

Work, Vocation & the Gospel

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[0:00] Thanks for joining this morning, everybody. It's nice to see you all. We'll go ahead and get started here.! I know a few people will probably continue trickling in, but we'll dive in. Let me open us up with a word of prayer before we get started.

Father in heaven, we give you praise and honor and glory, Lord, for the work that you've done in creation, Lord, the work that you've done in our lives, calling us out of death. And into life abundant with you, Lord. And we just ask that as we examine your word this morning, that it would teach us and instruct us.

Lord, we pray for wisdom and discernment as we seek ways to understand the calling that you've given to us in our lives, both broadly and specifically, individually.

And we just ask that this would be a time that's encouraging and edifying to each one of us. We thank you for Jesus, and it's in his name we pray. Amen. All right. Well, I thought we could start today with a little bit of a review from last week.

I'm hoping that this can be sort of conversational today. I have lots that I could say, but I would love for it to be a dialogue as much as we can.

[1:22] So please feel free to just jump in with questions, comments, anything that you want to say as I'm going. I'm happy to be interrupted. But let's start with a review.

Anybody remember anything from last week, from Kunle's lesson about work? What are some features of work that we discussed?

So God works, right? It's good because God did it. He created the universe, created everything in it. He delights in his creation.

He saw that it was good. In his work, he cares for his creation. It's providence for his creation.

And he commissions us to carry on his work, right? So God's work in creation was perfect at the outset, but intentionally, I'll use the word incomplete.

[2:31] If I'm using doctrinally unsound words, you can correct me. But it was intentionally unfinished in a way that leaves room for us to take part in his invitation to continue the cultivation process and creation.

So we see that God created the universe formless and empty so that his work of creation sort of progresses through the creation account. He's bringing order out of chaos, so to speak.

And our call to participate in his work mirrors this in a way as we're instructed to fill and subdue the earth. It's a command not only in our work of bringing order out of chaos in our material world, but also there's an aspect of cultivating a society that brings glory to God, right?

So we tend to think of, you know, work as being I'm working with my hands, and that's true. I'm going to work with my hands, and I'm going to mold something out of clay. But there's this work in bringing order to a society that's in view here.

Tim Keller says, human beings filling the earth means something far more than plants and animals filling the earth. It means civilization, not just procreation.

[3:52] We get the sense that God does not want merely more individuals of the human species. He also wants the world to be filled with a human society. So God doesn't just sort of make everything and magically put it all in its exact place where he wants it to be.

He gives us clay to mold. He gives us tools with which to build things. He gives us parents to rear children, teachers to instruct students, authorities to maintain order in society.

All of these things are part of God's creative and cultivative work in the world that we are called to participate in. And we'll notice in this that this framework all happens before the fall, so we're invited to consider the goodness of work based on God's design of it.

The command to work suggests that work is as much a human necessity as food and water. So much so that Dorothy Sayers says this about the Christian understanding of work.

The Christian understanding of work is that work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do. It is or it should be the full expression of the worker's faculties, the medium in which he offers himself to God.

[5:20] Okay, how many people have heard the phrase, you work to live, you don't live to work? Right? Is that the exact opposite of what Dorothy Sayers is saying?

What do we think about that? I think Sayers is right. Say more. You live to work because God has assigned it, right?

So it really begs the question, what's the purpose of life? That's a good question. What's the purpose of life? Yes, we'll see if we can answer that.

And of course, you know, in all things do for the glory of God. So you're putting your whole heart into your work because you're doing it for God, not for your patience.

Exactly. Work heartily unto the Lord. Yes. Yes. That's a great point that we have to keep in mind here. So what do we make of this idea that we hear in secular society, we don't live to work, we work to live?

[6:35] Is there any wisdom in that? Yeah, I think, well, agreeing with what Sayers would say there, there's a risk of putting a good as the highest good.

It's not necessarily the highest good. Yes, yes.

We're working to glorify God. It is not the only means by which we do so. And that there is a way to place good things in their proper place in life.

Yeah, these are all really great thoughts. Yeah, Peter. And work to live is actually putting your enjoyment of life as your higher God as opposed to live to work.

Yes. Yeah, exactly. I think part of what's going on, too, is they're both right because they're both talking about different kinds of work. One's talking about kind of work towards earthly ends and the other's talking about towards heavenly ends.

[7:41] Yes, I think that's a great point, too. What kind of work are we talking about when we say these things? Are we talking about working for ourselves, working for the Lord, working for our friends?

What is work? That's kind of what we're here to answer. What is work? And what's our calling to work? And how does it fit into our daily lives? So that's a great segue into something that I want to do, which is define some of the words that we're using.

And I've provided a handout that you can use to follow along a little bit if you don't have it. I think Sarah has a few copies. But when I put definitions on these, I just want to say, I've said it explicitly on the worksheet, this is for the sake of this class.

So if you leave this class and you're like, I don't really like that definition, that's fine. You don't have to agree. We're just trying to get on the same page about how we're using the words. So first, I think we can define the word occupation.

And I think this is just our paid work, right? The work that we go to our nine to five jobs, so to speak, and we are doing this for the specific sake of our material provision and in service to the common good, right?

[9:00] Secondly, I think we can define vocation. And this can include our occupation but is not exclusive to it, right? This is the work, the labor for which God has set us apart in service of the cultivation of his kingdom.

So if you have an occupation, if you are paid to do work, it is part of your vocation. God has assigned you to it. He has called you to it.

And it is part of the work that he wants you to do to cultivate his kingdom. But there are many other things that you can be doing as part of your calling in life to cultivate his kingdom.

If you're a parent, if you are a mentor, if you are serving your church, if you're serving your community, there are many ways that we can think of being set apart for work in the world according to God's call for our life.

So when Dorothy Sayers says that work is the thing that we live to do, I think she's talking about vocation, not our occupation. And when many of us say that we work to live rather than living to work, we're more often talking about our occupation, right?

[10:12] Our paid work. And I think this can come with some unhelpful undertones that our occupation is just like a necessary evil, a thing that we have to do so that we can get along with the rest of our lives.

And I think we want to battle against that too. But the point that we want to make here is that we have a calling in life and our occupation is part of it, but it is not the totality of it.

And I think that'll be important to keep in mind as we move forward. So, and since we're saying that there are different categories of work now, it might be helpful to have an overarching idea of work.

And I think we can go again to Dorothy Sayers who defines it as a gracious expression of creative energy offered in service to others. So God's creative energy is flowing in and through us to participate in the cultivation of the world.

And specifically, it's in service to others. If it's not in service to others, it may not feel like work as we're defining it, but rather an anxious toiling for ourselves or some other means.

[11:19] So these are not perfect definitions. These are just to help us wrap our heads around what we're talking about here. But I think all of this leads us to a question that many of us would ask, which is what corner of creation am I called to cultivate?

It's something that we wrestle with both in our occupation and our broader vocation. And we just want to take a little time today to see if we can understand what a calling is and if there is some wisdom that we can derive and how we might discern what that is.

So any questions? Let me pause for questions or comments. Yes, Peter.

I was wondering about what you just said about occupation and vocation. You said that the occupation is always part of the vocation, whereas I'm wondering, like, if you're the mine cook at McDonald's, you know, that's your occupation.

But it's not – but in your spare time, you volunteer at a – you know, so that would be more your vocation. And so therefore the occupation doesn't really coincide with the vocation.

[12:48] That's a great point. So this idea that if you're a line cook at McDonald's, say, how does that align with your vocation?

It depends on what we mean by vocation. What is this calling that we've been given by God? And I think we'll try to get into this, but the idea is that any meaningful work of cultivation in creation has a God-ordained purpose and that there is no form of work that's better – and we're talking about good, legitimate work, right?

Like we can all envision, you know – Ponzi. Yes, yeah, Ponzi schemes. So any good, legitimate work is contributing to God's work of cultivating creation in that he cares for creation.

So if you're a line cook, you're making food for people who are then going off and being nourished by the food that you've made to go do something else with their creative energy that's taking part in God's cultivative work.

So we do want to say that our occupation is part of our calling because it's been assigned to us and it has value and goodness because of the work that God is doing through it.

[14:11] And we want to try to unpack that a little bit more as we keep going. Joshua. I'll just ask you real quick. We've all – also we've all had good and bad experiences at McDonald's. Uh-huh.

So being the best line cook or cashier or whatever that you can be or whatever that is where God is placed to, for the sake of reflecting our excellent God is – Yes.

Yeah, I think that's great. Now, it doesn't mean like you don't feel like – like Dorothy Sayers mentioned like engagement or somebody – I mean some other quote maybe mentioned engaging your full faculties.

Like you feel like you have some sort of mobility, not possibilities that doesn't exclude you from choosing that, but like while you're there, like work hard to do.

Yes, I think that's a great point also. There's two different situations where we can envision applying some of this wisdom. One is the person who is considering a new calling in life, whether it's an occupation or something else vocationally.

[15:18] And then there's the person who is in the midst of their current calling and trying to understand how do I work heartily for the Lord in this context because maybe I don't have the opportunity or the desire to move and do something else.

So those are great points. I think I saw another hand. Pat? As you're working as a wine cook, the way you conduct yourself, the way you share the love of God that you have, with people who probably don't, like the next job, that's just as important as one of those.

Yes. Yes, that's true. There's an aspect in everything that we do of proclaiming the goodness of God so that others might see it.

And we often may never know how our words or our actions are playing out in God's grand plan to bring people to himself. But the promises that we see in the scripture are that he is doing so.

And so there's a, again, it should bring meaning and purpose to the work that we're doing in a way that gives us encouragement in any station in life.

[16:37] This is really great. We're getting into all the meat of everything that we wanted to discuss. Sarah? I guess, I think sometimes just reflecting on the words that are being said, I agree wholeheartedly.

And I think sometimes in Christian circles, like secular work and sacred work can be thought, like kingdom work as sacred work, or like your ministry, or like you're a whole time pastor, or you volunteer teaching Sunday school on Wednesday night to kids, or whatever.

Like we sometimes have these categories versus being like a line cook at McDonald's. But I think actually the point that you're making is that God is calling us to cultivate our corner of creation.

And that absolutely includes being a line cook at McDonald's. And like that vocation and what God has called us to from a work perspective absolutely includes both of these things.

And that we shouldn't be thinking of like, this is just my job, and then this is my kingdom work. And like they're separate. But that actually, the vision that God lays out in the Bible for work, like it is inclusive of these things.

[17:46] And I think everyone's kind of reiterating that point. But I do think sometimes we think in these buckets, but that actually the vision for work we see in the Bible is inclusive of, you know, bringing order to chaos by flipping burgers at McDonald's or whatever the thing God has called you.

That is your corner of creation to cultivate. And is kingdom work actually, like even though it's not like ministry? Would you agree with that?

Yes. Yeah. No, I think that's great. That's exactly right. Yeah. Justin. Yeah. I think to that point, I'll share just an example of a close friend of mine. He's a firefighter and he's also trained as a pastor. And part of his like glorifying God in his work is, yes, like honoring his authorities above him as a firefighter, performing his job technically well, but also he's engaged in sharing the gospel at work. Like every week or so, he's talking about a conversation that he had with a coworker where he's, he's now positioned himself to be somebody who people will bring their stories to.

[18:59] And if you can speak God's word into that, into the situation. So it is like, yeah, both of these things merged into one activity, really not just doing your job well and doing ministry well.

Yes. Integrated. Yeah. I think that's a great, yeah. Integrating your work. And I, and I think that helps reinforce, I think what we're trying to say, that your occupation is part of your broader vocation.

If your broader vocation is proclaiming the glory of God for his, his, just for the sake of his glory and also for the benefit of society.

So that people might know his goodness, that people might be confronted with what he has to offer in, in, in eternal life.

I think that fitting your occupation into that broader vocation is exactly what Justin was saying, which is I am going to go to job and go, go to work and do my job well.

[20:08] And I'm also going to love other people in the process in a way that I'm sharing the good news of the gospel. And this is an important, important consideration.

So I want to move through some scripture, which I've, there, there are a lot of passages that, that we can examine and may not have time to do all of them today.

And I've, I've put them on the worksheet so you can examine them yourself and follow along. But I kind of want to get into what is a calling? If I'm asking the question, what corner of creation am I called to cultivate?

We have to understand what this calling is. And I think it's helpful to move through some particular passages. So the Bible uses a number of words to, to reference, I think what we're calling a divine commissioning.

One that stands out is kaleo. This is a Greek word that means bid, call forth, name or invite. And it's used in quite a few different contexts in the New Testament. And I think we can look at this to kind of get a sense for what do we mean when we're talking about a calling.

[21:17] So the first one, there's, there's one application of kaleo in terms of God calling us into relationship with him. And I think this is our real overarching calling in life out of darkness and into light, out of death and into life.

And we can look at Romans 8:30 to start. And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those whom he called, he also justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified.

What do we see about how this relates to our work? I think sometimes we're fortunate enough to know that, well, God placed us in a particular job.

And when it's confirmed by the person who actually interviewed you and hired you, that that's also feel that way. Then I think that's like something.

It's a privilege and a responsibility. Yeah, that's a great point. There's, there's a sense of God's sovereignty in our lives that he places us where he wants us to be.

[22:40] And that's an important thing to remember. I think too, when we look at this and we think about our work as it maps onto this, our work in this verse is strikingly absent.

Our work has nothing to do with us being called into relationship with God, right? We can go to Ephesians chapter two to see this. For by grace, you've been saved through faith. And this is not, and this is not your own doing.

It is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So nothing that we do in our occupation, in our vocation or otherwise has anything to do with God's calling us into life with him.

And that is a really fundamental basis for how we view everything else that we do in life. And so I think there's, it's always an important reminder and foundation to consider that.

[23:45] And especially here where we're talking about our calling. So we do see later in Ephesians, Paul exhorting the church to walk in a manner that's worthy of the calling, right?

He's using this word kaleo. And in chapter two, he's sort of implicitly defined it, but in chapter four, he's saying it a little bit more explicitly. Um, but I think what's also important to recognize here is that we're saved.

We're called into life with God, not because of anything that we do, but it also says that we're saved for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So, okay, but what good works, right? That's the, that's still the question that we're trying to get to. Um, so we can maybe try to start whittling it down, right?

So we, we were saying calling is most broadly calling into life with God. Um, we see other contexts where we're, we're called and set apart for a new identity.

[24:50] Um, again, the word kaleo is used here. Uh, we see in Romans one, uh, Paul says, he introduces himself, Paul, a servant of Christ called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets and the Holy scriptures.

And he goes on, um, later, later it says, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, to all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints.

We can again look to first Peter chapter two, verse nine, you, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness and into marvelous light.

So again, we're thinking about our calling. We're still kind of in the realm of vocation, right? Not, not occupation yet, but our calling is to be saints.

Um, there's an identity that comes with our salvation. We're called to belong to Jesus Christ, to be this community of saints, called to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood. Um, Paul specifically is called to be an apostle.

[26:04] And in all of this, we're doing it so that we might proclaim his excellencies. This is something that's come up already is like when we go to work, we're proclaiming his excellencies so that others might know his glory.

Richard. Um, I don't think we should, uh, skip over first Corinthians one nine too quickly. Okay. because it says that we are called into the fellowship of his son.

So the essence of fellowship is being with Jesus, right? Yes. So being with him right at the table and enjoying the fellowship of his company when he died, right?

But with him when he's in the crowd preaching and teaching and providing, um, bread and fish for the hungry people, we're, we, we, we enjoy his fellowship then too.

Uh, and, uh, and, uh, that second part looks more like work, um, uh, but it's, it's in the context of the fellowship we're called.

[27:13] That's great. Yeah. And I apologize. I, I skipped over first Corinthians one nine, um, which is in the, the handout, but Richard is exactly right. I think we're, we are called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

And I appreciate the, the comment. It actually dovetails nicely into another note about, uh, the being a community of saints and being in fellowship with one another in Christ, uh, that the word ecclesia, uh, which is the word that Jesus uses for the church literally translates the called out ones.

Um, and so there is sort of a communal aspect to, to what we're doing in our calling, uh, to live this calling out, uh, together. So that's, that's really helpful.

Um, okay. So we're, we're getting a little more specific. Uh, we're getting the sense that our calling is related primarily to our relationship with God.

Um, we see that that comes apart from anything that we do, uh, but that we are called out for the sake of something specific. Um, we still want to know how does this relate to our day to day life?

[28:22] I think that's what we, we all are interested in. What's my, what's my calling in creation here? So, uh, we can look further to, to Matthew four. Um, while walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers.

He, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon, who's called Peter and Andrew, his brother casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. And he said to them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Immediately.

They left their nets and followed him. And going on from there, he saw two brothers, James, the son of Zebedee and John, his brother in the boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets. And he called them immediately.

They left the boat and their father and followed him. So now we're getting into this call of discipleship. And we're starting to interface a little bit with occupation, right?

These guys were fishermen. So there's a call to Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Jesus and to be made fishers of men. We see Jesus kind of tapping into their occupation as fishermen and pointing forward in a way to how their occupation, fits into this broader calling of their vocation as they follow Jesus.

[29:35] So they're participating in their call to subdue creation as fishermen so that they might promote the common good, right? They're feeding themselves.

They're feeding their families. They're feeding their communities. They're taking care of people. Jesus is saying in the same way that you're gathering fish for the sake of your community. So also will you now be gathering people for the sake of the kingdom of God.

So both of these activities, as Sayers would say, are gracious expressions of creative energy that are offered in service to others.

One activity is participating in the cultivation of a local and temporal community, but the other is participating in the cultivation of a global and eternal kingdom, right?

So now we're starting to get into a little bit more mixing and mingling of occupation and vocation, but we're still trying to get a little bit more specific. So how are we supposed to follow Jesus?

[30:39] We're not all called to work in the same ways, right? God does call people to specific tasks. And this brings us, I think, to an important passage as we consider the concept of occupation as part of the broader vocation.

And that's first Corinthians chapter seven. I put the whole thing on there, but I'm just going to read the first verse. Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him.

So we got into this a little bit earlier, but just expand on it a little bit. Reformers like Luther leaned on this verse as they were arguing against a prevailing view in the medieval Catholic church that only spiritual work was the work that truly mattered.

The spiritual work was the kingdom work. So if you wanted to do work that really mattered, you should go be a priest. You should go be a nun. You should go be a monk. And everything else was spiritually inferior.

But Luther saw this verse in Corinthians in relation to the concept that we discussed earlier, that God's call or invitation into a relationship with him is not at all a product of our work.

[31:52] And because of that, there's no work in life that could justify us before God in any way. And then all work then was to be viewed as important to God and part of his grand plan for ultimate cultivation and creation.

So Luther says this, I can't paraphrase Luther, so I'll just say it. In his vocation, man does works which affect the well-being of others, for so God has made all offices.

Through this work in man's offices, God's creative work goes forward, and that creative work is love, a profusion of good gifts. With persons as his hands or coworkers, God gives his gifts through the earthly vocations toward man's life on earth, food through farmers, fishermen and hunters, external peace through princes, judges and orderly powers, knowledge and education through teachers and parents, et cetera, et cetera.

Through the preacher's vocation, God gives the forgiveness of sins. Thus love comes from God flowing down to human beings on earth through all vocations, through both spiritual and earthly governments.

Okay, so that was a really long way of saying all work matters to God, right? No work is more important than other work. And this is why Paul can tell us in 1 Corinthians that God has assigned us a specific station in life and that we can work diligently and confidently knowing that our occupation is indeed part of our calling without being the source of our salvation.

[33:26] All right. I'm lost in my notes for a second. Sorry. I think we need to add, without being the source of our salvation or contributing to it.

Yes, that's a helpful clarification. Our work is not the source of our salvation, nor does it contribute anything to our salvation. I think that's right. So there's two kind of, Tim Keller would sort of boil it down into two different categories here, talking about work as an act of love and a ministry of competence, right?

So, our work is in service to others. That is a key point of what we're doing. In being a ministry of competence, the best thing that we can do as we work heartily for the Lord is to do it to the best of our abilities.

Not that we have to be the best, but that doing our best is the best thing that we can do in service to the Lord as we're participating in this work of cultivation.

And this is in Colossians 3. Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men. So, Keller gives this example of traveling, and I think this is related to, again, to something that we

discussed earlier.

[34:56] If I'm traveling on vacation and I want to go to Philadelphia, it sounds nice and easy, but there's a whole host of things that had to happen for me to get there. A road had to get built. And for that road to get built, somebody had to plan the road, and somebody had to pour the concrete, and somebody had to paint it, and somebody had to do all of it.

Somebody had to put up the signs on the exits and everything else. And so, there's this idea of people showing up to do a very specific task as part of a much greater call to build something that's in service to individuals, individuals to community, to the globe.

And that's a combination of what Keller's calling a ministry or an act of love and a ministry of competence. So, I want to, I put, again, on the worksheet, there's like a summary at the end of points that I'm hoping we got to that are clear.

But, what we really want to boil this down to is our ultimate call is into relationship with Jesus. Our ultimate call does not depend on any work that we do.

And within the greater call, there's a more specific call to engage in work for the sake of the kingdom. This work that we've been called to is appointed by God and thus has meaning, value, and purpose.

[36:27] Our call is in response to God and in service to the good of others through cultivation and creation. That's the ministry or the act of love that we're talking about. And our call includes a command to work with all of our heart as for the Lord.

And that's our ministry of competence. So, these are helpful. It's already 940. So, we're like coming up on the end of, of this.

I wanted to give one specific example from Exodus 31. And I won't read the whole thing, but this is an example, I think, of God calling someone to a specific occupation.

And this is in the creation of the tabernacle. He says, I called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, and I filled him with the spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, et cetera, et cetera.

And the idea here is that God has actually, we see in our vocational calling, a lot of, a lot about our relationship to God, and our desire, our call to, to share the good news, to participate in the cultivation of his kingdom.

[37:39] There is example in scripture, of God calling someone to a specific kind, of hands-based work, that seems a lot like what we would call an occupation, right?

And if we were trying to devise some general wisdom, and how we can assess, what are we called to, we can kind of look to this, and again, Keller would point out, a couple of key questions, which are, what are you good at, and what does the world need?

What's an area that God has, sort of revealed to you, where he's calling you to participate in, in the cultivation, right? And so in this example, in Exodus 31, there's a need, so to speak, right?

The Israelites need a tabernacle, because God wants to dwell with them. Nobody can gaze upon the glory of the Lord without, and survive. So there's got to be a place for God to be with his people, and he raises up people, with specific skills, specific abilities, he fills them with the Spirit, and he equips them to do that work.

And so I think, I really, I was, we don't have as much time to spend on this as I would have liked, but I think, if we're looking at, a new calling, and we're asking ourselves, how do I identify what God is calling me to do?

[39:09] There's good general wisdom in trying to answer these two questions. There's secular frameworks that kind of follow this, something called Ikigai, and it adds a couple of different questions, which is, what do I love, and how do I get paid?

Those, I think, also are helpful questions to ask, but really what we want to boil it down to is those two things, to try to identify where we can find satisfaction, not in our own abilities, not in our own achievements, but in connecting to the work that God has called us to, because of the way that he's designed us, and because of the opportunities that he's given to us to cultivate creation.

And I think there's an exercise in examining this in our own occupations, and our vocations, right? So, there's all kinds of caveats to this that I can't get into.

There's lots of times in scripture when God calls people to things that they're not good at. You know, Pharaoh was a corrupt world leader, and he called Moses to go give him some bad news, and Moses had a speech impediment.

Like, he probably wasn't, worldly speaking, like the guy that's best equipped to do that, but God called him to do it anyway. There's, you know, Jonah didn't want to go to the Ninevites, but he was called to do it anyway, right?

[40:25] So, there's lots of examples where we're breaking that mold, but we're sort of asking for general wisdom. How do we discern our calling? I should stop for questions.

There's lots more that we could say, but thoughts, comments? So, so the Exodus passage ends with the last sentence that says, and I have given to all able men ability that they may have, they may all have, that they may make all that I have commanded you.

That's, that's, that's astounding. I mean, it is. Yes, that's a great, that's a great point, and it's, it gives credence to this idea that we see in the New Testament that in the church, we're all part of the body of Christ, and not, not everybody has the same form and function, right?

Somebody is the eyes to see, somebody is, you know, a hand to do some work, somebody is the feet that gets you walking, you know, you don't want to be the, the, you know, the appendix, biologically active, but like serving those a certain real purpose, right?

Like that's, you want to, you want to find the intersection of these two things, like, but yes, God is calling up people, and equipping people, with all skill and ability and knowledge, to do everything that he has preordained, to do in, in creation.

[41:59] It goes back to this idea that we're, there's still work to do. God created everything, but he left some of it on form, so that we could participate in this call, to join in cultivation, and we all do it a little bit differently.

And again, just really highlighting this idea, that there's no form of work, that's more or less important than another, because it's all ordained by God, to contribute to the work that he's doing in creation.

Yeah, anecdotally, the very building we're sitting in, is a great example of that, because, at the time when we were doing this building project, for the church, we really needed a real estate lawyer, to help us out.

And the lot around us, was getting developed, as we were working on this. And, lo and behold, about a year or two earlier, a couple came to our church, and that is exactly what he had done, for decades in New England.

And there were ways in which, he had done his work, to glorify God, and to be a light for his kingdom, and it had no connection, to the explicit work of the local church.

[43:06] And yet here he was, at this time and place, and, you know, he was able to serve us, very massively, as we had to do negotiations, and work, and things like that.

Some of you may remember, Bob Wanaburger, who was speaking of, so, just wonderful, godly man, and he said, wow, this might be the one time, my gifts, can serve directly, the local church, doing what I do, right?

But of course, that wasn't the only time, his gifts were used, in God's kingdom, right? Because he was obviously, you know, being salt, and light, and making sure, that there was, healthy, good legal practice, in the world, as he did his work.

But, sometimes we might be surprised, at ways in which, what we think of, as two spheres, which, as we've said in this class, really aren't two spheres, but how they often interlap, over, over, yeah, intersect with one another.

So, you know, you may have a very obscure, profession, and yet, who knows how God, is using that work already, to advance his kingdom, through what you're doing, but, it may have a very direct, connection to a local church, and helping to advance, the kingdom of your local church too.

[44:15] So, God does really prepare, and advance good works, for us to do, some of which, we may never anticipate. Amen. Amen. Alright, this has been, great.

Thanks everyone, for joining. Next week, we will, get into, some of the ways, that we deal with, sin, and brokenness, in our work, and how we can, think through those, some of those problems, as well.

So, hope you can join, next week for that. But, thanks everyone, for joining. I'll just pray, real quick, and then we can dismiss. Lord God, we just thank you again, for, for your work, in creation, and your work, in our lives, and just, ask that, this time together, would, would be planting, good gospel seeds, in our hearts, Lord, that it would bear, good fruit, and Lord, that we might find, encouragement, in the ways, that you have called us, to participate, in your work, in the world, and for your kingdom.

Be with us, as we, go to worship, and it's in Jesus name, we pray, amen. All right, thanks everyone. Thank you, everyone. Thank you, everyone. If I could get, like, two people, to help set up the tables, for children's ministry, that would be great.

The tables are just around the corner, so we need to kind of move the chairs, out to the edge of the room, and then bring those things in, and then, turn some of the chairs, and then bring those tables. Um, thank you. Thank you.