

Work as God's Good Design

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[0 : 0 0] The scripture reading this morning is taken from parts of Genesis chapter 1 and chapter 2. You can follow along in your bulletins or on the screen behind me. Starting in Genesis chapter 1 verse 26 we read, Then God said, Let us make men in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it. And have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

Then in chapter 2 verse 15 we read, The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.

[1 : 3 8] For in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. This is the word of God. Great. Thank you, Angeline.

Let's pray, and then we're going to look at this together. So, Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, we come to you this morning, and we come to your word.

God, we've sung your praises because you are truly worthy of worship and adoration. We know that that is not only right for us to do, it's also good for us to do.

It's good for our souls. It's good to rightly align our hearts to you. But, God, we don't just come to worship you. We also come to hear you speak to us from your word.

And so, God, I pray that as we look at these verses, won't you help us to make sense of your calling for us in the workplace, in the marketplace, the things that we give ourselves to.

[2 : 3 4] God, won't you speak to us this morning, I pray. In your good and gracious name, amen. Well, we are starting today this four-week teaching series on work.

And what God and the Bible have to say about our work lives and how the Christian worldview should shape and influence our work lives and our concept of work and our practice of work.

And so, I wonder for you what comes to mind when we think of work. What's been your experience of work? I know that for many of us here, you are students.

And so, your work has involved lots of studying, reading lots of books, going to lots of lectures, and you've never been paid one cent for it. And you might feel like that doesn't count as work.

It's only work when I get paid, right? But that's an important part of your work life for this stage of your life. For some of us, maybe we are starting out in our careers, the first few years, maybe it's your first job or your second job.

[3 : 39] And that means you get given all the junk work, right? You're at the bottom of the pile in the company, and you do what nobody else wants to do. Maybe for some of us, you're at the other end of your career, and you're at the end of your career, you're at the top of the corporate ladder.

And so, there's some freedom there. There's some benefits there. Maybe you own your own business. But there's also a lot of pressure, a lot of responsibility. And when things don't go well, it all falls on your shoulders.

The client doesn't pay you money that they owe you, or the markets turn and you feel the weight. My guess is that for many of us, we're somewhere in between those two stages, neither at the top nor at the bottom, and you feel the crunch from both ends.

Your bosses are putting pressure on you, but the people you've got to manage, they put pressure on you, and so you just feel like you're in pressure all the time. Maybe for some of us, our work is unpaid work.

You look after kids at home. You look after elderly parents. That's your primary calling for the season of life. Maybe you work for an NGO or you volunteer your time for some ministry.

[4 : 45] So many different experiences, different expectations. And so, for some of us, work is a calling and a joy. For some of us, it's a real burden. For some of us, it's a necessary evil just to pay the bills and to allow us to really live on the weekends and when we retire.

For some of us, it's a privilege. For others of us, it's a pain. For many of us, I'm sure it's a combination of all of the above. I wonder if you've ever thought about what does the Bible or the God of the Bible have to say about our work, our vocation, our calling?

And if you're a Christian this morning, how does your Christian faith shape and influence your Monday to Friday, your work life and what you do with your time most of the week?

Well, today we're going to go back to the beginning of the Bible and we're going to look at the first few chapters and how God's design for humanity shapes the way that we think about our work. Now, when we talk about work, just by way of definition, we're not simply talking about paid work.

As we said, there are many kinds of work that are not paid. You could be a student. You could be looking after your kids, looking after elderly parents. There's many kind of unpaid work. We're talking about the primary activity that you give yourself to week by week or that endeavor that you committed to spending your time and your energy on.

[6 : 08] So think about what is the main thing that you devote your time and your energy and your resources to week by week. That's what we're thinking about at the moment. And so today we're going to look at four things, the dignity of work, the design of work, the discomfort of work, and the redemption of work.

Okay, that's where we're going to try and go. So firstly, let's look at the dignity of work. If you've got your Bible, your bulletin, look at Genesis 1, verses 26 with me. Angeline read it to us earlier.

Let me read it again. It says, Now, there's lots of things in this passage, but one of the things that should stand out to us immediately is how often it talks about this word image or likeness.

Four times in just these brief sentences, it talks about mankind is made in God's image, in His likeness. In the image of God, He made them. In the image of God, He made them, male and female.

Central to the Bible's teaching of what it means to be a human being, of our humanity is this notion that we are made in God's image.

[7 : 39] It's what distinguishes us from the plants and the animals, even animals that look very similar to us and have maybe similar DNA in some ways. What distinguishes humanity is this idea that we carry this virtue of made in God's image.

We carry the imago Dei, the image of God in us. Well, what does this mean? Well, it means a number of things, but for our work, it means two things in particular.

On the one hand, it means that as human beings, we are designed to think and act and behave as God thinks and acts and behaves. Of course, we are not exactly like God.

We are not divine. We don't carry divinity within us. But there's something about the way that we think and act and behave, the way we live our lives is meant to represent or shape the way that God thinks and acts and behaves.

And when we live contrary to that, when we go against that, not only does it go against God's instructions and therefore break down relationship, it actually means we go against our very design, our makeup.

[8 : 41] It's like we clash with the way that we designed. And when you go against your design, that's never a good idea, right? Think of somebody taking a ding-ding tram and trying to use that for a star ferry to cross the harbor.

It's not going to go down very well. Or as some people said, it is going to go down very well. But that's the problem. The star ferry is not meant to go down, right? When something goes against its design, its makeup, it doesn't function properly.

Well, God has designed us in His image to live and think and act like He does. And what does God do? Well, one of the things that Genesis tells us is that God works.

God is a worker. Look at chapter 2 with me. It says, verse 1, When the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God finished His work, He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done.

The God of the Bible, the God that Christians worship and adore and learn from and follow, is not just a cosmic do-nothing who sits in the clouds scrolling through Instagram because He's got nothing else to do.

[9 : 51] No, He's a creative God. He's working. And His creative work and His sustaining work, the Bible describes as His work. In fact, that Hebrew word for the work of God is a word that's often used to describe ordinary human work.

Or Genesis, it describes someone's occupation, their vocation. God is a working God. And this idea of the divine being working was scandalous in the ancient world.

In the ancient culture, almost nobody thought of the divine beings as being those who engaged in work at all. Work was considered far too menial, far too materialistic, far too worldly for the gods to be involved in.

And certainly creation wasn't something that the gods engaged in. Many ancient cultures thought that creation was the result of this cosmic warfare in the world. And the world kind of formed out of the result of this cosmic battle.

But the Bible says that God has no rivals. The world wasn't formed because of this cosmic battle in the sky. Actually, creation is the handiwork of a creator God.

[11 : 01] It's His artistic masterpiece. Psalm 8 says, And not only that, the Bible says that God enjoys His work.

He delights in it. Genesis 1. God saw everything He had made. And behold, it was very good. And so what this tells us is that work, as God has designed it, is not a necessary evil.

Something we've just got to endure in order to save enough money so that one day we can retire and then really live. Or something just to pay the bills. Work has an inherent importance, a profound significance, a profound meaning to it in and of itself.

Because it's part of the way that God has wired us and designed us. As Christianity says, the idea of giving ourselves to the creation and the care of something worthwhile is a gift that God gives us.

And it's part of what it means to be made in His image. And therefore, it has profound purpose. But here's another aspect about living, being made in God's image. And that is that we're meant to act as His representatives in the world in which we live.

[12 : 15] So in the ancient world, emperors and rulers, when they conquered a land or they wanted to conquer a land, they'd often set up a statue of themselves or an image of themselves in the town square or the marketplace or in the temple.

Kind of as a way of saying, there rests my representative, my authority, as a way of kind of claiming authority over that land. Well, here God doesn't set up an image of Himself anywhere other than putting humanity in the world.

God says, you are my image bearers. You exercise my rule and my authority. And you continue my creation work. And how is that done? Well, it's done through our work.

And so again, we see this in Genesis in the creation account. God works by bringing about and continuing to care for His creation. But then He commissions His people as His representatives to continue His work through our work.

So look at 1 verse 26. God created man in His image. In the image of God, He created them, male and female. God blessed them. He means He endows His authority in them.

[13 : 23] Then He says, be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over it. Now when God says, subdue the earth, rule over it, have dominion over it, He's not saying to exploit it, to use and abuse it for our own benefit.

It's the language of stewardship. A steward is someone who's given real responsibility on behalf of an owner. And God says, you now are my stewards. This world is mine.

It belongs to me. But I give you real responsibility to care for it, to look after it, to utilize its resources for its flourishing, to grow and bless it.

And Derek Kidner, who's an Old Testament scholar, makes an interesting point. He says, both animals and plants are also told to multiply and fill the earth.

But only humans are told to subdue it and have dominion over it. One of the distinctions between humanity and the animal world is not just our procreation, but that we're actually called to steward the world on behalf of God.

[14 : 28] And why is this given to us? Well, we alone are made in God's image. And so God continues His work through our work. And so whether your work is to look after elderly parents, to fly an airplane from one place to another, to put beauty on display through dance or artistry, whether it's to draw up fair legal contracts to protect people's rights, whether it's to market or sell something, to instruct and develop young lives and minds through teaching, God is entrusting to you His work of creation and caring for the world through your work.

And so tomorrow, when you wake up and you realize it's Monday morning and you endeavor to give yourself to something in this world, tomorrow your biblical worldview gives that work a profound importance, a significance.

You are carrying on God's work in the world through your work. So, firstly, the dignity of work. Secondly, the design of work. Now, what is God's purpose for our work?

What does God intend for our work to accomplish? On one hand, the dignity of works is that all work has meaning and purpose, whether it's blue-collar work or white-collar work, whether your job is thinking work or work with your hands, whether you work behind a computer or a machine.

All work has dignity and importance because it's the way that we carry out our creation mandate. But not all work is created equal, right? I mean, there's some work that's bad work.

[16 : 02] So if you work for a company that's pumping toxic pollution into the ocean or the rivers, okay, that's not good work. Or if you work for a marketing company and you're marketing pornography or prostitution, okay, that's not good work, right?

So all work can have dignity, but it's not all necessarily good. So what makes work good work? What is God's intention or design for our work? Well, Genesis tells us again.

Look at chapter 2 with me, verses 8 and 15. It says, The Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he put man in it whom he had formed. Verse 15, The Lord took the man, put him in the garden to work it and to keep it, or to care for it.

Now the translation says to care and to cultivate it. Here we see that God's purpose for our work is twofold. One, it's to cultivate civilization and society and culture, to serve our neighbors and to look after those around us.

And secondly, as an act of worship and devotion to the God who made us and who we love and have come to know. So when the Bible says that God called mankind to fill the earth and to subdue it, it means more than just having lots of babies, okay?

[17 : 22] That's a good thing as well. But it's more than just procreation, as one author said. It's civilization. God's call for us to fill the earth and to subdue it means to cultivate society, civilization, culture, in the world that was unformed and in many ways wild.

We said earlier that to rule and subdue is more than just exploiting it, not exploiting it. It's taking responsibility for it. It's fostering something good out of the unformed nature of the world.

So part of our work is to take the natural resources of the world, the things around us, and to give it shape and to form it such a way that it blesses society and forms culture.

I think one of the best examples of this is actually unpaid work of parenting, right? Parenting is unbelievably hard. It's just, it's really hard.

It's really joyful, but it's really hard work. And one of the temptations with parenting is after a while you can think, okay, if I've spoken once, I've spoken a thousand times, fine.

[18 : 28] If you don't listen, just do things your way. And then you'll see what happens, right? Any parents been tempted to say that this week? Okay. And yet that's not very good parenting, right?

Though we have all been tempted to do it and we've all done it. Now parenting, what is parenting? Parenting is taking the unformed character, the gifts and ability of this child, and shaping it and fostering it and nurturing it and maturing it, so that one day this child, you utilize all the latent potential within that child, they become a mature contributing member of society.

Now in some ways, that's a great picture of work. Tim Keller says, work is rearranging the raw material of God's creation in such a way that it helps the world in general and people in particular to thrive and to flourish.

So it takes the raw ingredients and says, how can I form this and shape this? How can I help society flourish through the contribution of these things?

So maybe if you work in HR, it's taking a job seeker and a job opportunity and bringing them together for the flourishing of that workplace but also that worker. If you're a banker, it's bringing a client and a customer together and helping them so that together they are more than some of the individual parts.

[19 : 55] Maybe if you're a teacher, it's helping to shape a student to see and think and behold the world differently. It's taking our work and creating something more meaningful out of it.

Again, Tim Keller says this. Here's his full quote. As Christians, we should not choose jobs and conduct our work merely to fulfill ourselves and accrue power, for being called by God is something empowering enough.

We see work as a way of service to God and neighbor so that we should both choose and conduct our work in accordance with that purpose. The question regarding our choice of work is thus no longer what will make me the most money and give me the most status, but rather how with my existing abilities and opportunities can I be of greatest service to other people knowing what I do of God's will and of human need?

You see what he's saying there? How do I take my abilities and gifts and what I know of God in the world and steward these things together to serve culture, to serve society, to serve my neighbor?

So think about your work at the moment. How can you wake up tomorrow morning, whether it's paid or not paid, the endeavor that you spend your time and your energy on and say, how can I use my gifts and my abilities and the opportunities in front of me to serve the city of Hong Kong and to cause it to flourish?

[21 : 16] So maybe you're a financial advisor. Is your work about selling policies so that you can make lots of money? Or is it about helping people think about their future and care for their children, their children's education and the future?

That alone gives it a profound dignity and significance. Maybe you're a teacher, right? On the one hand, you're filling children's minds with ideas and thoughts and how to see the world.

But maybe as a teacher, you're the only adult in their life that is pouring love into their hearts and encouraging them and building them up rather than discouraging them and breaking them down. How can you be a source of encouragement to that young child in your classroom?

Maybe you work as a barista at a coffee shop, right? Is your job just to make coffee and earn some money? Or can you create an environment where people come in and have great conversations and taste something delicious and encourage one another, where they leave your coffee shop feeling better about the world than how they entered in?

Maybe you're a foreign domestic worker. Maybe you came to Hong Kong just to make money to send back home. But can you see your work as a place of bringing joy and peace and encouragement to a home, blessing them with your attitude and your presence?

[22 : 30] Maybe you're a banker. What would it look like to see all the deals that you make as not just a way of creating wealth for some corporate entity, but actually seeing all the families down the line that are going to benefit and earn money and put their kids through college and education because of your kind of work?

So the design of work is to be a blessing, to help society flourish and to serve society. But there's another aspect of work, and that is to worship and to honor the God that made us.

Now, you might say, Okay, Kevin, that's what I'd expect from a pastor. Of course you're going to say that, right? But here, yeah, look at Genesis 2 verse 15. God says here, He says, The Lord God took man, put him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.

Now, the word work it there is actually an interesting word. It's the word *avada* or something like that. Niels can correct me, my Hebrew. And it's a word that is difficult to translate.

Sometimes in the Bible it means service or work or craftsmanship. But often in the Bible it also means worship. And it's the word that the Old Testament uses to describe the priests who go about their work where they serve God and serve the community.

[23 : 45] They go about their work, their service, their worship. On one hand, their work is bringing worship to God, but on the other hand, it's serving the community at the same time. In other words, God's design is that our work and our worship should be a seamless way of living, that our Sunday flows into our Monday almost seamlessly, that both our work and our worship, our Sunday morning singing of God to devotion, and our Monday morning going to the office or to school, to university, is one and the same thing.

So whether you're flying an airplane, consulting to a business executive, baking bread for a bakery, or helping your children with your homework, Christians approach their work with more than just a sense of, this is what I've got to do today, but this is how I can honor God and use my gifts and my opportunities for His glory.

And that's why the Apostle Paul in the New Testament is constantly saying, work not for man, but for the Lord. In fact, when Paul writes that in Colossians 3, he's writing to a bunch of slaves, who their work very much was for man, right?

For their master. And yet he says, even as a slave, see your work as not just for your master, but for the God who made you and knows you. I remember a few years ago, speaking to a gentleman in South Africa, but he used to be part of a church in London, and in his church was a British diplomat, someone who worked for the British government, and he was constantly going on diplomatic missions around the world on behalf of the British government.

And this man commented that in his church, the youth group and the young adults were constantly going on mission trips to Uganda and Zimbabwe or different parts of the world.

[25 : 33] And whenever the young adults would go on a mission trip, the church would call up all the people and they'd lay hands on them and they'd pray them and they'd send them out with God's blessing on their mission trip.

And this guy commented, every month I go on high level missions and I see my work as a form of worship to God. And yet no one ever lays hands on me or sends me out into my workplace.

And yet is my work any less important than the youth team that are going on mission to Africa? It's an interesting thought. And so on that note, I hope you notice the words of the benediction with which we send you out each week.

Great, do you know them off by heart by now? You should know them, right? So each Sunday we stand, we sometimes open your hands if you want and you say, having encountered God and being encouraged in the gospel, may you go into the city of Hong Kong this week, into the places of work, the coffee shop, the school room, the negotiating table, the classroom, as may you go into the cities of Hong Kong this week or the cities of Asia if you're traveling, secure in the love of the Father, resting in the grace of Christ, not in your own strength, but filled with the power of the Spirit as God's image-bearing representatives to work and care for society, not just for your glory, but for the glory of God.

You see that? Every Sunday we send you out, we commission you, go into your workplaces as God's representative doing His work for His glory. Okay, are you with me?

[27 : 06] Are you following? Okay. So what are the implications of this? Let me give you three quick implications. First one is this. Think carefully about the kind of work you do and the kind of company you work for.

So especially if you're a student and you're thinking about work, what kind of job are you going to do and what company are you going to work for? So on one hand, all work can be dignified work, right? We spoke about that earlier.

But on the other hand, not all work is good work. So think about this. You're a surgeon, right? Sam Lowe. You're a surgeon. Well, generally, we think of surgeons as doing really good work.

They're contributing, they're healing, they're helping people in trouble. But what happens if you work for a company that promotes the taking of vulnerable lives of unborn children through abortion?

Well, actually, then you're using all your skills and training, not for the good of society, but actually to harm society, right? So even work like being a doctor or a surgeon can be bad work.

[28 : 04] Are you in financial services? Are you selling policies that will really look after your clients? Or are you contributing to a big financial bubble that's just going to burst one day and leave a lot of people in poverty?

Are you working for a tech company? Are you building good tech that is going to help people? Or are you contributing to teenage addiction, to gaming, to social media problems, or to society problems?

Is the work that you're doing contributing to society or damaging society? Okay, that's the first implication. Second implication is this. Do really excellent work.

Now, we're going to talk about this a bit more in a few weeks' time. So let me not steal Henry's thunder too much. But if you're an engineer, your first primary job as an engineer is not to stand on a pile of bricks at lunchtime and to give a sermon, okay?

Your primary job is to build good roads or good computers or artificial limbs or whatever you do, right? So Dorothy Sayers, who was a British thinker and writer in the 1960s, she wrote this.

[29 : 08] The church's approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to moral instruction and church attendance, okay? So just be a good person, don't drink too much on the job, and come to church.

What the church should be telling him is this. Your first demand of your faith is that you should make really good tables, okay? So if you're a Christian, be the best employee that your employer has in the company.

God is as interested in what you do in the Thursday boardroom as what you do in the Thursday night prayer meeting. Here's the third implication. Think carefully about retirement.

So I know many of us are not there, but some of us are maybe approaching it. If work is more than simply earning money so that one day you can stop working, it's joining God in his work for the world, what does that mean for our retirement?

Well, I think it means that the Bible's definition of retirement is different to the world's definition of retirement. And so one day you may stop working, you may not earn a salary, you may not need to punch into the office or keep certain hours, but actually how can you still, in that season of life, still contribute to the common good, to serving society, to worship of God, to using the gifts and the resources that God has given you for the betterment of our world?

[30 : 28] Okay, so three brief implications. So, the dignity of work, the design of work, thirdly, the discomfort and the redemption of work. I've kind of put these together. Now you may say, okay Kevin, that sounds all very well and good, but let's be honest, you're a pastor, you don't know what real work is, right?

You just sit around having coffee with people all day and looking at the Bible. Life doesn't work like that, right? In the real world, work is hard. It's gritty. It's messy.

People are irritating. Things go wrong. What do you know about real work? And okay, you're right. Okay, I don't know anything. But, still, the Bible does tell us a bit about it.

Today, what we've done is we've looked at Genesis 1 and 2 and we've tried to get as close as possible to God's original design because we wanted to see how God designed us as humans and what that means for our work.

And so Genesis 1 and 2 tells us the way that the world ought to be. Genesis 3 tells us the way that the world is. And what it says is that the world is broken.

[31 : 34] And the world doesn't work the way it's meant to be because of sin and our rebellion against God. And so, the Bible tells us, Genesis 3, that as a result of humanity's rejection of God and His Word, that now our work, what the Bible calls our toil, is marked with frustration and hardship and difficulty, sometimes even futility.

Look what Genesis 3 says, verse 18, I think it is. It says, Because you have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, don't eat of it. Cursed is the ground because of you.

In pain, you will eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles, rather than fruit trees and joy and blessing, will the earth bring forth for you. By the sweat of your brow, you shall eat bread.

In other words, since the fall, the time when humanity walked away from God and went our own way, two things happened. Creation and the world itself is fractured.

There's a dissonance. It doesn't work the way that it's meant to be. It's hard work. Our toil is marked with difficulty. It's an uphill battle. But the other problem is that the worker themselves, we as people, sin has fractured our hearts.

[32 : 50] And so sin has now left our hearts at a dissonance. Our hearts don't work the way that they're meant to be. As one author said it, sin runs through the heart of every worker and the culture of every enterprise.

In other words, sin and the broken world has affected our work, the world in which we live, but also the worker who engages in the world. And so it's like there's a virus, there's a bug in the system that we just can't get right.

And as much as we work on the system, we can't get the bug out of the system. And even if we try, the bug is in us. And so we ourselves perpetuate the buggedness, if I can use that word, of the system, right?

And so our work is fractured, we fractured, the world is fractured. What's the solution? Well, we need a rescuer. We need a redeemer. We need somebody from outside of the system to come from outside to come and to bring healing to the system and healing to the human heart.

We need someone who can redeem the world and redeem our work and redeem us. We need a savior, a liberator, one who will put right what is wrong with the world.

[34 : 02] And friends, that is Jesus Christ. God himself from outside of our world became and took on flesh and took on humanity. And came to redeem us who are broken, redeem our work and redeem our world and to start to put things right.

Jesus came to fix our hearts so that sin no longer needs to have the final say in our lives. Jesus came to fix our works so that our work is not pointless and futile, but there's meaning and there's dignity.

And Jesus came to start to fix our world and one day he will come and bring heaven and earth and unite them together so that heaven and earth are one and that all the best things in this world will carry over into that world and all the frustration and the brokenness and the sin and the pain and the tears and the death of this world will be no more.

Friends, Jesus came to change the way that we see and think about work. And so as we close, let me leave us with four brief ways that Jesus and the gospel changes the way that we think and view work.

Firstly, Jesus gives us a new kind of master. So for most people in our city, making sure that you're in your boss's good books is extremely important, right?

[35 : 18] Because we think that our lives and our future and our career and our progression and our financial security is in our boss's hands. Jesus tells us that if you love and follow Jesus, your life is not in your boss's hands.

Your life is in the hands of a good and faithful father, a master, a lord, a king, but one who loved you enough to go to the cross for you and your life is in his hands and that's why you can do your work for the pleasure of the audience of him, not just the boss who sits in the corner office.

That's why the New Testament constantly says, serve your masters wholeheartedly as if you were working for the Lord because ultimately you are working for the Lord. So, a new kind of master.

Secondly, Jesus gives us a new view of humanity. For most people in our city, we view people based on giftings and abilities and we rank people all the time, right?

What are your giftings? What school did you go to? What degree did you get? Where do you live? What job do you do? And if you do blue collar job or you sweep the streets, oh, you're not very important.

[36 : 22] But if you do white collar job, oh, you have a certain kind of ranking. But Jesus changes all that because Jesus says that no matter who you are, no matter what your ethnicity or your culture, your background, your gender, your language, all people have inherent dignity and worth and value.

And so Jesus changes the way that we view people. Jesus Christ says regardless of that, we don't view people as a liability to be managed but as a person to be understood, to be valued, irrespective of how difficult they may be to get along with or what they contribute to your career.

Thirdly, Jesus gives us a new source of power. In our city, people are exhausted and burnt out, anxious and frustrated because we believe the saying that if it's to be, it's up to me, right?

If I'm going to get ahead in my career, I've got to work longer than anyone else. I've got to work harder than anyone else. I've got to make sure I'm the last one to leave the office place. I've got to be the first one in, last one out.

I've got to progress in my career. Well, Jesus says that if you live for Him, by His Spirit, He will empower you and to live out your calling. He will give you everything you need for divine power to life and godliness to become the person that He's called you to be.

[37 : 39] And remember Jesus' words, He says, I am the vine and you are the branch. If you abide in me, if you rest in me, I will produce fruit in you. I will cause you to live. But apart from me, you can do nothing.

And so friends, what that means is that our future, our life, our hope is not in what you can muster up. It's an abiding in Christ. And then finally, Jesus gives us a new kind of rest.

A new kind of rest. For most of us in our city, we don't know how to rest. And even when we rest, we are simply, it's simply in order to work again. And that means we never experience true rest, deep abiding rest, soul rest.

Because even when we're on holiday and even when we're on weekends, we're thinking about work and how we can get ahead or the things that we need to do. Jesus says that there's a rest beneath your rest.

A deep soul rest that will still the anxious voices in your mind and still the striving and the demand to get ahead. Augustine, the great theologian in the third century said this, you have made us for yourself, oh God, and our hearts will always be restless until we find our rest in you.

[38 : 52] Augustine was really just saying what Jesus Christ said, right, where he said, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come and learn from me for I am humble and gentle of heart and you will find deep rest for your souls.

Friends, everyone in our city engages in work, but there's often a work underneath the work. There's a work to prove ourselves, a work not to be a bum, a work to impress our parents, a work to prove that we're not a failure.

Jesus comes and he gives a rest to that kind of work and he says, you are my child. You're enough. I love you. You're accepted. You'll give us a rest below our rest, a deep soul rest that will deeply satisfy.

Friends, Jesus Christ is a complete savior, a comprehensive savior. And what he does is he invites us to love him, to trust him, to follow him, to worship him, to adore him, to come and find our rest in him, and to let that change the way that we think about our work, our calling, our vocation, our purpose.

Let's pray together. In fact, maybe before we pray, let me give us just a minute just to think about what we've heard today.

[40 : 11] What should our response be? Friends, maybe what's one or two things that you want to take home from today, change the way that you wake up tomorrow morning and approach your work?

all right. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.