



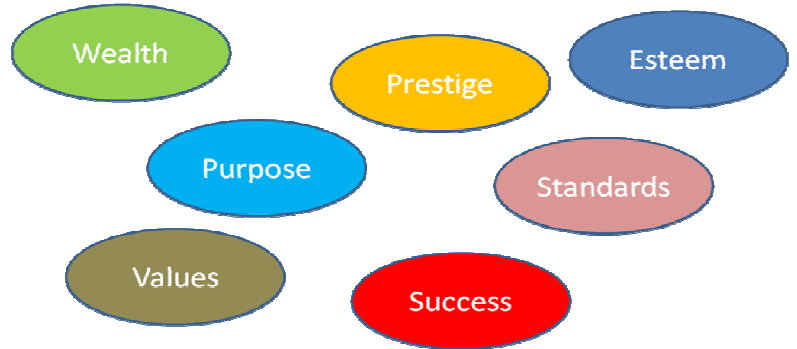
# WORK OUT: Why go to work?

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010

## Mindset in Society

Society suggests that work will give us ...

- These may be benefits of work, but scripture suggests they are not derived from work, but from God Himself.
- God never intended man to work for these reasons.
- Consider the 3 dimensions discussed previously at Work Out based on “*Get a Life, Winning Choices for working people*” by Paul Valler.
  - Identity - who I am
  - Purpose - why I am here
  - Choices - what I should do
- God has given us work to do, but the value of work is found mainly in relation to our reward in Heaven.



“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” (John 6:27)

## Where did work come from?

- God instigated a sense of rhythm
  - Weekly cycle – Gen 2:2,3 – God created in 6 days, rested on the seventh
  - Seasons – Eccl 3:1-8 – “a time to plant and a time to uproot”, etc.
  - Day and night – John 9:4 – “as long as it is day we must do the work of Him who sent me”
- God ordained work before the fall (Gen 2:15)
  - The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.
- In Ecclesiastes, Solomon makes many observations about work (Eccl 2:17-26, 3:12-15, 5:18)
  - On the one hand, all man’s work is meaningless; on the other hand, man is to enjoy his work

## Reasons for going to work

Two fundamental reasons for going to work:

1. God commands it
2. It is an environment in which disciples of Jesus Christ can represent Him

But, let’s not confuse “going to work” with “earning a living”.

We are to work hard, not to store up treasure, but to glorify God.

My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:19)

Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matt 6:25-34)

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men ... It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Col 3:22-25)

### **Doesn't work give us significance and value?**

- Significance and a sense of personal worth are found in a person's relationship with God.
- The world defines greatness in terms of wealth, wisdom and power.
- People are not significant because they have a university degree or have reached the top of the corporate ladder.
- Significance is not found in the exercising of one's gifts.
- God's children are significant because they are created in the image of God – "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:17)

### **5 Principles to stimulate our thinking about work**

#### **1. We do not work to earn a living**

- Instead, we trust God to meet our needs according to His promises, while working to give us a platform for ministry.

#### **2. There is no cause/effect relationship between how hard we work and how much we earn**

- We work hard because we are commanded to.

#### **3. There is no intrinsic value in the product of our work**

- God is concerned with the process of our work – our attitudes and our faithfulness to opportunities presented to us by God.

#### **4. Significance is not found in the type of work we do**

- God declares us to be of worth and we are to derive our significance only from our relationship to Him.

#### **5. We can contribute nothing to the work of God**

- God is self-sufficient. It is our privilege to *participate* with Him in what He is doing in this world.

### **Questions:**

- Why do I go to work?
- What difference does it make to my attitude to work if I believe Jesus' words in Matthew 6:24-34?
- Do I fear that if I allow Jesus to determine my standard of living and my status, He will establish it lower than I want it to be?
- How does the world's view of 'significance' differ from God's view, and how should that influence my view of me and others around me?