

April 17, 2005
Shepherd's Community Church
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Col. 3:22-4:1

“Growing in Your Relationship with the Lost World: *Work*”

Intro:

MINI-THEOLOGY ON WORK:

1. Work is good. Gen. 1-2; 2:15
 2. Work became harder after the Fall. Gen. 3:17ff
 3. We need rest from work. Gen. 1; Ex. 23:12
 4. We need to work hard (be diligent). Prov. 10:4; 12:11, 24, 27; 13:4, 11, 23; 14:4, 23; 21:5; 22:29; 27:23; 28:19; 31:27; Eccl. 11:4, 6
 5. Avoid the get-rich-quick schemes. Prov. 21:5; 28:19
 6. Hard work is blessed. Ps. 128:2; Prov. 12:11, 14; 13:4, 11; 14:23
 7. God joins with us in our labors. Ps. 127; I Cor. 3:9; 15:10
 8. Work is vain apart from God and an eternal perspective. Eccl. 2:11, 17-22; Contrast Eccl. 2:24; 5:18f
 9. All work is to be done for God's glory. I Cor. 10:31; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:17; 23f
 10. We should work hard so we can give to others. Eph. 4:28
 11. People who don't work should not eat. 2 Th. 3:10-12
 12. Workers should be paid promptly and fairly. If you rob them, God will judge you. Lev. 19:13; Mal. 3:5; James 5:4
 13. There are many benefits to work:
 - Provision for oneself. Prov. 12:14; 28:19
 - Ability to share with others. Eph. 4:28
 - Profit. Prov. 13:11; 14:23
 - Stature. Prov. 12:24
 - Happiness. Ps. 128:2; Eccl. 5:18f
- I. Employees – Colossians 3:22-25
- A. Who

B. What

1. Do everything you are _____ to do!

1. How?

1) _____

2) _____

a. Why?

1) God is _____

2) _____ (work = ministry)

3) Fear the _____, not _____

2. Do everything with _____!

1. How?

1) Put your _____ into every task

2) Do every task for _____

b. Why?

1) _____

2) There is no _____ / _____ distinction

3) You _____ what you _____

II. Employers – 4:1

A. Who =

B. What = Treat your _____ the way Jesus would!

1. Grant them _____

2. Grant them _____

B. Why = you are _____ to Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does the Bible have to say about slavery? Why didn't Paul condemn the practice of slavery here in Colossians?
2. In our culture, to whom would we apply these commands for slaves?
3. To what extent does God want us to obey those in authority over us? What if they are unreasonable and overly demanding? (Read 1 Peter 2)
4. Why would a slave need to apply the principles of Col. 3:1-17 in order to fulfill the commands in Col. 3:22-25? How would applying those principles help you in your current work situation?
5. What are some ways that people demonstrate they are only "men-pleasers" and not totally devoted to Christ in the workplace?
6. Does your quality of work improve when you are being watched? Why or why not?
7. The Bible tells us not to steal. What are some ways that people steal at work? What should we call it when we waste time at work and still get paid for it? [According to a 1989 study, the average employee spends 14.9 minutes a day making personal phone calls. On an annual basis that adds up to 62 hours—a workweek and a half. Deliberate waste and abuse of company time costs the U.S. economy over \$120 billion a year. This loss is three times more than it is for recognized business crime. At some companies 20-40% of employee time is stolen. Office employees are 30% worse than blue-collar workers, perhaps because supervision isn't as close. Workers under 30 are the biggest offenders.]

8. Is Paul advocating that we become workaholics? What do you think about relaxing? Is a vacation a good thing? Why or why not? Lee Iacocca was a busy man running the Chrysler Corporation but he knew the value of taking time off:

“I’m constantly amazed by the number of people who can’t seem to control their own schedules. Over the years, I’ve had many executives come to me and say with pride: ‘Boy, last year I worked so hard that I didn’t take any vacation.’ It’s nothing to be proud of. I always feel like responding: ‘You dummy. You mean to tell me that you can take responsibility for an \$80 million project and you can’t plan two weeks out of the year to go off with your family and have some fun?’” (*Iacocca, An Autobiography* by Lee Iacocca & William Novak, Bantam, 1988, quoted in *Lifeline*, Summer, 1997)

9. Why do you go to work?

10. What are some ways that you can remind yourself this week to do all your work for Jesus? Get practical!

11. What are some ways that bosses are not just & fair? List as many as you can think of.

12. “Power corrupts; and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Does this have to be true? How can this passage in Colossians keep this from happening?

13. What are some ways that a boss can demonstrate Who Jesus is in the workplace?

14. Why do you own a company?

15. What can you do this week at work to make sure that the name of our God and His doctrine will not be spoken against? (1 Timothy 6:1)