

SESSION 3:

MAKING GOOD WORK

'And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.'

Colossians 3:17

Key Question: How might I make good work with God on my frontline?

Aim: To see that there is dignity and value in the work we do on our frontlines and that this can be done with and for God.

Core Text: Genesis 1

Materials: Bibles

WORK: Work is a gift God has given us so we can serve other people. When we use the word 'work', we're not just talking about paid employment but rather the tasks that we each do on a regular basis, which may include voluntary work, housework, childcare, etc.

Thinking Back (5 mins)

Last time, we thought about ways in which the Holy Spirit helps us to be more fruitful as we 'keep in step' with him.

Have there been any times since we last met where have you felt the Spirit's prompting or recognised his fruit in your life on your frontline?

Pre-Film Discussion (10 mins)

In two or three sentences can you explain to the group the main tasks you have to do on your frontline in an average week? Try to keep it brief!





PLAY FILM (9 mins)

Questions to Discuss after the Film (15 mins)

- In the film, we saw how Keith the decorator came to view his work in a completely different light. No longer is it just about earning money for himself or even for the church; it's a way of serving God by serving other people. How does the story help you to see the significance of the tasks you do on your frontline? Think about ways that your work serves others both directly and indirectly.

In another example, someone working in the finance department of a competitive pharmaceutical company may struggle to see how their work reflects God's purposes. However, God wants to alleviate suffering and promote health – he does this, at least partly, through medicine. In order for the company to run well and for new drugs to be developed, they need a good finance department to manage overheads efficiently and make sensible investments.

For example, a retired person may struggle to see how they can still 'make good work' when they are no longer in paid employment. Nevertheless, the lady who volunteers at the charity shop does good work by using her time and skills directly when serving her customers and more broadly by raising funds to support the charity. Similarly, the man who visits his grandson and helps with his science project uses the knowledge he has acquired during his life so that his grandson might flourish.

- Often people can think that some roles are more important to God than others. For example, being a missionary or a teacher may be valued more highly than being a business owner or a stay-at-home parent. Do we ever see attitudes like this in our own thinking? As Christians, why might we want to challenge this view?

THE CHURCH'S APPROACH TO AN INTELLIGENT CARPENTER IS USUALLY CONFINED TO EXHORTING HIM NOT TO BE DRUNK AND DISORDERLY IN HIS LEISURE HOURS AND TO COME TO CHURCH ON SUNDAYS. WHAT THE CHURCH SHOULD BE TELLING HIM IS THIS: THAT THE VERY FIRST DEMAND THAT HIS RELIGION MAKES UPON HIM IS THAT HE SHOULD MAKE GOOD TABLES.



Author Dorothy Sayers, *Why Work?*, 1942



Bible Reflection (25 mins)

GENESIS 1

Read through the whole of Genesis chapter 1 as a group. What things particularly strike you about this passage? What do you think are the main points that the writer is trying to get across to us?

The opening chapters of Genesis provide a rich picture of a God who designed work to be good for the human race. We don't earn God's love by our works; rather work is a gift and opportunity to join in with what God is doing – to co-work with him to make the world a better place. It's only later in chapter 3 that work becomes frustrating, marred by the consequences of the fall. By looking at this original purpose, we can begin to see how our daily tasks on our frontline can be part of God's good purposes for the world.

- God reviewed his work and said that it was good (Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25). What does 'good work' look like on your frontline? When are you ever tempted to give something other than your best?
- In our work on our frontline, we can reflect some of the ways that God works in creation, for example by:

Bringing order

Making provision

Bringing joy

Bringing beauty

Releasing potential

Which of the characteristics above do you most easily see in your own tasks?

- Having made such an impressive world, what is the responsibility that God gives to human beings (see particularly 1:27-28, and 2:15)? To what extent are you surprised by how much responsibility he gives us?
- How might seeing your individual work as part of God's bigger plans for the world affect the way that you go about your tasks on your frontline?



Praying Forwards (10 mins – in pairs)

- It's often easy to turn to God in times of crisis, but how might we develop a rhythm of prayer that invites God to work with us in our day-to-day tasks so that we are always working in his strength?
- Pray for an increased sense that God is with you on your frontline.
Pray for eyes to see how your everyday tasks matter and play a part in God's big plans for the world.



Takeaway Action

Take a minute at the end of each day to jot down one example of good work on your frontline this week to praise God for.

You may find it helpful to remember some of the characteristics of good work you talked about together:

- Bringing order
- Making provision
- Bringing joy
- Bringing beauty
- Releasing potential

Monday



Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

