



# Sermon Discussion Guide



## “Work”

Genesis 1:27-28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Colossians 3:23-24

Rev. Ray Cortese, January 31 & February 1, 2015

### Step 1: Reflect on the Text

Why do we do this first? We always want to start with the Bible. The goal is to meditate on the Word and read it with an ear sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Look for words or phrases that stand out through logic, repetition, layout, etc.

- 📖 Read Genesis 1:27-28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Colossians 3:23-24. What stood out to you? What did you find interesting and/or important? What was challenging or caused you to have questions?

### Step 2: Reflect on the Sermon

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1 Have you ever heard the cliché, “No one ever says at the end of their life, ‘I wish I had spent more time at the office’”? What is wrong with this saying? How does it square with the Bible? Why do we think a better life is a life in which we work less, not more?
- 2 Summarize the *Big Idea* of the sermon in *one phrase or sentence* (Note: this is not the same as listing the main points). In other words, if someone woke you up at 3am on Monday morning and asked, “What was the sermon about on Sunday?” what would you say in the midst of your sleepy haze?

#### THE DIGNITY OF WORK

- 3 *Work is ordained by God.* What foundational aspects do you learn about work from Genesis 1? What do you think God meant when he told Adam and Eve to subdue the earth and have dominion over the creation?

- 4 *Work is sacred.* Why is it wrong to say that pastors, missionaries, evangelists, etc. do “sacred” work, and everyone else does “secular/worldly” work? How is your job, what you do every day, full-time Christian ministry? Discuss the following quote by Martin Luther.

I advise no one to enter any religious order or the priesthood, indeed, I advise everyone against it—unless he is forearmed with this knowledge and understands that the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks.

- 5 *Work is a gift of God's grace.* Dostoyevsky said, “Robbed of meaningful work, men will go stark raving mad.” The most significant moments in life are not found in leisure, but in those times when you find yourself engaged in a challenging task. Can you recall such a moment in your own life?

### THE DIFFICULTY OF WORK

- 6 *The world is broken.* What are some things that make work hard for you?
- 7 *We are soft.* Did your parents instill a work ethic in you? How can parents today teach their children the value of hard work?
- 8 *We are idolaters.* How do we try to replace God with work? What kind of results does an idolatry of work produce?

### THE DELIGHT OF WORK

- 9 Why does competency matter when it comes to work? How do you grow in your skills in your particular craft/area of labor?
- 10 When you are leader, you are a servant; others do not work for you, you work for them. Are you a servant leader? Have you seen servant leadership exemplified in the workplace?
- 11 Bono from U2 said, “I write songs just to tear off a little corner of the darkness.” Can you name some examples of people in our church who make our community a more beautiful and flourishing place through their vocation?

## Step 3: Final Reflections

- ✠ How has your understanding, appreciation, and love for Jesus and the gospel grown as a result of this study?
- ♥ In what areas of faith and practice are you feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit to act as a result of this study?