's what God wanted you to know this morning.

If you have your bibles, Ephesians chapter 6. We're going to talk about work, and we are looking at our work under God's work. That's what we're going to be talking about this morning, our work under God's work. Some of you are dreading tomorrow. You're dreading it; it's a Monday, right. We have words about this, right. "It's just another Monday." We have words about the weekend, "Thank God, it's Friday." We say that. We're excited about Friday, but Monday, it's a case of the Mondays, "I don't want to go," "I'm going to have to work all week," "I've got to go back to school." Some of us dread the workweek and we live for the weekend because the weekend is when we come alive and we get to do what we want to do. We've had this dream that maybe one day a rich uncle that we don't know about dies and leaves us millions and millions of dollars and we never have to work another day in our life. Wouldn't that be great! We would just vacation all the time, travel around, not be responsible for anything, not have to labor, not have to do any work. That's our dream because what we

believe about work, it is an unnecessary evil, right. We just don't want to do it. Why do we have to work? Our passion for work is not working hard; it is hardly working. That's what we say about work; we just despise it. So that's part of us. Then there's another part in here that you can't wait until tomorrow. You've actually thought about it all Friday night, all Saturday, and all day today. You cannot wait to get back in the office. You can't wait to work on that project, to build that thing you have going. You cannot wait to finish that house or start that new company because work is what makes you thrive. Work, if I could say it, is who you are. You're defined by your work; you get all of who you are based on your work. So for you, you live to work. It is everything that you are. It is ultimately the god that you worship and you can't wait for even this sermon to end so you can go home and just do something. You can't ever stop. Days off for vacation are for the weak. That's not you. You don't take vacations because you work. Work is your vacation. That's who you are; it makes you thrive. If you're not working, somehow you don't feel valuable. So there are two camps, and here is what I want to say; when work is about you, you'll fall into one of those camps. Either you'll hate it too much, or you'll love it too much. It will be a duty, or it will be a deity, one of those two. But the reality is if you see your work under God's work, it won't be just a duty, it won't be a deity, but it will be a delight. It will be something that you actually enjoy because what you understand is that working is actually a way to practically love God and love your neighbor. That's what I want to show this morning. So here's kind of the summary of the sermon. We're going to put it up on the screen.

1. In your work, we want to love God in your work.
2. Serve your neighbor through your work.
3. Celebrate the work of others.

That's what I think Paul is going to want us to see in his letter to Ephesus. He wants us to see that their work actually matters, and he wants them to see their work as a way they can love God, love their neighbor, and as they look around and see others working, they should actually celebrate what is happening all around them. So why is Paul even mentioning work in Ephesians? If you're in Ephesians 6, you know that we just talked about

the family, husband and wife, kids and parents. That is sort of a sacred space, the family. What about work; is work our secular space? I mean yeah, Jesus, You're about church and family. But isn't work kind of my thing? Don't I get to do work? Isn't work just about providing for my family? Is the work itself actually something that God cares about? We're going to see is the reason Paul addresses work in Ephesians is because God actually cares about your work. It's not just a means to make money to support your family; it's not just a means to make money to fund missions; your actual work, the thing that you actually do matters to God. What we're going to see is that your work is actually the way God providentially takes care of the world. So hopefully, you see your work in a complete different way this morning, or you're just encouraged in the reality that you get to work as God works, and you get to be His hands as He cares for the world through your work. So if you have your bibles, Ephesians chapter 6 go ahead and go there with me. If you don't, the words are going to be on the screen. If you would stand out of reverence for the Word of God, we're going to read the Scripture together. Here's what we see in verse 5.

Scripture

“Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.”

(Prayer)

Father God, I pray that You would help us to see that our work matters to You, that our work is a way that You take care of the world, so in our

work, we can love You, love our neighbor, and celebrate those around us. We pray this in Jesus good name, amen.

What I want to do in that text is make this a two-part sermon. There are a lot of things going on in the text, and we're going to deal with next week on the practical how-to's, what not to do and what to do, whether you're an employer or boss. But what I want to do this morning is just look at work itself. I think for some of us, we've missed the goodness that God has given us in this thing called work. So I want to look in, primarily, verses 6, 7, and 8 this morning, so you want to go back to those in your Bible. I just want to read them again to show you where we're going to really focus in on this morning.

Here's what verse 6 says. Work is the context here. What is our work? It's doing the will of go from the heart. Have you ever thought about your work as actually doing God's will? I mean, maybe ministry, but what about a plumber? What about a carpenter? What about a farmer? What about a nurse? Can a nurse be doing God's will just caring for patients? Paul is, I think, going to argue absolutely. So it's "doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service (that's what work is) with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free." So when we see our work under God's work, we see that it is actually accomplishing God's will. It's actually serving or loving our neighbor, and there are actually rewards that should come from our labor.

I've got to just be honest; God has done a lot this past month in the way I view work. He sort of changed my whole lens by which I see work, so part of this morning is me just walking you through what God has shown me, and hopefully, He will open your eyes maybe to the same truths about your work because I'm sort of conflicted sometimes when it comes to work. As most of you know, this is springtime so the farmers are out in the fields, or at least when it's not raining they are trying to be out in the field because they're trying to get the crops in the ground. If you know me, my granddad is a farmer, my dad is a farmer, and so by default, without even

choosing it, I am a farmer. That's just part of what I have to do as a Cunningham. During the springtime, for a couple of weeks I have to spend several days a week over in LBL driving a tractor. I always feel a little guilty about it because when I'm driving a tractor, I'm not doing important work because important work is things like ministry. That's what God has called me to do, and important work is meeting with people, going to the hospital, crafting a sermon, meeting with some discipleship guys, doing evangelism. That is important work. That's work that really matters, work that's going to last forever. But during the spring, I find myself in a tractor sometimes doing work that doesn't matter to God. I'm just driving a tractor. What does God care about that? So I have this conflicting spirit within me of wanting to be doing work that matters, but I'm just doing stuff that doesn't matter. So I usually try to multitask. I'm always when I'm in a tractor, I'm either listening to a spiritual podcast, I'm trying to learn something new, I'm trying to communicate with our ministry team on something they can be doing, I'm trying to take calls, do counseling in the tractor, trying to work on a sermon; just trying to use this work that God doesn't care about, farming, to do something that God cares about like ministry. I'm always trying to figure out when I'm feeling like I'm just not being used by God; maybe I can do something to redeem this wasted time in a tractor. I knew I was going to preach on work in a few weeks, so I thought, well, I'm going to be doing some meaningless task, driving a tractor, so how about I do something that matters. So I downloaded an audio book by Tim Keller called, 'Every Good Endeavor.' I highly recommend that book to you. So I put my earbuds in as I'm doing work that doesn't matter to God, and now I'm doing work that matters to God. I'm hearing about His Word and I'm listening to a sermon. I'm listening to a guy who's diving into work and how it relates to God. As I put my earbuds in, here I am driving a tractor, doing this work that doesn't matter, I'm steering, disking up a field, God doesn't care about that obviously, so I've got my head buds in and I'm doing something that matters. I'm listening, I'm trying to hear what God would say to me, doing the work that really matters, and as I begin to drive, what happened is through that book, God began to take my heart and with a scalpel began to show me how unhealthy my view of work was. Here was my view; there is sacred

work, ministry, missions, and then there is secular work, the things that pay for sacred work like ministry and missions. So if you want to be a businessman, great, do that but support missions because that's what really matters to God. As I began to drive a tractor doing this work that I saw was very meaningless and just something I had to do, I'm trying to do something meaningful, and then Tim Keller began to open up the Scripture to me and show me that I was dead wrong about work. But it is not true that God has these two categories of work, there's the sacred and then there's the secular. There's the work that matters, and then there's the work that doesn't matter. In fact, what the Bible tells us is Jesus Christ rules and reigns over all creation. There's not a square inch that is outside of His Kingdom, so everything we do, all of our work is sacred work, everything we do. So I began to hear Tim Keller as I'm driving a tractor doing not important work to God, and I began to realize, hold on, what am I doing right now? I'm driving a tractor. Why am I driving a tractor? Because we are planting crops. What are crops for? Oh yeah, they're to feed the world! Uh, that does seem like something that matters to God. I'm pretty sure God is passionate about feeding and caring for the world. All of a sudden, I began to see that this work I thought didn't matter to God is something actually deeply at the heart of God, that my work as a farmer is actually God's vehicle to care for the world. Through something like farming, God is feeding the world and it's just as important to Him as my other job. I began to see there's no category of secular and sacred. All our work is sacred and God is using all of our work to take care of His good creation. So what does God want us to do in our work? He wants us to love Him and love our neighbor through our work.

What Tim Keller began to show me was a lot of the work Martin Luther did when it came to work. He was also in a society where it saw church work as important to God, everything else was not so important. Martin Luther began to fight against that and began to show that all work is sacred. Everything you do is actually the hands of God caring for the world. Now walking through some of the psalms that Luther took me through, here is the first psalm, Psalm 145 says, "The eyes of all look to You and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand; You satisfy the desires of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind

in all His works." So just notice that. Eyes are looking to God, God is the one who does what; gives food. God is the one who satisfies the desires of every living thing. So what is this saying? God is the one who feeds the world. Then Luther backs up and says how does God do this? When you wake up, does food just magically appear? Is that how God does it? Is that how He feeds the world? No, how does God feel the world? He feeds the world through the farmer who's driving a tractor, who's harvesting. Then He feeds the world through the semi driver who's getting the grain to the granary, then through the barge driver who's taking the barge to where it goes, then through the other truck drivers who's taking it to the processing plant, and then all those workers on the line who are making labels and creating boxes and are putting bread together, and then it goes out on other truck and shipping it to groceries. Then you have the managers of groceries and all the way down to the stock boy who's taking a loaf of bread and putting it on a shelf. What is that kid doing? He is answering the Lord's Prayer, 'give us this day our daily bread.' Bread doesn't just show up, bread takes a stock boy or girl grabbing it and putting it on a shelf. That person, in that moment, is answering the prayer of people who are saying give us this day our daily bread. We sort of disconnect God's providence, God's care for the world, from how He does it. How does God feed the world? It's through the farmer. That's how He feeds the world. So all of a sudden, I'm hearing Luther rebuke me, hey tractor driver, your work matters. Right now, God is using you to be His hands as He feeds the world. I'm pretty sure He cares about that. I'm pretty sure that day matters just like a day in the office matters. I'm beginning to see work is so much grander than what I had seen it to be, that my work in whatever I do or you do, if we're working for a service, a good that we are giving away, we're actually being the providence of God. We're the vehicle by which God is taking care of the world. Yes, ministry is about caring for souls, which is vitally important, but farming is about feeding people, which is also vitally important. God cares for both of those things, and what God began to show me is both of those realms matter deeply to God.

Here's what I want you to see, your work matters. It matters to God that your work, whatever you do, I want you to begin to see it as the hands of God serving His creation. So whatever you do, whatever task you have,

you are the hands of God that is serving His creation as He sustains the universe. Your work is actually under God's work. I want to show this, so we go back to Genesis, Genesis 1. What we see is God works. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God..." What's the first thing we find God doing? It doesn't say in the beginning God loved, in the beginning God saved. It says in the beginning God "created." The very first thing we find out about God is God is a working God, and we go all through Genesis 1, it's the story of God's work, how God created all things. At the end of Genesis 1, Genesis 2, three times it talks about God's work, how He was finished with His work, He rested after His work, He looked at His work and saw that it was good. So God is a working God who works. He created, and right now His work is caring and sustaining and that's where you and I come in. Notice what happened in Genesis 1 when He goes to make us in verse 28. What does God say? "Let Us make man in Our own image. Let Us make them male and female. Now let them have dominion and let them subdue all of creation." The word, 'subdue,' is to cultivate, to take the resources that God has made and take them and subdue them and cultivate them, make what God has made and make it thrive, make it even better. That's what God gave us the gift to do. So a God who works created us to work. Work is not just what we do; work is a part of who we are as human beings. We're made in the image of God who works and we are created to work, not to create in the way God does, everything out of nothing, but to be cultivators, to be God's hands and feet as He cares for the world. That is what God is doing.

I love what JD Greer talks about when he talks about Adam in the beginning. Do you know what he says? He didn't make Adam to be a park ranger. Do you know what park rangers do? Like if you go to a park and you see a park ranger, they are going to make sure that you don't mess up anything that's there. Like if you step out of bounds, don't do that, it's got to stay exactly like it is. A park ranger's job is to keep God's creation just like it is. Don't touch anything! But God didn't make us to be park rangers. We're not supposed to just sit back and not do anything with God's creation. Instead, He created us to be gardeners. What do gardeners do? They take what's there and they cultivate it, they dig in the ground, they plant, and they take all of this harnessed power and energy and they do

things with us, and we are people in the image of God and we build things like cities out of the raw material that God has made. We, as a people, together in the image of God have done amazing things if we have taken what He created and cultivated it. We've made culture and civilization great and beautiful, and that's what God wanted us to do, to take His creation and cultivate it, not just keep it like it is, but form it and shape it and make it where it thrives in what environments we need it to be. So we create under God. So our work; God is a creator and God created us to work, and our work is a way that we participate in what God is doing in the world.

I'll give you one more psalm that Luther took me to. Here's what it says in Psalm 147, it says this, "Praise the Lord oh Jerusalem, praise your God oh Zion, for it strengthens the bars of your gate. He blesses your children within you. He makes peace in your borders. He fills you with the finest of wheat." So who is doing this? God is doing this. God is strengthening the bars of Jerusalem. God is raising up the next generation in the home. God is the one who's creating peace. God is the one who is giving wheat. God is doing those things. The question is how is He doing that? How does God actually strengthen the bars of gates? Well, He does it through ironworkers. He does it through masonry workers. He does it through construction workers. That's how God strengthens the bars of Jerusalem's gates. How does God make peace in a city? He does it through government and lawmakers and people that are able to care for the people, make good laws, and enforce them. It's through police officers who are making peace within the city. It takes all of these things. How is God raising up the next generation? It is moms and dads doing their part. And how in the world is God giving everyone wheat? It is through the farmer and everyone who is involved in that process. You see, the psalm is saying God, You are doing this, but Martin Luther steps back and says well how is God doing this, practically? It's through the work of His people, just like God created Adam to do, I've created it; you cultivate it. I've made it; you care for it. So God is sustaining the universe, He's caring for the universe. How? Through you and I as we labor, as we work under His work. I don't know about you, but that gets me a little bit excited. Because I drive a tractor, I'm the hands of God planting a field. That's pretty cool, and I'm feeding the world. As I worm cows, I'm actually helping the kids who go to Culver's have a

cheeseburger. That's a pretty cool thing! There's that feeding of the world that's going on through what? Through labor, through work. So the reason Paul has a whole section on work, and the reason we're going to spend two Sundays on it is because work matters to God. Your work matters deeply to God.

So let's get into our text in Ephesians. Let's look at verse 6, and the first thing we're going to see is this, that work as loving God. We're going to see our work as an act of worship, as an act to worship God, as an act to love God. The way you work, the way you love the work, it should be a way that you actually love God. Why? Because you're connecting your work to what He's doing. You're His hands. You're His laborer as He is caring for the world. Here's what it says in verse 6, "But as bondservants of Christ," so it's a connection of your working in Christ, your real boss is Jesus, "doing the will of God from the heart." Just think about that for a moment. The context is work. It's not missions, it's not evangelism, it's not preaching; it's work, it's labor. What does he say? That in your labor, in your work, in your job, in your vocation, you are doing the will of God with your whole heart. That's what you should be doing. But how in the world can just labor be fulfilling God's will? As we've seen, your labor is God's vehicle to take care of His creation. God's will is sustain the universe, feed all of the people, care for all the animals, and make cities do endeavors, build civilizations. That's God's will for our planet. How do those things get accomplished? It's through our labor. So as we labor, what we're actually doing is we are doing it under God. We're sharing in His work. As Luther said, "God milks the cows through the milkmaid." Just think about that. In his culture, there were milkmaids. Ours would be the dairy farmer. But how is God milking cows? How do we get milk? It's through a dairy farmer, but the reality is God is the one milking the cows through the dairy farmer so that you and I could have milk in our refrigerator. There's that connection of God is caring for His world, how is He doing that? He's doing that through you and I. Imagine when you pray for someone to get better. They're sick, maybe they have some disease, and you're praying for them to be healed. How does that prayer usually get answered? There's a hospital involved, there's a nurse that's involved, there's a doctor that's involved, and there's all sorts of scientist that are involved to create

medicine. All these different things go into play to you praying for your friend for them to get better, and when they go to the hospital and have all of those people doing their work, as they're loving God and loving their neighbor, what happens? That person gets better, and that is an answered prayer. God is healing people through the medical professions that we have. So if you're in the medical profession, know that your work matters; actually connected to God and God is healing the world through you. When people pray give us this day our daily bread, those people who are involved in the food industry are actually making that happen that you're getting to be connected to God's work.

There was a quote that I found by Dorothy Sayer, and what she says is that usually when it comes to the church, let's take a carpenter, usually when we think about a carpenter he's got a profession, usually think what his or her responsibility is, is just not cuss on the job site, and don't get drunk on the weekends. That's our admonition to a carpenter. Just try to not lie at work. What Dorothy Sayer says is that is not that person's first duty when it comes to their relation with Jesus. No, what their first duty is as a carpenter is to make great tables. That's their first responsibility. Do you know why? Because God is a God who works, and God has made them to work. It's loving of them to care enough about their work to do the absolute best job, to build the absolute best table. Why? Because it is an extension of what God is doing. God is a table builder, and He's building it through the hands of laborers, through carpenters. So a carpenter's first response to the gospel is to make the best table in the whole world because a family is going to sit around that table, and you want this loving your neighbor and loving God to come out by the way that you do your absolute best at your job. You're doing it as an act of loving God, and that work that sometimes we think doesn't matter much, it matters so much to God, and it's the way God cares for the world. The first Adam was a gardener, the second Adam, Jesus, was a carpenter. Those aren't usually jobs we think about as the most important jobs. But when God came to us in the incarnation, He was a carpenter providing a service for those around Him, loving His neighbor through a hammer and nails. That's what Jesus did. That's what we get to do in our work. We get to connect our work to God's work.

So if you're going to actually love God in what you do, you have to connect what you do to what God is doing. You have to make a connection; my work connected to His work. So if you're a teacher, you're not just saying yeah, I'm teaching kids. No, I am God's vehicle to share information and knowledge and wisdom to the next generation. God wants these young students to have wisdom and God has chosen me to be the hands from Him to give them wisdom. When I'm pulling electric lines, God wants people to be warm and have lights, and have stoves that work. As an electrician, I'm the hands of God pulling wires so that someone can have their lights working. In all areas, God wants fires to be put out, so how does He do it? He raises up firemen and women to do those things. That God wants people to have leisure time and to enjoy, so maybe it is athletics. So if you work for Murray State in the athletic department, what am I doing? I'm having a space for families and friends to get together and enjoy one another because God loves community and family, and I'm getting to serve God in that way. I'm not just creating fans, I'm giving people a space to be who they are, to love God, and love their neighbor. Whatever you do, it's connected. What does God want and how is what I'm doing actually serving. As I'm paving roads, what am I really doing? I'm letting God help families and friends and people get connected to one another and to their jobs and vacations and all those different things. You connect your work to God's work, and all of a sudden, as you work it is a way to love God, because God is allowing you to serve His creation. You're the vehicle of His providence.

So the second way that hopefully you're going to work is work as loving your neighbor. So the first is I'm working at this because God is a worker, He's created me to cultivate, and in my work I'm loving God. But with your work, you should also be loving your neighbor. Here's what we see in the text in verse 7. Here's what work is, "...rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free." So what essentially is work? It is rendering a service to someone. There is a need and you are meeting it. I've got a tooth that is hurting, and I can't make my tooth stop hurting, so what do I do? I go to the dentist. The dentist is rendering a service to help my hurting tooth. So what's the

dentist doing? Not just getting a paycheck, no, the dentist is loving his or her neighbor because my tooth is hurting. I'm glad they went to school and found out how to fix teeth because I desperately need that. Now, they get to love their neighbor by giving a service to me, a good work towards me, a service that matters. If we will connect our work, not just as I'm doing something, but I'm actually helping someone. Like the kid who's flipping burgers in the back. I'm just flipping burgers because I need a minimum wage job because I'm going to school and that's all I'm doing. I'm just flipping burgers. What if that kid looked through the window and saw the family sitting at the table after a soccer game? They see the little trophies the kid has and they see the kid grab the perfectly grilled cheeseburger that's been made to perfection because you did it to the best of your ability. You see that kid take a bite and just smile from ear to ear with ketchup and mustard dripping down. What do you do? You're not just flipping burgers, you're serving your neighbor, you're loving your neighbor. They have a need. They're hungry. They need a place to come and fellowship, and because you showed up and flipped a burger, they get to have that experience. You did that! You love God and you loved your neighbor, and you showed up and you did something to the best of your ability, and what did it do? It helped your neighbor. You're not just doing a task to get a reward. You're not just doing a task to get a paycheck. You're doing something to help another human being. You are loving your neighbor through your work. So I think to live this out we've got to connect our work to how it serves and helps others. So whatever work you do, I want you to think about, what am I doing? What's the service? What's the product? Maybe you're at Briggs and Stratton, you're putting a part on an engine, this doesn't seem like a really significant thing, but you need to visualize where is that engine going? Maybe it's going on a push mower and you're going to see a dad get his son out in the yard and pull the mower and show his little boy how to mow the yard, and you are getting actually to do that experience. That's your work, that's your labor; you are loving your neighbor by putting that part on the very best way you can because you want it to crank when it's in that moment.

One of the best examples of this is there is a guy named John O'Leary and he is a motivational speaker, and he tells this story. He was a nine-year-old

who was in a terrible fire. There was an explosion and he was burnt almost all over his entire body, lost his hands, just very, very severe. So they took him to a hospital to the burn care unit, and they thought he only had days to live. So he's in this hospital, and they just know he's not going to make it so they're trying to keep him comfortable. There's a doctor who is really invested in him, really spends time with him, and they're trying to get him back to health. So he's now telling this story years later of how his survival story happened. He said here's what happened every single morning. Every morning the doctor, when he made his rounds, would come in and sit on my bed, but it wasn't him alone. He would bring the janitor of the hospital and he would have the janitor sit beside me every single morning at 5:00 a.m. Every morning he said the same thing to the janitor. He said, "Janitor, I just want to remind you why your work matters. I want you to see this nine-year-old little kid. The number one killer of burn victims is infection. I can't control that as the doctor. You can control that as the janitor, so I want you to know that when it comes to caring for this little boy and keeping him alive, your job matters more than my job. When you mop that floor today, I want you to look into his eyes and think about your mopping is his life or death." Can you imagine what that did to that janitor? I mean, the janitor probably rode the bus there and got minimum wage, and all of a sudden, he realized I'm mopping because I'm keeping a little boy alive. You talk about transforming that janitor's life and work! His work mattered. Why? Because his work was connected to loving his neighbor. See, if we're going to love our neighbor through our work, we have to connect it to the end result. We have to connect it to who we're helping, who we're serving, and then actually care enough about them to do good work, to do our best work because we're serving someone else. We want to love God and love our neighbor through our work.

The last thing I just want to say is I think we should celebrate others around us who are working. Here's what the text says, "...knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free." This idea of in that culture we've got bondservants, slaves, and masters. We will deal with some of that next week, but they might not get rewarded for anything they do, but Paul is saying just do good work because there is a reward. So the reality is good

work deserves a reward, so why not we be the people, we be the church that actually rewards good work around us. This is something I'm personally passionate about after this month of rediscovering that work, all work, matters. To give you an example of how this played into my life this weekend, we go to Louisville and we're driving down and go into Beaver Dam. We go for a pit stop and me and the boys go into the bathroom, and there is a teenage boy mopping the floor. I stopped what I was doing and walked over to him and said, "Excuse me, I just want you to know that what you're doing matters greatly. Because you mopped this floor, me and my sons are able to come in here and have a safe, clean place to make a pit stop. You're work has served us, and I just want to thank you for that." The kid was like, ok...I don't know what to say about that...So then we drive into Louisville and we're running late and weren't able to do dinner with her parents, so we call in at Outback, one of our favorite places, and we got takeout. The boy comes out to bring my bags and before he hands me the bags, I said, "I just want you to stop for a moment. Here's what I want to say to you. Your work matters greatly. I'm about to take these sacks that you and your team have prepared, and I'm going to put it in the van and drive to our hotel room and me and my family who has driven for three and a half hours, we're going to have a meal together, and we're going to laugh together, and we're going to talk together, and my little boys are hungry, and you are actually getting to feed them tonight. So I want you to know what you did by coming to work today, it served my family greatly. Thank you." Again, it was kind of ok...Then we go to the hotel and we eat our meal. And the next morning we get up and we're getting to the elevator and we push the button. There's the maid and she has all of her stuff out, and before we get in the elevator, I say, "Hold on sons." I walk over to the maids and say, "Hold on a second, I just want you to know, what you do matters. Last night we stayed in this hotel, and it was spotless, it was clean, it smelled great, and I know that you worked really hard to clean that room. I just want you to know that we're a family who got to have a getaway and got to have some time together and spend together, and you made that possible. Thank you because you served my family well." Again, it was almost like tears in her eyes. I don't know if anybody's ever said that to her. But what if we become the people who

actually believe what the Bible says about work, that work is a way we love God and love our neighbor, and work really does matter, no matter what you do. There is not secular and sacred. Jesus rules over every square inch of the planet, so everything you do is sacred. Everything matters to Him. What if every day you showed up to work and say I'm going to do this to the glory of God. I'm going to love God and do this task the best I can because I love God, and as I do this task and render a service to someone else, I am going to do that in connection with I'm loving my neighbor because I want them to benefit from this. What if we in our own work did that and then we looked around at all the work that happens all around us and we told everyone around us how thankful we were that they participated in loving God and loving their neighbor through their work. How would that change your co-workers as they feel like they're coming to a meaningless job, going into a cubicle, answering some emails, going on a jobsite, what if you brought that into your workplace. What if you showed them that they matter, they have dignity, that God is a working God and He created them to be a cultivator, and they get to love God. They get to do work that really matters, love God and love their neighbor through what they do, and then you celebrated that. How could that change our labor? How could that change our workplace for the glory of Christ? Because Paul is saying your work matters. I want you to see that. As you work this week, go into Monday full steam ahead because what you do tomorrow, maybe tonight, whenever you go back in, maybe it's at home managing the house, whatever you do, love God, love your neighbor, and celebrate all the work around you because our work is God's vehicle of providence throughout the world. God feeds the world, but He does so through the farmer.