

# **Your Work Matters to God**

**(Eph 2:10; 1 Pet 4:10)**

## **I. Men's struggles at work<sup>1</sup>**

- A. *Boring: keep repeating the same task***
- B. *Tiring: long hours and demanding work load***
- C. *Suffering: being abused, difficult interpersonal relationship, reduce one's dignity***
- D. *Frustrating: cannot do what one is burdened/ skilled to do***
- E. *Struggling: the job may cost one to sacrifice for integrity or compromising ones ethical standard***
- F. *Loss: do not know how to incorporate Biblical truth into work environment.***
- G. *Purposeless: no other purpose other than making money to put the butter on the table***
- H. *Insignificant: Making no lasting impact to the society***
- I. *Fruitless: No opportunity to share Gospel and no impact to the Kingdom***

## **II. Reason #1 Secular Thoughts of Work<sup>2</sup>**

- A. *The ultimate purpose of work is to fulfill myself***
- B. *Success in life means success at work***
- C. *You can tell how successful someone is by his material wealth, his professionally recognition, or his positional status***

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<sup>1</sup> Sherman, Doug and Hendricks, William. Your Work Matters to God. P 13-14. Most materials of the this lesson are coming from this book.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p25-32

*D. You've got to do whatever it takes to get the job done*

*E. All is bottom line driven: "I just go to work to earn a living, a good one"*

### **III. Reason #2 Two-stories View<sup>3</sup>**

#### *A. The Flaws*

1. The Soul-Body Hierarchy
2. The Eternal-Temporal Hierarchy
3. The Sacred-Secular Hierarchy
4. The Clergy-Laity Hierarchy

#### *B. The Consequences*

1. Guilt and a diminished sense of dignity
2. Withdrawal from the work world
3. Moral compromise
4. Skepticism about the relevance of Christianity

### **IV. Biblical Perspectives: Fulfilling the Great Commandments (Mat 22:37-40)**

#### *A. Men are created to work: God works (Gen 1:1), and Men are created and commanded to do legitimate work*

1. Work is not the result of man's sin. It is given before man the Fall. It is a basic need of man (Gen 1:28, cf. 3:17-19).
2. The results of sin on work: work is not our enemy, sin is<sup>4</sup>.
  - a) Sin makes work harder
  - b) Sin renders life and its work futile

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p 45-60

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p 101-107

c) Sin affects our purpose, coworkers and the system

**B. *Self Fulfillment***<sup>5</sup>

1. Men need challenge, achievement, reward, interaction with people, belongingness, meaning and purpose, expression of skills and gifts

**C. *Meeting Society's Needs***

1. Serving God & different needs of society (Ex 35:30-35; Eph 4:28)

**D. *Meeting Self/Family's Needs***

1. 2 Thes 3:10; 1Tim 5:8

**E. *Giving Money to Others (1 Cor 16:1-3; 2 Cor 8:14,15)***

**F. *Being Salt and Light (Mat 5:13-16)***

1. Preserving the society, keeping God's presence in every corner in the world
2. Love God by letting others to know how a job should be done as God wants something to be done.

**G. *Opening Gospel Door***

1. Enter into their lives and understand their struggles (1Cor 9:20-23)

**V. Seeking new job /position/career: the uncommon common phenomena**

**A. *Consider what does God design me to be***

**B. *Consider what is my ability***

**C. *Consider how effective (making the biggest contribution) in the new career/job/position to glorify God and serve others***

**D. *Consider the impacts to other priorities***

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p71-73

## **VI. Thinking about going into full time ministry**

### ***A. Illegitimate motives: focus on me***

- 1. I am holier than thou**
- 2. I want more power in the church**
- 3. I got laid off**
- 4. I have something to do when I retired (Lk 9:62)**
- 5. I will become significant and more important to God**
- 6. God will love me more**

### ***B. Legitimate motives: focus on God***

- 1. God gives me the calling/burden to go full time ministry**
- 2. God gives me the spiritual gifts**
- 3. God's timing is right**
- 4. Submission even to sacrifice**

## **VII. Discussion**

- A. Are you doing what God designs you to do?***
- B. Are you glorifying God and serving people at your work?***
- C. Are you making the biggest contribution that you are capable of at work?***
- D. Are you living a God-focused balance life that can take care of other important priorities in life?***
- E. How can you adjust in order to answer the above four questions in enthusiastically "Yes"?***
- F. Are you thinking about changing job or going into full time ministry? Why and why not?***