

WORKING TO PLEASE GOD

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

WORSHIP

Read Psalm 47 aloud. Take a moment to reflect on God's Word and center in Him.

FELLOWSHIP

- What was your first job?
- How did you live out last week's sermon and discussion?

DISCUSSION

Discuss the questions below, or if you're studying a book, RightNow Media series, etc., transition to discussion and try to include questions that address head, heart, and hands.

1. How do you respond to the concept of work as contribution? What is one way you have contributed in the last week at work, at home, in your neighborhood, in your garden or studio, etc.?

2. Read Genesis 1:26-31.

- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does this passage tell us about ourselves and our work?

3. Consider the connection between your work and your faith.

-Where would you put your level of integration on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 1 being “no connection” and 10 being “total congruence”)? Why?

-What would moving toward congruence between faith and work look like for you? Is there a step you can take this week?

4. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1, 9-12.

-What stands out to you in Paul’s instructions?

-How does Paul present ambition (v. 11)?

-Respond to Paul’s reasons for living this way (v. 12).

-If you were to offer someone else instruction on how to live to please God, what would you say? Is there something God is inviting you to do this week to live in a way that pleases him, especially in relation to your work?

PRAYER

Ask for prayer requests; try to remember any needs that came up during the fellowship or discussion time. Check in on requests from last week, if you can. Does anyone have a practical need that another group member may be able to help with?

Pray for group, church, and community needs. Consider praying this prayer from Redeemer Presbyterian Church’s Center for Faith & Work:

Dear Father, Son and Spirit,

You have called us to be salt and light in a world where there is much brokenness and darkness. You have called us out of this darkness into your glorious light to love those around us as you have loved us, strengthened by the grace that you generously give. You have made us in your image and through the gospel, we are being made more human.

Grant to [us] the grace to see your light shining brightly in this city and in our world, so that we can see the glimpses of glory that surround us each day.

Open our eyes to see what is unseen, to be overwhelmed by the unfading glory that surrounds us so that our hearts may be freed from our idols to serve the One true living God.

Grant to [us] the grace to see the power of community—people who are united in spirit and purpose—so that together we might more effectively serve the world around us. Empower us with the Spirit of Christ to serve those in our workplaces, rather than seek to be served by them. Help us to be instruments of grace in our companies and industries and to know that your life-giving presence is not excluded from even the darkest places.

Grant to [us] the grace to see your unchanging love towards all who look to you, so that our hearts are strengthened with grace and not fear. You have not withheld your only Son from us, but gave Him up for us all, and you will be faithful to graciously provide all that we need for every good work that you call us to.

Amen.¹

¹ <https://denverinstitute.org/three-prayers-for-work/>