

PRE-CAMP BIBLE STUDIES

SUMMER 2021



Whatever you do, work heartily,
as for the Lord and not for men,
knowing that from the Lord you
will receive the inheritance as
your reward. You are serving the
Lord Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24
ESV



What is work, and why do we do it? **Can you answer in your own words?**

Read the DI theme verse (Colossians 3:23-24)

Work is, broadly, the physical or mental activity required to accomplish a task. However, the Bible views work as more than this for two reasons.

- God is described as a worker.
 - From the very beginning in Genesis, God is viewed as a Deity that works. His work in creating the universe shows us as much.
 - Psalms 8:3 refers to the universe as “the work of [God’s] Fingers” just as Isaiah 45:9 likens man’s creation to that of a pot a potter would craft with clay
 - Jesus too used his time on earth to complete his work, which was the great work of redeeming mankind from their sin.
 - Many other ancient religious texts view work as an action beneath the gods in the stories and myths. The Bible does the opposite and shows God as a worker from the very first paragraphs.
 - How Does this change or inform your outlook on God?

The act of doing work is often viewed highly within the Bible, though there are good and evil deed which can be done by anyone. The Bible remains generally positive regarding the idea of work. This is in part due to good works being a value associated with God’s character, as we just discussed. However, another reason we do work, is because Man was created in the Image of God, and so was created to work.

- Man was created to Work.
 - Genesis 1:26 tells us that man was created in the image of God, and as such, at the most ideal level, we should reflect his character and qualities. As such, it is within us to do good work.
 - This is backed up further by Genesis 2:15, in which it is plainly stated that Adam was to work in the garden and keep it.
 - Think for a moment about your own actions lately, has the work you have been doing good? Or does it benefit only yourself?
 - Remember back to the broad definition of work given earlier. What sort of work have you been doing lately? Consider writing down five good works you have done, and five works which you may need to cut out of your life.

While it is true that we were created to do good works, we cannot be saved by them. It is important to remember that no matter how much good you do in your life, being a good person will not save you should from Sin. Instead, you must turn to Christ, because only He can substitute in for you, because only He lived a perfect life with no sin.

- Made to Work but saved by grace.
 - Read Ephesians 2:8-9
 - Remember that work is a good thing, but it cannot save you from your sin, or to put it another way, you cannot save yourself from your sin.
 - All is not lost though; Jesus came for that very reason.
 - **These questions do not have to be answered out loud. I would suggest each person write down the answer for themselves, and if they see something they do not like, write down some steps to change, or prevent these behaviors in the future.**
 - Part of the Salvation process is repentance – that is turning away from your sin. Have you done this yet? If not, are you trying to justify it, or make up for it by doing good things?
 - If you are saved, but some sin is still lingering in your life, are you allowing it to stay there, and attempting to make up for it with piety or charity? What can you do to fix this?

Note: Feel free to change this around to fit your team or group. If you feel this is a good place to stop and present the gospel, please do it. If something piques your creative interest, feel free to include any activities that are safe and appropriate for the age group.

Begin by reviewing the theme verses again (Colossians 3:23-24).

- What does work for men, and not for the Lord look like?
 - Fish for examples pertaining to selfish motives, looking for praise or glory, not doing our work to the best of our ability, or working on things that reject God or his nature.

The act of work is one that all of us are familiar with to some extent, be it school, jobs, manual labor, and much more. Regardless of the type of work you may be doing, there is always a temptation that all of us share: the feeling that we could conserve some energy, or just scrape by doing the minimum, since that is all that is required of us. However, to conform to the image of God, we must work like him.

- Working for Men
 - It can be easy to slack off, or give no more effort than is required, either because the work is easy, boring, or your boss is a jerk, it's very easy to justify our actions of laziness to ourselves.
 - Write down a time within the last week or two in which you deliberately chose to give the minimum effort or slack off. Once you have this written down, reflect on the reason that you have done this, write that down, and then come up with a plan that you can follow to become more diligent.

When we become Christians, we seek to turn from our former selves, and try our best to take on the aspects of God. One of these characteristics is diligence in work. Just as God is pleased with his followers when they emulate any of his other characteristics, so too is he pleased with those who work hard and conscientiously.

- Working for God
 - Growing up in a Christian environment, some of you may have heard the word "work" used to describe the general actions taken by those who serve in ministry, all working toward the goal of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - This, however, is not the only work in which the Bible commands us to be diligent, as much of the New Testament gives us glimpses of Christian leaders working hard at trades as well. (Paul was a Tentmaker)
 - It is important to remember that when we work, we do it to be more like Christ, and live more godly lives. It is not a means to salvation.
 - Make a list of people who have worked hard in your life. Use this list to find a way to let each of these people know that you appreciate their work in your life, via text, letter, or conversation.

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Last time, we discussed what it means to work for man, and what it means to work for God. However, having a good work ethic is nothing without Christ in our hearts. Paul writes of this often, and despite the fact he is regarded today as one of the heroes of the Christian faith, he admitted in his own epistles that none of what he did was to his credit.

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-11 with a focus on verse 10.
 - Paul suggests here, that regardless of the work we do in our lives, without God working through us, it is unlikely that much would be accomplished according to his will.
 - Acts 6:2-3, and 13:2 give us a glimpse of the Spirit's role in our work, and, along with Paul's comments show us how important it is that we have Christ in our lives if we wish to lead productive ones.

Whether you realize it or not, your actions when serving others in any capacity can be a chance to share the gospel, even small actions can add up to have great consequences on the lives of those around you. However, without God in our lives, none of it would even be possible.

- Now would be an excellent time to share the gospel story and present it for anyone to respond to.
 - Man is separated from God because of Sin (Rom. 3:23, 6:23)
 - Christ came to atone for our sins, (Rom. 5:8)
 - He died on the cross, but his story does not end there
 - Christ was resurrected on the third day (Luke 24:1-10)
 - With his sacrifice, we may move from darkness and sin to light and Holiness because he is the light (John 14:6)
 - The choice of following Christ has eternal consequences, and is not a choice to be made lightly, or left for too long.
 - Prayer for salvation (Romans 10:9-10)
 - Assurance of salvation (1John 5:13, John 1:12)
 - After receiving salvation, evangelize, discipleship, study, pray, communal worship.

The act of receiving Christ into your heart, is one of the most important acts that you can ever commit, and once you have done it, the Holy Spirit will work through you in many different situations and provide you opportunities to join in the great work that Christ started for us, and that God will see through.

Note: Feel free to change this around to fit your team or group. This is a good place to stop and present the gospel, feel free to present it in whatever way you are comfortable with, a small, bulleted list is provided as well. If something piques your creative interest, feel free to include any activities that are safe and appropriate for the age group.

DAY 4 WHATEVER YOU DO



Begin by reviewing the theme verses again (Colossians 3:23-24)

In the work climate of today, it can sometimes be difficult to keep your perspective and attitude in check. However, that is exactly what we are called to do as Christians. The New Testament spends a lot of time covering the topic of working, not just in ministering to others, and sharing the gospel message, but also acknowledging the necessity of working to provide for ourselves, and our families.

- Our Goal in Working
 - It is important that we remember that whatever we do, regardless of what kind of job we may have, that money is never really the sole goal of why we work.
 - Read or paraphrase James 5:3-4, take a moment and reflect on your own work not just this week, but within the past month. Ask yourself, why do I do the work I do? And where does my motivation stem from?
 - While providing for our families and ourselves is important, as Paul notes in his letters, specifically 2 Thessalonians 3:10, it is also important we keep James 5 in mind and remember our true goal in doing God's work.

When we work, our minds and hearts should be focused on Christ, and we should work for him, to achieve the spread of the Gospel. However, Paul gives another instruction in 1 Corinthians 10:31. He teaches in this letter to do all things for the glory of God, even things as seemingly insignificant as eating and drinking.

- Serve God in all you do.
 - As you leave camp, you may feel motivated to go out and continue the work you started here, this is a great feeling, and while it may fade, try your best to make a conscious effort to not lose the motivation to keep helping others and sharing the gospel.
 - One of the most important lessons to learn from this camp is not necessarily doing local missions, though starting local programs can be an excellent way to share Christ and help the community. Rather, it is to show you that it does not matter what you do now, or what you are doing in a month, or a year, or ten years.
 - There is a chance to share the Gospel and live like Christ in whatever you choose to do. There are people that have not been reached both near and far, and anyone from a missionary to other countries, to a simple small-town farmer minding his crops, to an accountant in an office has the chance to be a part of the work of Jesus Christ.
 - Take some time to think about your plans and what your career might look like. With that in mind, write down five ways that you could serve God through that work opportunity.

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