



TURNING THE RAT RACE INTO A PILGRIMAGE

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Turning the Rat Race into a Pilgrimage

SERMON REFERENCE: Ephesians 6:5-8

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2167

As Christians, we have the chance to put joy, zest, and dignity into the most mundane jobs. God can turn our Monday mornings into a thing of beauty and joy. There are three principles to draw from Ephesians 6:5-8 as we begin turning the rat race into a pilgrimage.

One, we need to see our jobs as an opportunity and be grateful.

There are three wrong ways to look at work: a necessary evil, a cruel master, or a god itself. But when we see our work for what it truly is, a gift from God, we will begin to feel grateful.

Two, we need to see our jobs as a responsibility and be helpful.

When we work, we join a partnership with God, even in the secular workforce. We can draw parallels from Jeremiah 29, where God instructs Israel, captives of Babylon, to get into the work world and seek the welfare of Babylon. (See v. 4.) Your job is a part of a greater plan; we must be helpful to others.

Three, we need to see our jobs as a ministry and be faithful. Our jobs are our greatest ministry opportunity. We serve God full time wherever we work and no matter how mundane the job might be. Ephesians 6:6-7 says to approach our work, “not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.”

Adrian Rogers says, “We’ve been saved out of the world, sent back into the world to witness to the world, and that’s the only business in the world we have until we’re taken out of the world when Jesus comes. We’re in this world, but not of this world. And Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, ‘You are the light of the world.’”

LIFE APPLICATION

Understanding that we are not called to a rat race, but a pilgrimage, there are four things to remember when you go to work tomorrow:

1. Don’t brag; do away with self-righteousness. Your light is to glow, not to glare.
2. Don’t nag; no one has ever been talked down into a relationship with Jesus.
3. Don’t lag; carry your part of the load... in fact, work harder than anybody else.
4. Don’t sag; uphold your Christian faith in the workplace.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Many people in the world today hate their jobs and dread going to work on Monday.
- b) There is a way to put joy, zest and dignity into the most mundane job if you will follow the principles found in the Word of God.
 - i) Some feel as though they're just drawing their breath and drawing their salaries.
- c) 1 Corinthians 1:26-27
 - i) These are ordinary people whom God chooses.
- d) God's plan is to take ordinary people and put them in ordinary places with ordinary jobs and get extraordinary glory unto Himself.
- e) Ephesians 6:5
 - i) This passage is not talking about our church lives.
 - ii) "Masters according to the flesh" refers to what we would today call our boss in a secular occupation.
 - (1) We are to serve our boss as if he were the Lord Jesus.
- f) Ephesians 6:6-8
 - i) When we go to our jobs, we are not going to work for our boss but for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g) The message today will focus on three principles that can put a little grace in the rat race and that can turn the rat race into a pilgrimage.

2) SEE YOUR JOB AS AN OPPORTUNITY AND BE GRATEFUL (Ephesians 6:5)

- a) If you have a job be grateful; it is a God-given opportunity.
- b) Some people see their job as a necessary evil.
 - i) It's the same old drudgery, but they have to do it.
 - ii) They have no sense of meaning and no real sense of accomplishment.
 - iii) To some people, work is just a necessary evil that they have to do to pay the bills.
- c) Some see their job as a cruel master.
 - i) They feel like they're caught in a trap, and they can't get out.
 - (1) They feel like they can't even stop working to look for another job.
 - ii) Sometimes people feel that things are required of them on the job that are just not right.
- d) Some have made a god of their job; they see their job as a demanding god.
 - i) This is one of the most dangerous things.
 - ii) People make a god of their career, and they sacrifice everything.
 - (1) Nothing is too good for a man's god; so, he sacrifices his health, family and his love for the Lord Jesus for his job.
 - (a) Some may call him a success, but his health and family are in shambles.
- e) We need to see our job as a gift from God.



- i) Proverbs 14:23
- 3) SEE YOUR JOB AS A RESPONSIBILITY AND BE HELPFUL (Ephesians 6:6-7)
- a) Your job is really a partnership with God, even if it's a secular job.
 - b) Work is not a punishment from God.
 - i) Work did not come as a punishment for sin.
 - (1) Toil and sweat came as a punishment for sin, but not work in itself.
 - c) Genesis 2:8
 - i) God was the first farmer.
 - ii) God started it, and then He turned it over to Adam.
 - (1) Genesis 2:15
 - iii) Farming is not preaching or missionary work, but any work done for God is the work of God.
 - d) Colossians 3:23-24
 - i) These verses refer to our so-called secular work.
 - (1) If you work in a factory, you're working for God.
 - (2) If you work in an office, you're working for God.
 - e) When the children of Israel were carried away to Babylon in the Babylonian captivity, some of the people reasoned that since they were in a pagan land as captives that they were not going to work with all of their hearts.
 - i) Jeremiah 29:4-7
 - (1) God engineered the Babylonian captivity because Israel couldn't handle their blessings.
 - ii) God tells us to build houses, to be busy, to get into the work world and do a good job.
 - f) We are to be helpful to others and to help ourselves.
 - i) Ephesians 6:7
 - g) It is not good to be lazy and to refuse to work.
 - i) We should work no matter how much money we may have.
 - h) 2 Thessalonians 3:10-13
 - i) It is a sin to feed a person who refuses to work.
 - i) 1 Timothy 5:8
 - i) We are supposed to take care of our children and not leave that to someone else.
 - j) Ephesians 4:28
 - i) We don't work just to meet our needs but to also meet the needs of other people.
 - (1) This passage is not referring to those who will not work but those who cannot work.
 - (2) When a person cannot work, it is our joy, duty and responsibility to do enough work for ourselves and for them, also.
 - (a) Help those in need.
 - k) The Lord Jesus was a carpenter; He knew what it was to work.
- 4) SEE YOUR JOB AS A MINISTRY AND BE FAITHFUL (Ephesians 6:5-7)
- a) This puts dignity into what we do; we are serving God.



- i) We do not have to be in professional ministry to serve God.
- b) We are serving God full-time, wherever we work and no matter how mundane our jobs might be.
- c) We should not think that one-tenth of our money and one-seventh of our time belong to God; it all belongs to Him.
 - i) All of our money belongs to God.
 - ii) All of our time belongs to God.
 - iii) Every day is a holy day, every place is a sacred place, and every duty is a divine duty.
- d) Colossians 3:17
 - i) If we are in a difficult job or in drudgery, we can say that we are doing it for the Lord Jesus.
 - (1) A classic example of this is Daniel.
 - (a) Daniel was taken to Babylon, not of his own free will, but as a captive during the Babylonian captivity.
 - (b) While in Babylon, Daniel became a governmental employee, and he served God while he was working for a pagan ruler.
 - (c) Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, and the pagan king Darius knew that Daniel, in his ordinary work, was really serving God.
 - (i) Daniel 6:16
- e) We sometimes complain about how difficult it is to be a Christian in the workforce, but it is not God's plan that we isolate from people.
 - i) John 17:15
 - ii) 1 Corinthians 5:9-10
 - iii) Romans 12:21
 - iv) 1 John 5:4
 - v) We have been saved out of the world and sent back into the world to witness to the world.
 - (1) This is the only business in the world we have until we're taken out of the world when Jesus comes.
 - (2) We're in this world but not of this world.
 - (3) Matthew 5:14
- f) Matthew 5:13-14
 - i) The Lord did not say that we are the light of the church but the light of the world.
 - (1) This is the reason we are in our jobs where we are.
 - (a) You do not put a lighthouse in the middle of a bright city but on a barren coast.
- g) Philippians 2:15
 - i) This is why we are in the place (or job) we call Babylon.
 - ii) We can serve God in our secular jobs; this is where the salt is needed.
- h) There are four things we can do at work to be a witness and to let our light shine:
 - i) Don't brag.
 - (1) Matthew 5:16
 - (2) We are not to be self-righteous.
 - (a) Our light is to glow, not to glare.
 - (b) Those around us are to see the light, not the lamp.



- ii) Don't nag.
 - (1) Colossians 4:5-7
 - (2) No one is won to Jesus by being talked down to.
 - (3) We should not be pointing our fingers in people's faces.
 - (a) Sinners do what sinners do: they sin.
- iii) Don't lag.
 - (1) Colossians 3:23
 - (2) Carry your part of the load at the job and work harder than anybody else.
 - (3) It is a sin for a Christian to do less than his best.
 - (a) If we were to do this on Monday and live what we've learned from the Bible in our communities and in our jobs, then those who are unsaved would start believing what is preached on Sunday.
- iv) Don't sag.
 - (1) Never let down in your Christian faith.
 - (2) Don't join in the petty gossip, don't listen to the dirty joke, etc.
 - (a) Our co-workers will remember our sin more than the good that we do.
 - (3) Don't sag in your Christian witness.
 - (a) There is only one person who has lived a Christian life, and His name is Jesus.
 - (b) If the Christian life is lived in the office where you work, it will be Jesus in you.
 - (i) This is why it's so important to have a quiet time with the Lord early in the morning before you walk into the office.
 - (ii) Be so filled with Jesus that when you walk into the office, God will be walking into that office because Christ will be in you.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) When we see our job as an opportunity and are thankful, when we see our job as a responsibility and are helpful, when we see our job as a ministry and are faithful, then our unsaved co-workers will come to us.
 - i) They will want to know what makes the difference in our lives.
 - ii) They will see the difference and the reality of Jesus Christ in us.
- b) Many people are not all that interested in going to Heaven or Hell; they just want to know how to hack it on Monday.
 - i) We need to go to our jobs in victory and let them see the light, the love, the joy and the peace that Jesus gives us.
 - ii) We need to share Jesus with them, not in a bragging way, but through the grace of the Lord Jesus.
- c) You cannot approach your job this way without the Lord Jesus.
- d) Jesus will come into your life and give you peace and purpose if you'll trust Him.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.



- i) Romans 3:23
- ii) Romans 10:9-10
- iii) Romans 10:13
- iv) Acts 16:31
- v) John 3:16



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Would you take your Bibles and turn if you will please to Ephesians chapter 6? We're speaking today about turning the rat race into a pilgrimage.

Let me ask you a question. How many of you have a job outside of the home? Most of us. And those who are mothers who are inside the home, they have a job. You know, when they say, "Well, she's a mother. She doesn't have a job." That is so ridiculous. "Working mother," is true, whether she's outside the home or whether she's inside the home. I can guarantee you if she is a momma, she is working. But with so many of us, there are so many people in the world today, frankly, they hate their job. When Friday comes, they say, "Thank God it's Friday." When Monday comes, they say, "Oh, no. Good night. It's Monday. I've got to go to work." And somehow there's a vast difference between our people on Sunday and our people on Monday. Somebody said, "They're praising God on Sunday, but they'll be all right on Monday. It's just a little habit they've acquired."

Well, what is wrong with so many of us? We've come to think of work almost as a four-letter word. Well, I want to tell you, friend, that you can put joy and zest and dignity into the most mundane job. You can turn the monotony into a dignity and a joy if you'll take the principles that I'm going to give from the Word of God today. And this is especially needful not for those who have exotic jobs, but those who have what we would call very ordinary jobs. You say, "Well, I'm a clerk," or, "I work in a factory and all I'm doing is just drawing my breath and drawing my salary." Well, I want you to see, friend, that God can take you this Monday morning and make you a thing of beauty and joy to Himself.

You know, the Bible says, and we're going to get to our text in a moment, but, in First Corinthians chapter 1 verses 26 and 27, Paul, talking to those folks at Corinth, he said, "You see your calling, brethren, not many mighty, not many noble are called." And then he says, "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound those things which are wise, and weak things, and base things." These are just the ordinary people, and God literally chooses them. Now if you're a Ph.D., a movie star, a star athlete, a class president, a Phi Beta Kappa, well, God can use you too, but He'll have to work harder to do it. I'm serious, listen, I am serious. God's plan, listen to me, don't miss it, God's plan is to take ordinary people and take ordinary people and put them in ordinary places with ordinary jobs and get extraordinary glory to Himself. That is God's plan, to take ordinary people with ordinary talents, put them in ordinary places, and then get extraordinary glory to Himself. It's just like God to do that. So if you're saying, "Well, I don't count. Nobody knows me. I didn't make "Who's Who;" I didn't even make "Who's Not." They don't even let me lead in silent prayer." Friend, if you're one of those folks, you just say, "Hey, I don't count for anything. I'm just going off to work tomorrow because I have to." Well, the message is for you. And it's so very important, because you know, we spend about a third to forty-five percent of our working lives, on the job. That's where we spend our



lives. And wouldn't it be a shame just to spend that much time with something we feel really down in our heart doesn't amount to much, or something really we despise?

Now there're three principles I want to give you, but, first of all, let's read the Scripture here. Ephesians chapter 6 beginning in verse 5 to verse 8, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh." Now he's not talking about the church life now. When he says, "Your masters according to the flesh," he's talking about what we would call today your boss in the secular occupation. "Be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." You serve your boss as if he were Jesus. You say, "Wait a minute, Pastor. Do you know my boss, that two-legged devil?" Well, that's what he's talking about here, "Your masters according to the flesh." Treat him as if he is Jesus. "And not with eye-service," that is, not just working when he's watching, "or as men-pleasers," not trying to butter him up to get a promotion, "but as the servants of Christ," watch this, "doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men." You're not going to work tomorrow for your boss; you're going to work tomorrow for Jesus Christ. I don't care what you do, you do it as, "to the Lord and not to men." And then notice this: here's the hidden paycheck, the hidden paycheck, "Knowing that whatsoever good any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." God knows. I love the song, "His eye is on the sparrow, and I know that He watches me." Are you ready for these three principles that can put a little grace in the rat race; that can turn the rat race into a pilgrimage?

Principle number one: see your job as an opportunity and be grateful. If you have a job, be grateful. It is a God-given opportunity. Now there're basically four ways to look at a job. Some people look at a job as a necessary evil. I mean, they have to do it. They're bored to tears. It's the same old grind. It's the same old drudgery, but they've got to do it. They have no sense of meaning, no real sense of accomplishment. As we say, it's just a rat race. As I've already said, "drawing your breath and drawing your salary." And it's not just the assembly line worker that sometimes feels this way. It's not just the clerk who feels this way. Sometimes the executive feels exactly the same way.

One business executive said, "I kept having a recurring dream. It was like a nightmare." He said, "I dreamed I was running in a marathon, running." And he said, "All of my co-workers were the ones that I was running against." And he said, "I was running and running," and then he said, "all of the sudden, in this dream," he said, "I couldn't figure out why we were in the race and where the finish line was. It was like a nightmare." He was an executive. And you know, there're so many people like that. I'm not just talking about people who have what we consider the less glamorous jobs, but people who have what they consider to be glamorous jobs. You know what they say when spiritual fervor begins to rise? They say, "Man, I would like to quit this job. I'd like to get into some ministry. I'd like to get into some service. I'd like to be a pastor or missionary, a singer, or a something that I could do for Jesus." Now that's the way some people feel. So to them, work is just a necessary evil; they have to do it to pay the bills. And to others it's even worse. Work for them is a cruel master. I mean, it's like they're caught in a trap. They can't get out. They can't even stop working to look for another job, and they just feel



that they are trapped, and sometimes they almost have a moral schizophrenia because they're doing things on the job, or things are required of them that they think are just not right.

Have you ever felt that way, that your job is a master? Some see it as a necessary evil. Some see it as a cruel master. I tell you, other people have made a god of their job, not so much that their job is their master, but it's almost their god. And this, I think, is one of the most dangerous things. People make a god of their career and they sacrifice everything. They go to these seminars, high-priced seminars, and there're always those there who'll tell you how to be successful. Let me give you a little speech right now. Here, here's the typical thing, and they all begin with "D."

First of all, determination. "Man, you've got to have determination." And they'll say, "There are many starters, but there're few finishers. You've got to be determined."

And number two is; discipline. And they'll tell you that creativity is 2% inspiration and 98% percent perspiration.

And the next one is direction, and they'll tell you, "Man, you've got to have these goals," and "If you don't know where you're going, if you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time."

And the next is discernment. And they say that, "Success in life comes, you know, not from being given a good hand, but by playing the hand that you have well."

And then last of all they'll tell you is duration. They say "Hard times never last but people do." And you know, people get this stuff down, and, "Man, I'm going to do it. I'm going to succeed." And so, their job, their career is their god. And nothing is too good for a man's god, so he sacrifices his health, he sacrifices his family, he sacrifices his love for the Lord Jesus Christ for his job. And somebody'll look at him and say, "He's a success." But he's got a peptic ulcer. He's already had a coronary. He's on his second or third wife and she's is about to walk out on him. His kids are on drugs, but the business is up here, and everybody says, "Man, isn't he successful?" He's an abject failure. He's an abject failure, but people think because he is a wheeler-dealer, he's successful. You see, for some people the work is a necessary evil. For some people it's a cruel master. For some people it is a demanding god. But what you need to see, your work is an opportunity, a God-given opportunity, and be grateful. It is a loving gift. You say, "My job?" If you have a job, be grateful. It is a gift from God, and the Bible says in Proverbs chapter 14 and verse 23, "In all labor there is profit."

Now here's the second principle. Not only see your job as an opportunity and be grateful, but see your job as a responsibility and be helpful. Look if you will now in Ephesians chapter 6 verses 6 and 7. Verse 5 speaks of the opportunity, but verses 6 and 7; do your job, "Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of God, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will," watch this, "doing service as to the Lord, and not to men."

Did you know that your job is really a partnership with God, even if it's what we call a secular job? Did you know that? And work is not a punishment from God. Some people think, you know, if we got back to the Garden of Eden, we wouldn't have any work to do. You'd be wrong. Work did not come as a punishment for sin. Toil and sweat came as a punishment for sin, but not work in itself.

Now, let me ask you a question: do you know who the first farmer was? If you're not thinking, you're going to say, "Well, Adam was the first farmer," but he wasn't. God was the first farmer. Listen,



just put in your margin Genesis chapter 2 verse 8, “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden.” “The Lord God planted a garden.” Who was the first farmer? It was God Himself. And then what did God say to Adam? In Genesis chapter 2 verse 15, “And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

Now God started it, and then God said, “Adam, I’m going to turn this over to you. I want you to dress it and I want you to keep it.” So what was Adam doing? Well, farming is not preaching, it’s not missionary work, it’s not working in the temple. It’s what some people would call secular work. But, friend, any work done for God is the work of God, is it not? Is it not? Yes, it is. It is the work of God. And so, put this down, put this verse down, Colossians 3 verses 23 and 24. I love this. Listen to it. If you’re one of those people that just kind of lag around on the job, you have no spizzerinctum. Listen to this, “And whatsoever ye do,” now notice he said, “whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.” And, friend, in those verses he’s talking about your so-called secular work. Friend, if you work in a factory, you’re working for God. If you work in an office, you’re working for God. Don’t get so heavenly minded you’re no earthly good. You know, some of the people who were carried away to Babylon in the Babylonian captivity, when they got over there to Babylon, they said, “Well, we’re in a pagan land. This is a pagan world. We’re only here as captives. We’re not going to work. We’re not going to work with all of our heart.” Now this is very important. Don’t you miss this! Jeremiah 29 verse 4, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon.” By the way, the Babylonian captivity was not a mistake. God engineered it. God engineered some trouble for Israel because they couldn’t handle their blessings, and that’s what frightens me about America right now. God carried them away to Babylon. And then, here’s what He says to these folks. Listen to it, Jeremiah 29 verses 5 through 7, “Build ye houses and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters, that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.” Now watch this, “And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for the peace thereof, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.” All right. Let’s translate that.

You’re there in your city or town. What does God say to you? God says, “Build houses.” God says, “Be busy.” God says, “Get into the work world and do a good job and seek the welfare of your city.” God told them, “You seek the welfare of Babylon, where I have carried you.” Don’t you think that your job is not important? Your job is a part of all of this. You are to be helpful to others and you’re to help yourself. Look again in verse 7. We’re in chapter 6 of Ephesians verse 7. And He says, “With good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men.” Be helpful. If you’re lazy, if you refuse to work, there’s something bad wrong with you.

Do you know what a lot of folks think? They think, “Well, you know, man if I just had enough money, if I could win the lottery, I wouldn’t have to work anymore.” Friend, you ought to work no matter how much money you have. And I would say something else. If you don’t have a job, get out



to think I'm a hired gun. I want them to think I love Jesus because I love Jesus. You know, a little boy said, "Momma," said, "would you give me a dollar?" She said, "What for?" He said, "For being a good boy." She said, "Why? Can't you be good for nothing like your dad?" I want people to think I'm good for nothing. I mean, not that I'm being paid as a minister, as a professional. And sometime they sniff it out. It must be something about the way I talk, but when I open my mouth, they say, "You're a preacher, aren't you?" I say, "No, I've just been sick." I don't want them to know that I'm just a sort of a hit man for Jesus. I want to be a child of God who loves Jesus and just serves Jesus because I love Him.

Don't get the idea that you have to get into the, quote, ministry to serve God. You have a great opportunity to serve the Lord. You see, so many people come to church on Sunday like it's a weekend hobby. And then they're out there rest of the week, or, on the other hand, they're going to despise their job and can hardly wait to get here on Sunday so they can, quote, serve the Lord. And there's a bridge between their work life and their worship life. And we need to put a little spiritual dynamite under that bridge. You are serving God full time wherever you work and no matter how mundane your job might be.

Let me ask you a question: Would you agree with this? One-tenth of your money and one-seventh of all of your time belongs to God? Be careful, it's a trick question. Don't answer it. That's wrong. Friend, it's not one-tenth of your money belongs to God. All your money belongs to God. It's not one-seventh of your time that belongs to God. All of your time belongs to God. Do you think your life is like a pie and you say, "Well, I'm going to slice it, you know, and put all these slices, and I'll take one-tenth of this pie here, one-tenth of my financial pie, and I'll take that slice out, and I'll give that to God, and then I've got nine-tenths to do what I want with." No. You say, "Well, I'm going to give God a whole day on Sunday. That's the Lord's Day. Then I've got six days of my own." No. Friend, every day is a holy day. Every place is a sacred place. And every duty is a divine duty. Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever you do in word or deed," do a-double-I, "all to the glory of God."

Isn't that wonderful? Doesn't that put some dignity into it? And say, "Well, if it's drudgery, then that puts more dignity into it. Lord Jesus, I'm willing to endure drudgery for You." And if you're getting a difficulty, say, "Lord Jesus, look what I am doing for You." There is a delightfulness in even doing that which is undignified.

Now let me give you the classic example of this. There's a man named Daniel. And Daniel was taken to Babylon not of his own free will. He did not go to some business counselor and say, "What do you think I'd be good at doing?" Nor did he choose, after getting a degree in business from some university, as to where to go. Daniel was what we would call a victim of circumstances. But it wasn't circumstances. Remember what I told you, that those Jews were carried away captive into Babylon, and God had caused it? See, God was over it. And so, here's Daniel. He is there in Babylon and he has a job. Now he got into the government service, and he became a governmental employee, a functionary in the government, but he served God while he was working for a pagan ruler. And when they threw old Daniel in the lions' den, Darius, the king, looked into the lions' den, and he said



of that house and go to somebody and say, "Look, would you hire me?" He says, "No, I can't hire." "All right. Would you let me work for you for nothing? Just let me work for you for nothing. You tell me what to do. I will work for you for nothing." And before long, you'll have a job anyway. But if nothing else, you will have the joy of work. Get out and get busy doing something.

The Bible says, listen to this, Second Thessalonians chapter 3 verses 10 to 13, "For even when we were with you, we commanded you, that if any would not work," it doesn't say could not work; it says would not work, "neither should he eat." It is a sin to feed a person who refuses to work, a sin. If he will not work, don't let him eat. By the way, he'll start working after a while if you'll do that. "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing." He's talking about your job, your job.

And then, we're supposed to take care of our children, not somebody else. First Timothy chapter 5 verse 8, "But if any provide not for his own, specially those for his own house, he hath denied the faith, he's worse than an infidel." And then over in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 26. We're in Ephesians chapter 6. Paul says this concerning the man who's gotten right with God, "Let him that stole steal no more but, rather, let him labor, working with his hands," he's not talking now about working in the temple. He's talking about what we call secular work, "Working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." You don't work just to meet your needs. You work to meet the needs of other people that you have enough not only for yourself, but you have enough to give to others who need. He's not talking about those who will not work. He's talking about those who cannot work, and there're plenty of them. And, friend, when a person cannot work, it is our joy, our duty; it is our responsibility to do enough work for ourselves and to do enough work for them also, to help those who need help. Now, listen. You see your job as an opportunity and be grateful. You see your job as a responsibility and be helpful. The Lord Jesus was a carpenter. He knew what it was to work.

Now here's the third thing I want you to see. There're three principles here. See your job as a ministry and be faithful. And I really want to pull off right here and park for just a few moments. Yes, your job is an opportunity. Yes, your job is a responsibility. But, friend, your job is a ministry. Look at Ephesians 6 verses 5 through 7 again. Listen to it, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart," now underscore this, "as unto Christ." Verse 6, "Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ." Underscore that. Now he's talking about secular work, doing the will of God from the heart. Look in verse 7, "With good will doing service as to the Lord." Could it be any more plain? That ought to put dignity in what you do. You are not going to work tomorrow morning for a company. You're going to work tomorrow morning for Jesus Christ. For Jesus Christ. You are serving God!

You know, so many people say, "Oh, man. I wish I could get out of this rat race and serve God." Friend, that's split-level living. As a matter of fact, when I'm on an airplane, I try to disguise the fact that I'm a minister, not that I'm a Christian, but that I'm a minister. You know why? I don't want them



there in Daniel 6 verse 16, “Daniel, the God that you serve continually has delivered you.” Even this pagan king knew that Daniel in his ordinary work was really serving God.

Now I know some of you feel like, “Pastor, you just don’t know. You poor, old, benighted soul. You don’t have any idea. You’ve been in the ministry all your life. You don’t know what is out there. Well, you don’t know what I’m facing. You think Daniel lived in Babylon, man, I live in Babylon. All around me God’s name is taken in vain. All around there’re dirty jokes and sexual innuendoes. All around there’re people who are laughing and mocking at holy things. It’s dog eat dog. They’re stepping on one another. There unfair business practices. Pastor, you just don’t know what it’s like. Materialism and greed and all of that.”

Well, I want to ask you a question: Do you think it’s God’s plan that you, that you live in a monastery? That you just go off and get in some hole somewhere and pluck a harp, or something? Listen to what Jesus prayed in John chapter 17 verse 15 for His saints, “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Notice what Paul said in First Corinthians chapter 5 verses 9 and 10, “I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters, for then ye must needs go out of the world.” He’s saying, “Hey, you’re going to live with fornicators, covetous, and idolatrous people.” I’m telling you that in this world, they’re all around us. And listen. The Bible says there in Romans chapter 12 verse 21, “Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.” And John tells us in First John 5:4, “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” We’ve been saved out of the world, sent back into the world to witness to the world, and that’s the only business in the world we have until we’re taken out of the world when Jesus comes. We’re in this world, but not of this world. And Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “You are the light of the world.” Matthew 5 verse 14.

Now I want to ask you a question: If you’re the light of the world, He doesn’t say, “You’re the light of the church.” He says, “You’re the light of the world.” He said in Matthew 5:13, “You’re the salt of the earth.” Do you know what we do on Sunday? We come to church and we shine our flashlights on each other. And I’ll salt him and he’ll salt me. We’re salting each other. No. This is the church. We are the light of the world. That’s the reason you’re in your job where you are. Where do you put a lighthouse? Downtown Manhattan or out on some barren coast? Where is your light to shine? Listen to Philippians 2 verse 15, “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst,” in the middle, “of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” That is why you are there in that place that you call Babylon. That is why Daniel was there. You say, “Well, I want to get out of there so I can serve God.” Stay there and serve God! That’s where the salt is needed. You don’t put the salt in one barrel and the fish in another. That’s where the light



is needed. Your job is an opportunity; be grateful. Your job is a responsibility; be helpful. Your job is a ministry; be faithful.

I've told you before about four things that I want you to do if tomorrow morning when you go to work, and they're easy to remember. But jot them on a slip of paper if you would be a witness, if you'd let your light shine. Here's what it is.

Number one: do not brag. Do not brag. Jesus said in Matthew 5 verse 16, "Let your light so shine before them that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, which is in Heaven." Now if you go around there showing what a good boy you are, and you're self-righteous prig, your light is to glow, not to glare. They're to see the light, not the lamp. Self-righteous people are the most obnoxious people on earth. You go in there and you start telling this person, "You ought not to go down to those casinos. You ought not to gamble for that coke." They say, "Would you get out of here?" No! Don't brag.

Number two: don't nag. Don't nag. Don't always go around wagging your finger in peoples' face. They don't want to hear it. Nobody's ever won to Jesus by being talked down to. The Bible says in Colossians 4 verses 5 and 6, "Walk in wisdom toward them which are without, redeeming the time." Now listen to this: "Let your speech be always seasoned with grace, or let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man." Isn't that great? Isn't that great? Listen, "Walk in wisdom toward those who are without." Well, you say, "Well, they've doing all these bad things, preacher." Of course, they are. They're sinners. That's what sinners do: sin! Don't go in there and try to tell billygoats not to butt. That is what they do! Don't you brag and don't you nag.

And don't you lag, L-A-G. Don't do it. You carry your part of the load at the job. As a matter of fact, you work just a little harder than anybody else. It's a sin for a Christian to do less than his best. Remember that Scripture in Colossians 3 verse 23? "Whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord."

When an employer goes down to the employment agency, he ought to say, "I need some workers because I need this and this and this. And by the way, if you have any Christians, send them over. Man, I don't understand these people. They're the hardest working people. They get here on time. They do what is required of them. They do more than is required of them."

Do you know if people started living like that on Monday, they'd start believing what I preach on Sunday, did you know that? If we were to take what's in this place and just put it out into the community. Don't brag. Don't nag. Don't, dear friend, lag.

And here's the last one: don't sag, don't sag. Never let down in your Christian faith. I mean, they will remember one little malfeasance more than so much good that you do. Don't, sag. Don't let down. Don't let down. Don't look at that dirty, obscene joke. Don't say, "Well, we're just matching for cokes." Or don't join in some sort of petty gossip. Don't let down. Don't sag in your Christian witness. Well, you say, "Well, Pastor, I haven't got what it takes." That's right. You don't. There's only one person who has ever lived a Christian life. Do you know His name? Jesus. And if it's lived in that office where you work, it'll be Jesus in you. And that's the reason that you need to get up a little earlier tomorrow morning and have that quiet time with the Lord, and load up on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be so



filled with Him that when you walk into that office, God'll be walking into that office, because Christ will be in you. And you'll see your job as an opportunity; you'll be thankful. And you'll see your job as, as a responsibility and you'll be helpful. And then you'll see your job as a ministry and you'll be faithful. And you know what'll happen? I'll guarantee you, I'll just guarantee you, they will come to you. They'll say, "Hey, man, what makes you tick? How do you live this way? You're different." They will see the difference. They'll see the reality of Jesus Christ in you.

Folks, I'm going to tell you this much: most people are not all that interested in going to Heaven or hell; they want to know how to hack it on Monday. That's right. You just come in to your job with victory, with victory, and let them see the light, the love, the joy, the peace that Jesus Christ gives you. I'm not talking about bragging. I'm just talking about reality. And I'm not saying that you never share Jesus. You do share Jesus, but you share Jesus in the right way. Don't go in the office and say, "I'm going to be like Pastor Rogers and preach to them." Hey, folks, I'm speaking to 6,000 people in a big auditorium. You don't speak that way in the office. Let the grace of Jesus come out of your life. Share the Lord Jesus Christ. Those are the people that you work with at home, and on the job, who are your first responsibility and, and God'll bless you for it. Tomorrow morning when you go to work, say, "Good morning, Lord. Good morning, Lord. Oh, Lord God, here I am in the fulltime ministry. Thank God it's Monday. Thank God it's Monday. And I'm going off to serve my Lord and my Savior." Wouldn't that be wonderful? Amen.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Now you can't do this without Jesus. You can't do this unless you're saved. Remember I told you there's only one who's ever lived the Christian life. His name is Jesus. And if it's lived in your home or in your office or in your factory, in your place of business, it'll be Jesus Christ in you. And He will come into you, energize you, give you peace and purpose if you'll trust Him. If you do not know Jesus, let me help you to be saved right now. You can be saved right now, I mean, right now for all eternity, instantaneously and eternally, today, now, if you will receive Jesus Christ. He died for you. He paid for your sin with His blood on the cross. He proved to be the Son of God by the resurrection with many infallible proofs. He died to save you. He promised to save you. He lives to save you. He will save you if you'll trust Him.

Pray a prayer like this. Forget anybody else is here. Speak to God. "Dear God." Pray right now. "Dear God." Speak to Him. "Dear God, I know that You love me and I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me. You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Jesus."

Friend, tell Him that right now, right now. Do it for your sake. "I do trust You, Jesus, with all of my heart. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Save me. Save me, Lord Jesus." Did you ask Him? Then by faith pray this way, "Thank You for doing it. I receive it by faith. I don't look for a feeling. I stand on Your Word. You're now my Lord, my Savior, and my God. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be. And help me never, ever, Jesus, to be ashamed of You. Because You died for me, I will live for you. Not in order to be saved, but because I have been saved, I will live for You. I love You, Jesus. Give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray. Amen."



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