

Life Goals: Making your Career and Life Count

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The challenge of balance: family, career, service, ministry, relationships, etc.

Why did God give us jobs (whether at home or outside the home)?

The “callings” of work:

1. We are called to excellence in our work.

2. We are called to servanthood, not self-fulfillment.

3. We are called to give our lives in exchange for what is eternal. We are called to put first things first.

4. We are called to Some One, not some thing.

We are called to excellence in our work:

Col 3:23-24 NKJV - 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Col 3:17 NKJV - 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Eph 6:6-7 NKJV - “...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”

1 Peter 2:13, 15 NKJV - “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ... 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men--”

The witness of a job well-done: shows love, concern, servant's heart.

The witness of a job poorly-done: shows indifference, lack of concern, possibly defrauding our employer.

“A significant and often overlooked way that we serve God is in our everyday tasks. Martin Luther understood this when he wrote, “The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays -- not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship.” Our Daily Bread Sept. 5, 1994

Sharing our faith starts by doing excellent work.

We are called to servanthood, not self-fulfillment.

Mark 10:42-45 NKJV - "But Jesus called them to [Himself] and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them."Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant."And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

John 13:14 NKJV - "If I then, [your] Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Philippians 2:5-8 NKJV - "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, [and] coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to [the point of] death, even the death of the cross."

2 Cor 4:5 NKJV - "For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake."

We are called to give our lives in exchange for what is eternal. We are called to keep our priorities straight.

What is eternal? What is of prime importance that I should give my life in exchange for?

Isaiah 40:8 NKJV - "The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

Luke 10:42 NKJV - 42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

The word of God is eternal.

Rom 8:38-39 NKJV - "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The souls of men and women are eternal.

Eph 5:15-16 NKJV - 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

"My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever-increasing depth and to make disciples and develop laborers at all times, under any conditions in every place I go."

If that is my objective, I must then ask myself, how do I fashion my life and time commitments to best meet that goal?

Essential: Defined as: “That which will last for eternity and is on God’s heart.”

Necessary: Defined as: “That which we must do in the **culture** and environment we find ourselves.” Examples might be our work, taking care of material things, physical fitness. Each of these are necessary, but how much of each one are needed? Do these detract from what is essential in our lives?

Good: Defined as: “That which helps others or gives us refreshment”

Delegate: “That which can be done by **someone else**”

Eliminate: “That which is **not** helpful.”

Practical implications:

1. Ask yourself, “How does this activity help me in my goal: My objective: To know Christ, etc.” OR “Does this free time activity help me in my goal in life?”
2. How does this activity help me love Jesus more, make Him known more, help my family more, etc?
3. It may mean limiting church involvement to 1-2 things
4. When considering employment, ask, “Will this job interfere with my ‘essential or necessary activities?’” If so, question if it’s the right thing to do.
5. Is there a way I can delegate some of the things I am currently assuming responsibility for? Do I need to humble myself to realize that someone else can do ...?
6. What do I need to eliminate from my life? What is distracting me from knowing Jesus better or from making Him known better?
7. Am I sold out to the truth that the “essential” — investing in knowing Jesus through His Word and investing in the souls of men and women — is what I need to invest my time in?
8. Do I need to limit the “necessary” to make room for the “essential”?
9. Labeling something as “good” helps us understand that there are separate, more important, “essential” things.
10. It may be costly to make time for the essential, but it is worth it!

We are called to Some One, not some thing.

Col 1:15-18 NKJV - "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."

Implications:

Identify with Christ: Do people know you are believer and follower of Jesus at work?

Be willing to suffer for Him: Taking stands for righteousness

Resources:

Richard Spann blogs:

“Mark or blur: Live your life in such a way as to leave a mark, not a blur” : <https://kansasnavs.org/2014/12/>

“At all times, under any conditions”: <https://kansasnavs.org/2014/08/>

“Don’t wait for perfect conditions”: <https://kansasnavs.org/2015/10/>

“Prioritize your life”: <https://kansasnavs.org/2015/10/>

Kansas Navigators Podcast “Making Disciples Naturally:”

“Making disciples in the workplace”: <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts/>
Podcasts 114, 115, 116 (Elmo Joseph)

“How do we put Christ first in our families, business and social life?”: <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts> Podcast 113 (Joe Stout)

“How does God want to use me in the lives of others?”: <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts> Podcasts 139, 140, 141 (“Bill”)

Questions for discussion:

1. What may be hard about having a servant’s attitude in the workplace?
2. Do you agree or disagree that excellence in the workplace is important to our testimony for Christ? Why or why not? What motivates you to do an excellent job in the workplace?
3. Do you think our work has intrinsic value apart from a platform to share Christ? Why or why not?
4. What are some practical implications in your own situation of the statement that we are called to some One, not some thing?