

SESSION 6 NOTES

Work: Cultivating the Garden

Matthew 6:19-21

The Bible is a single true story with teachings sprinkled throughout to illustrate the story. When you see this, you will realize that God has a plan for your life, your community, and the whole world. God's plan is to establish His kingdom for His glory. That started through the work of Jesus Christ, is now continuing through those who are His followers, and will be completed in the future. The become a Christian is to become a part of that story—His story. We must learn to look at all of life through that story, and since the gospel is the means of that story, then the gospel should influence everything we do.

Work is one significant part of our lives that must be impacted by the gospel, by God's story. **You need to bring the gospel into your work.** We should be workers who are shaped in our day to day work by the gospel—we should both share the gospel at work and allow the gospel to shape our work

1. The gospel changes the motivation for our work.

Colossians 3:23-24 – The gospel teaches us that, ultimately, God is your boss and your market segment. You are working for Him, not for others, not for the money.

There are many people that overwork, and the Bible teaches us of the crucial need for Sabbath rest. The gospel enables us to enjoy this rest, because it changes our motivation for work. Because we are accepted by God through the gospel (i.e., a new identity), the work is now about the work, and not about me and the identity I get from my work. We can now rest, walk away from our work, and take breaks when we need to—God will give us our needed rest when we are working for the Lord (Matthew 11:28).

2. The gospel changes the ethics of our work.

Of course we must work with honesty and integrity, but within each field of work, we must wrestle with the ethical issues that are found there. Those issues should be considered in community, with other Christians in the same field of work. Naaman illustrates how to engage in work without worshipping your work (2 Kings 5:1-19).

3. The gospel changes our conception of our work.

All work has intrinsic value and dignity, because God loves His world (in so much that He will one day redeem it). Our word "culture" comes from the word "cultivation." We need to engage in our work in such a way that helps people flourish.