

Kenmore Baptist Church Message Outline July 26, 2015 (Patrick Hegarty)

Fruitfulness on the Frontline

Making Good Work - Colossians 3:17; 23-24

Vocation: *“Our main occupation, especially that which requires dedication and suitability.”*

Life with God on Monday can look vastly different to life with God on Sunday.

“Making good work” means that we make our occupation (whether that be employment, raising a family or education) a means of expanding God’s purposes in a way that brings Him glory.

This includes two elements: The way we do what we do; and the actual work we do.

1) How we do what we do

Colossians 3:17 – *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the **name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

To do something “in the name of the Lord” means we are His authorised representative in that place, and we conduct ourselves in the way Jesus would if He were present.

We are in effect His own coin that He is spending. We bear His image. That coin has two sides to it, and there are two facets to how we undertake our vocation with Him.

a) Faith

We need to be able to trust God as we engage with the world in our vocation.

- So that we don't rely on money/employers more than God
- For the times where we consider career movement or change
- When we wonder at the degree of godly impact we are having
- When we can't find rest in regards to ambition and performance

When Moses enquired of God as to His ways in regard to walking and working with him in the exodus God replied *"My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest"* Exodus 33:14

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. (Hebrews 4:9-10)

To walk in Sabbath rest is an act of faith in God's provision in all these areas, trusting that He is big enough to have them in His hand.

b) Faithfulness

Colossians 3:23 - *"Whatever you do, work at it with **all your heart**, as **working for the Lord**, not for men"*

"All your heart"

- Modern culture resists the idea of loyally investing your heart – many have gone beyond being "free agents" and are now "fulfilment seekers"

- To invest all our heart implies growing skill, and giving our very best. Building the godly quality of excellence.
- We gain a voice to the irreligious world by having competence and character.

“Working for the Lord”

- Working by God’s standards: exercising integrity and diligence
- Working to please Him, not ourselves or other people
- Competence and commitment builds passion – it is a result
- Passion (which changes) is a not a reliable guide to calling, but more often a result of investing in our calling.

2) What we do

The subject of what we “do” in this world should be founded more in the concept of kingdom inheritance, than in personal profiling and job descriptions.

*Colossians 3:23-24 - Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an **inheritance from the Lord as a reward**. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Our vocation is sometimes referred to as our “field” – a throwback to the ancient idea of portions of land and family inheritance.

LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. (Psalms 16:5-6)

Paul the apostle saw the people he had authority and influence over as his field. 2 Corinthians 10:13-16

*(13) We will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the **field God has assigned** to us, a field that reaches even to you.*

(15) Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, ... (16) for we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory.

We each have a field of influence at home, work, school, university, or community.

God has placed us there to advance the flame-front of kingdom influence.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1:28

Whatever our vocation – we as God's authorised representatives are there to make a difference either by advancing culture, bringing peace and relational health, fulfilling Christ's work, bearing witness, caring for our planet, or sharing God's story directly.

Discussion Questions

Refer to your Fruitfulness on the Frontline study guide for group discussion.