



# CHURCH @ Work

Why Church @ Work? Whatever life season you are in, we all have some kind of work that we are engaging on a daily basis whether it's related to career, school, finding a job, home, family life, or retirement. In these next 6 sessions, we will explore together what it means to see our work as a partnership with God in His greater mission in the world.

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| 1. WHY DO WE WORK?<br>Theology of Work                 | <i>Gen. 1:28</i>     |
| 2. HOW SHOULD WE WORK?<br>The Spirit Empowers our Work | <i>Isaiah 61:1-6</i> |
| 3. WHAT IS WORK?<br>The Integration of Faith & Work    | <i>Col. 1:15-20</i>  |
| 4. WHEN DOES WORK END?<br>Work in New Heavens/Earth    | <i>Rev. 22:1-5</i>   |
| 5. WHY REST FROM WORK?<br>Theology of Rest             | <i>Gen. 2:1-3</i>    |
| 6. HOW DO WE WORSHIP AS WE WORK?<br>Work as Worship    | <i>Rom. 12:1-8</i>   |



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

Begin your session by catching up with each other in the group. Here are some suggested questions to start off with:

- As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up, and why?
- What do you think makes doing any type of work purposeful? Or vice versa, what makes it purposeless?
- Name one of your favourite hobbies and what it might say about you.



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

**God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” — Genesis 1:28 (NIV)**

We were made from the beginning to be image bearers of God, the Creator of all heaven and earth. If this was the intention of the Creator when He made human beings we should really stop to ask, what does it mean for me to live as an image bearer of God?

In Genesis 1:28, we read of God’s blessing and instruction for not only the first human beings, but to all of humanity. They were given specific tasks to carry out in God’s kingdom. From the very beginning before any evil entered the world, work has been core to what it means to be a human being – but it’s not necessarily just about a job or calling. All work, in fact, is worship! Whether we are students studying with the hopes of landing a career in the future, a stay-at-home parent taking care of the needs around the house, or someone in-between jobs or working full-time in the industry. Work is a part of who we are and how we serve God with our lives.

As Christians, we need to re-engage in the great mission of God in the world by looking at the world through a bigger frame when we tackle both big and small questions in life. People very often start too specific with questions that are focused on such things as sexual identity and work. But what we need to do to re-frame is to think of what is true of all human beings in light of the great mission of God in the world.

- What is the work that God has called you to partake in this stage of your life?
- How might society’s view of work conflict with the biblical perspective of work?
- How do you think our outlook on work would be affected if we were to see our work as participation in God’s great mission in the world?





## C – The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

***“Creation Mandate (to fill, cultivate, and rule the earth), the Great Commandments (to love God and neighbor), the Great Commission (to scatter, be witnesses, and make disciples), and the New Commandment (to “love one another as I have loved you” [John 15:12 ESV]) all serve the mission of God in the world. We often focus heavily on the third of these, but it is worth noting that the Great Commission is the only temporary command on this list. The other three are permanent. In the vision of the garden-city there is still work and rulership in a renewed earth. There is still love for God and neighbor. There is still love for one another modeled on that of Jesus. But there is no need of evangelism. ... If the church’s missionary activity is to serve the wider mission of God, then the Great Commission must be understood and conducted in a way that reinforces these other commands. This is another way of saying that the church must have a kingdom vision in all that it does. It must be kingdom-minded and not focused only on itself. ... Once we detach the Great Commission from these other commands in Scripture, we begin to distort the gospel.”***

**— Paul Williams, *Exiles on Mission: How Christians Can Thrive in a Post-Christian World***

- Take some time to brainstorm how we can encourage one another to live out the Creation Mandate in our lives. Consider this from both an individual and group perspective.
- In what practical ways do you think the gospel can become distorted when the Creation Mandate is detached from the other commands we receive in Scripture?



## D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)

**Action Step of the Week:** This week, you are challenged to identify at least one or two ways you can live out the Creation Mandate in your regular routines. Thank God for how you can worship him in both big and small ways in life.

Conclude your time together by praying for each other and the church. At the end of each session is a liturgical prayer that your group is encouraged to practice together as we learn what it means to engage the great mission of God in the world through our work.



## A Prayer to Gather Workers

**LEADER:** Creator God, For six days You laboured in the work of creation, bringing order to chaos, speaking light into darkness, creating rhythms and patterns, times and seasons, and on the seventh day You rested.

**PEOPLE:** For six days we have been co-labourers, gospel messengers bringing Your words of life to our homes, our schools, and our workplaces. And now we come to the seventh day.

**LEADER:** We carry into worship our experiences of the week.

**PEOPLE:** We bring with us our joys, our frustrations, our laments, and our praise.

**LEADER:** We come to worship, just as we are, longing to connect our work and our week to Your ongoing work in our world.

**PEOPLE:** We come to reflect and to repent, to be refreshed, to be reoriented.

**LEADER:** Remind us who we are; remind us Whose we are.

**PEOPLE:** Accept now the humble worship we offer through the perfect work of Your Son Jesus, our Saviour and our Lord.

Amen.



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

As you open your time together, consider spending this time following up on how your group was able to apply the Action Step of the Week from the previous session.

- What do you do to motivate yourself to get work done?
- Do you tend to prefer working solo or in a team setting?



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

<sup>8</sup> *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” — Acts 1:8 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, <sup>3</sup> and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.*

<sup>4</sup> *They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. <sup>5</sup> Strangers will shepherd your flocks; foreigners will work your fields and vineyards. <sup>6</sup> And you will be called priests of the Lord, you will be named ministers of our God. You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. — Isaiah 61:1-6*

Old Testament prophets like Isaiah made it known well in advance what Jesus’ mission in the world would be even before his earthly ministry had begun. Jesus would come to deliver the good news to the poor and liberate them from countless infirmities! But his work wouldn’t stop there. Jesus’ work would also trigger a whole chain reaction of events because of this mission, and this work continues even today!

As those liberated from our own bondage to sin and invited to work alongside God in his mission, we are called to recognize the uniqueness of our created beings and the roles we are to play as the Spirit’s witnesses in our workplace. Let us not forget, however, that to be the Spirit’s witnesses we need to not only be content in knowing the Holy Spirit with our heads, but the Holy Spirit is best known when we experience his lifechanging work in and through our lives! Acts 1:8 makes it clear to us that once we receive the Spirit, we are empowered to do our work and also must also go out to live out and share His good news as his witnesses.

- In what ways do you find these two Scripture passages are correlated?
- What do you think it means to be “priests of the Lord” even in your “secular” workplace?
- Why do you think Luke 4:18-21 has been called the Greater Commission?



### C – The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

<sup>1</sup> *Then the Lord said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>3</sup> and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills— <sup>4</sup> to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, <sup>5</sup> to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. — Exodus 31:1-5*

*“Most of us have a hard time understanding the Spirit as a Person” — Gordon Fee*



- Do you agree with this quote from Gordon Fee? Why, or why not?
- How is Bezalel a model for how Christians do their work or art?
- Take some time as a group to consider what gifts and talents each person brings to the table? How has the Spirit challenged or enabled you to use these things in your work?



## D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)

Action Step of the Week: Spend a few moments at the beginning of each day praying over the challenges you face in integrating your faith in the workplace. Whether that may be praying for His Spirit's power as you work or for colleagues who are not as receptive to your faith or personal obstacles that hinder you from being bold in your witness. Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you in overcoming these things and to do His Kingdom work.



## Corporate Prayers of Vocational Intercession and Confession

### Prayer of Intercession

O God the Father, Creator of all things:  
*Have mercy upon us.*

O God the Holy Spirit, Giver of life:  
*Have mercy upon us.*

O Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God:  
*Have mercy upon us.*

From envy, avarice and status-seeking, from covetousness which is idolatry, from wanting more than is our fair share:  
*Good Lord, deliver us.*

From ruthlessness in making money, and from irresponsibility in spending it:  
*Good Lord, deliver us.*

From unwillingness in making money, and from irresponsibility in spending it:  
*Good Lord, deliver us.*

For financiers and politicians, industrialists and trade unionists, and all who wield economic power; that they may have grace, wisdom and compassion:  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the bewildered and those who cannot cope with a budget or with filling in forms or with the pressures of modern life:  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the victims of inflation, pensioners, people on small fixed incomes, and all who have been robbed of their savings:  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For those who cannot find jobs, or homes they can afford, for people made redundant for whatever reason:  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the increase of the fruits of the earth, that all may enjoy them:  
*Lord, hear our prayer.*

Lord, when we are deciding how to make money, how to steward it, and what to do with it; help us to look hard at our motives, our aims and our prejudices— honestly, as in your sight.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sake became poor; grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires and inordinate love of riches, and to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. For your name's sake. Amen.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious Lord, we bring before you our personal failures in our daily work. We have been poor stewards of your gifts; we have not given you the glory, nor laboured in your love. We confess too, the faults of our industrial society: continuing injustice, lack of harmony, the inability— and worse— the unwillingness to seek the paths of reconciliation. Have mercy upon us, and grant that, as the workshop at Nazareth was blessed through the labour of the Christ, so the workplaces of this land may be enriched by the work of those who call him "Lord." We ask this in his name. Amen.

**[David Welbourn, [www.theologyofwork.org](http://www.theologyofwork.org)]**



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

As you open your time together, consider spending this time following up on how your group was able to apply the Action Step of the Week from the previous session.

- Do you know if any of your co-workers or peers at work are Christians?
- Does your work network overlap with your church network? Why or why not?
- What is something you find challenging about integrating your faith in your workplace?



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

***<sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. — Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV)***

It is common for everyday Christians to think that church life and work life are two separate circles that rarely, if ever, overlap. Church is where we go on Sundays during our time off and we might even commit one other time during the week for fellowship time. Even our church and work friend circles are separate! But in dividing the sacred from the secular – a false dualism is created when we think these two circles are completely exclusive from one another.

As Christians we are to be part of the “priesthood of all believers” (1 Peter 2:4-5,9; Exodus 19:6) called to perform a certain priestly duty within the work of the church as the body of Christ. Jesus the Son of God as the head of this body of believers pioneered this through his life and ministry so we may follow in his example. Through his life, Jesus worked to reconcile all things back to himself by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Work, as we have been exploring in these past few sessions is a unique calling given to all believers to worship God through our lives. If work is part of our everyday lives, then work is not just a platform for mission, but work is mission.

- In today’s Scripture passage, how do you observe both Jesus’ identity and work as coming alongside God’s great mission in the world?
- Based on the example Jesus sets for us, in what ways do you think faith can integrate into your respective work?



### C –The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

***For Christians, the problem is that we are fatally fascinated with the extraordinary. On one side of a line there are Sunday things: other-worldly things, supernatural things, holy things, and spiritual things. On the other side of the line there are unspiritual things: human things, natural things, this-worldly things, and the things of everyday life... This is the problem of dualism – that some things are sacred and some things are secular. It is the worst heresy in the Christian church worldwide. Here is the sacred-secular dualism. Church services are sacred. Company office are not. Quiet times are sacred, but eating, sleeping, and resting are secular. Prayer meetings are sacred, but political action is secular. Reading the Bible or witnessing are sacred, but reading the newspaper is secular... The problem is the tragic separation of Sunday and Monday. Church life is separated from ordinary life. Private life is separated from public life. Inner life is separated from outer life. And belief is separated from behavior. Let me suggest something. Paul in his writings never said people go to church to worship. Paul believed***



**that we are worshipping God all the time. I don't think there's a part-time option for followers of Jesus..."All work done well and for God's glory is Christian work."**

**- Paul Stevens**

- Stevens is arguing that dualism (in that some work is holy and other work is secular) is a dangerous misunderstanding. Do you agree? Why, or why not?
- What difference will it make to know that Christians doing work in the church and in the office are both doing "the Lord's work"?
- If someone asked you, "Why do you work?", how would you answer?



## **D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)**

Action Step of the Week: Find a time this week to take a prayer walk in or around your workplace praying for the Spirit's help to know how to be the salt and light and to take further steps to integrate your faith with your work & co-workers.



## **Litany of Gratitude for the Work of Christ**

LEADER: God, we are so grateful for the gift of worship. Thank you for the gift of the altar. While the altar was a physical place (and still is in many churches), we are assured that we can have an altar anywhere we go, as we commune with you—for Jesus is THE WAY for us to enter the Holy place. Worship is unto you O God, and with open hands you welcome us. Thank you for the wonderful exchange that takes place during worship. The altar is a place where we hand you our sorrow in exchange for your joy.

PEOPLE: Psalm 56:8 declares that You recognize our tears and sorrow; and Psalm 16:11 declares that in your presence there is fullness of joy.

LEADER: It's a place where we hand over our fears in exchange for your perfect love.

PEOPLE: 1 John 4:18 declares that perfect love casts out fear.

LEADER: It's a place where we surrender our dreams in exchange for your plans.

PEOPLE: Romans 8:28 declares that we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

LEADER: On the altar we lay down our sins for your forgiveness. It's a place where we can give you the very worst of us in exchange for your beauty. We hand you our shame for the joy of your salvation. For we are no longer bound to the weight of sin, but we are washed clean by your blood and made free in you.

PEOPLE: Romans 8:1 declares that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; and 2 Corinthians 3:17 declares that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

LEADER: Yes God, the altar is a place of freedom.

PEOPLE: And he who the Son has made free is free indeed.

Amen.

**\*\*Written for the Worship for Workers Project of Fuller Seminary by Brian Horshaw from St John's Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Maryland, and Brian Hehn from the Center for Congregational Song\*\***



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

As you open your time together, consider spending this time following up on how your group was able to apply the Action Step of the Week from the previous session.

- What is one skill or talent you have that you find particularly helpful in your work?
- Do you know what your spiritual gifts are?
- Share about a recent memory or experience when you had found satisfaction in your work.



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

*Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb<sup>2</sup> down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.<sup>3</sup> No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.<sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.<sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign [work] for ever and ever. — Revelation 22:1-5 (NIV)*

Does work still exist in the new heaven and earth that the Bible talks about?

In Luke 19:13-27, Jesus teaches a parable of a man of noble birth who goes to a distant country to have himself appointed as king before he returns. The man first summons his servants, gives them each three months' wages, then clearly instructs them to put the money to work while he's gone. Each servant treats these wages differently during their master's absence and the master upon his return responds to each according to the fruits of his servants' labor. Those servants who had invested and done well in the sight of the master are rewarded by being given charge of more than what they had initially been given.

While this parable is most commonly interpreted to be one about stewardship, it can also be observed through the lens of work as worship to God. In fact, we read in Revelation 22 that "the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him...And they will reign [work] for ever and ever." Work is very much still a part of our lives in the new heaven and earth, but depending on our understanding of what work is and what work is for, we may struggle to see this as a good thing.

- Have you ever thought of work as extending beyond your mortal lifetime on earth?
- How does this passage challenge your view of what work is or what work should be?
- Is it possible to connect our work here on earth to the work we will do in the new heaven and earth? Why or why not?



### C – The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

*The new Jerusalem needs no temple because every aspect of life in that city is permeated with the light and love of God. In that sense worship as we know it—a sacred time set apart to realign our hearts with the knowledge and love of God—will be obsolete. What will take its place? The most plausible answer, it seems to me, is that our eternal life in God's recreated world will be the fulfillment of what God originally asked us to do: cultivating and creating in full and lasting relationship with our Creator. - Andy Crouch, Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling*





- What difference will it make to the way you work if some of your work (perhaps in ways beyond your imagination!) may survive beyond this lifetime and become part of the new heaven and new earth?

**Leisure and pleasure are great goods, but we can take only so much of them. If you ask people in nursing homes or hospitals how they are doing, you will often hear that their main regret is that they wish they had something to do, some way to be useful to others. They feel they have too much leisure and not enough work. The loss of work is deeply disturbing because we were designed for it. This realization injects a deeper and far more positive meaning into the common view that people work in order to survive. According to the Bible, we don't merely need the money from work to survive; we need the work itself to survive and live fully human lives. – Tim Keller, Every Good Endeavor**

- What difference does it make to how you view heaven if work is an integral part of the new heavens/earth?
- In light of Keller's quote, how do you view retirement?



## D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)

Action Step of the Week: This week you are challenged to engage a colleague/family member in a thoughtful discussion about how your approach on work would be different if you saw it as something you did with an everlasting impact.



## A Prayer for Fruitful Work

Lord of all creation,  
In the beginning, you sang your creation into being.  
Again, and again you voiced your delight: It is good. It is good. It is good!  
All creatures flourished in your care and blessing.

When our turn came, you molded us as a copy.  
Replicas shaped in your image.  
You called us "very good!"  
You shared your mission.  
You entrusted your care: fish of your sea, birds in your sky, your tamed and wild things. And then you summoned us to be fruitful.

On this day, we seek again your creation blessing.  
Bless this work. So it hallows your name.  
So it reflects your purpose. And honors your mission.  
Make this work fruitful. Prosper it. And all creation because of it.

We present this work to you. And long to hear you declare,  
"It is very good."  
For your kingdom's sake,

Amen.

**\*\*Written for the Worship for Workers Project of Fuller Seminary by Kevin Adams from Granite Springs Church in California\*\***



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

As you open your time together, consider spending this time following up on how your group was able to apply the Action Step of the Week from the previous session.

- What activity do you like to do that you know will make you feel well rested and rejuvenated?
- What is one of the common challenges you face that makes it difficult for you to rest or slow down?



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

**<sup>1</sup> Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. <sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. – Genesis 2:1**

God was the first to rest from his work, and he shared this as a gift to the Israelites when he gave them the command to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath during which they too would rest from their work. But the Sabbath was made for more than just God's people, it was also made to allow the land to rest! (Exodus 16:21-30) So just as the Creator himself rested from his work on the seventh day, all of creation is invited to partake in this same rest from work.

We were not made for work, but for God. In other words, we were created to be human beings, not human doings. If we do not properly balance our work and rest, we are prone to burning out and even losing touch with why we work in the first place.

Modern conveniences can make things easy for us by saving on the amount of time we spend working but it doesn't necessarily mean we end up doing less. While "rest" may be considered the time one spends not working, it may not necessarily mean what we do with that time is restful for our body and soul.

In keeping the Sabbath, we give ourselves the space to learn what it means to rest well in ways that nourish not only our bodies, but our mind and soul. In resting from our work, we practice dependency on God to meet our needs and take the opportunity to recenter our lives on Him.

**"God works for those who wait on him." (Isaiah 64:4b)**

- Why do you think it is so difficult for our society to make room for Sabbath-keeping? Alternatively, why is it so difficult for so many of us to carve out room for Sabbath-keeping?
- Do you find it challenging to pause from your work even for short amounts of time? Share from your experiences.
- Brainstorm together with your group how we can steward this gift of Sabbath rest well.



### C – The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

***Our politicians are fond of telling us that we live in a free country but they less often invite us to consider what our freedom consists of and what it is for. In asking those questions we touch on a great dissonance in American culture. In her essay, "Keeping the Sabbath", Dorothy Bes observed that in Deuteronomy the commandment to observe the Sabbath Day is tied to the experience of a people newly released from bondage. Slaves cannot take a day off, freed people can. In that light, how many people are free? —Kathleen Norris***



- In light of the above quote, how many of you are free?
- How many of you practice a weekly Sabbath? If so, what do you do during your sabbath? If not, how might a sabbath help you?
- Spend some time as a group in thoughtful discussion over how the Sabbath or intentional rest has benefited you personally. What has rest taught you about embracing the freedom that God has gifted to his people?

***“Busyness is the enemy of spirituality. It is essentially laziness. It is doing the easy thing instead of the hard thing. It is filling our time with our own actions instead of paying attention to God’s actions. It is taking charge.”***  
- Eugene Peterson

- How does this quote by Eugene Peterson challenge the societal norms of our day? Does it challenge you personally?
- In what ways do you think your group can encourage one another to fill our time with less of our own actions and instead pay more attention to God’s actions?



## D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)

Action Step of the Week: If you do not regularly keep the Sabbath, consider blocking off some intentional time during your week to rest from your work and focus on God, asking for more of His Spirit to pray over your work/workplace and for your co-workers. If you do regularly keep the Sabbath, consider incorporating liturgical prayers like the one at the end of each session to pray for your work and co-workers.



## A blessing for those who come to Jesus

Adapted from Matthew 14:14; 5:1-12; 11:28-29

Crowds of people gathered around Jesus, many with illnesses and great need. And when Jesus looked out at the people, he saw them and he felt compassion for them.

And he blessed the people, saying:

Blessed are you who are worn out and ready to give up, for you are welcome in my kingdom.

Blessed are you who weep, for you will be comforted.

Blessed are you who are gentle, for even though you didn’t push your way to the top, your inheritance will be great.

Blessed are you who yearn for what’s right, for a day is coming when all will be well and your longings will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who show mercy, to employees, to colleagues, to families, and friends, for mercy will also be shown to you.

Blessed are you whose hearts are pure, for you will see God.

Blessed are you who work for peace, in your spheres both big and small for God will call you his children. Blessed are you who suffer for what is right, for my kingdom—and all its treasures and gifts—belong to people like you.

Blessed are you. Blessed are you, just as you are. Come to me, all who are weary and burdened. And you will find rest for your souls.

***\*\*Written for the Worship for Workers Project of Fuller Seminary by Erin Hollaar Pacheco from Chicago, Illinois\*\****



### A – The Lobby: Catching Up (10mins)

As you open your time together, consider spending this time following up on how your group was able to apply the Action Step of the Week from the previous session.

- After going through these last five sessions, has there been a particular learning point that you've found most helpful or challenging?
- Have you had any unique moments in your workplace that has reminded you of things we've been talking about these last five sessions?



### B – The Lunchroom: Engaging the Word Together (25-30mins)

**<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. <sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. — Romans 12:1-8 (NIV)**

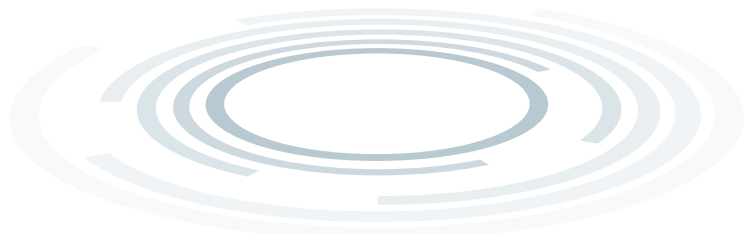
Romans 12 makes it clear that we are to worship God with our whole self – not just a part of who we are or whatever we have left to spare for God. To echo Jesus' words in Mark 12:30, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." There is nothing sparing about the way we are called to worship God.

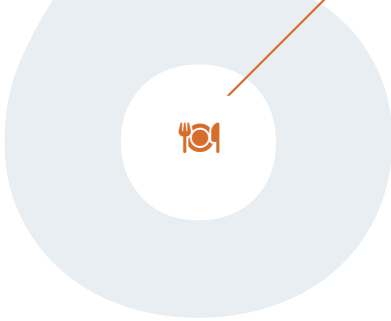
As contradictory as it may sound, to be a "living sacrifice" in Paul's words suggests a life that is lived with godly character and set apart from the world. It is also a life that is lived in an acceptable and pleasing manner before God. Our worship to God, then, is both an internal and external way of living and being.

While it may sound straight forward, both new and old Christians alike constantly find themselves struggling to live up to this calling. But this is why "Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-12, NIV). This growth is an ongoing, life-long process that the church as the body of Christ journeys through together.

In this sense, as the church learns how to worship God through our lives, the church simultaneously learns what it means to live out its mission for God in the world. As we worship with our whole selves, we realize that every part of our lives can and should share in the heart of God's mission. Our work as a facet of our lives, goes hand in hand with the worship we give to God on a daily basis.

- What does Paul mean in Romans 12:4 that the members of the body "do not all have the same function"? How do you see this to be the case within your own group?
- Take some time to brainstorm how your group can best exercise your gifts to serve God and serve others.





## C –The Water Cooler: Engaging the World Together (25-30mins)

***“In Matthew 28, the first disciples receive the commission to make disciples of all nations. And yet what must not be missed is that this commission flows from their worship. They first meet Christ on the mountain and they worship him. Or take the example of John 21, where Peter hears those words: feed my sheep. Here too his call, his vocation, flows from his intimate and dynamic encounter with Christ at breakfast on the shore of the Galilean Sea...mission flows from worship just as much as mission leads to worship.” - Gordon Smith***

- Do you practically see how “mission flows from worship just as much as mission leads to worship” in your own work/church life?
- Gordon Smith says in the vocation and work of the individual Christian, the same principle applies: our work in the world flows from our communion with Christ in our personal prayers, even as our work leads us to prayer.
  - How can we learn to live from the rhythm of prayer and work in our lives, informing and sustaining each other?
  - How can we pray as those eagerly engaged in our world and not just to escape it?



## D – The Drive Home: Living the Word (10mins)

Action Step of the Week: It takes practice to see how every part of our lives is meant to be lived out in worship to God. This week, your challenge is to imagine how you can connect your work with your worship of God. It is our prayer that starting with your summer weekday lunchbreaks, you could gather monthly with fellow Christian & church co-workers nearby your workplaces to encourage each other how to live out your faith through your work, confess your sins, and pray for each other so that you could be healed. Later, we

boldly hope you will invite your co-workers into authentic relationship and a flourishing community, which is His body & church, as we learn together for the first time, how to be the Church@Work...



## Prayer of Dedication: Immeasurably More

- LEADER: Glorious God, in Christ all things are ours - and we give you back all that we are.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.
- LEADER: Take every gift and every burden every day and every hour.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.
- LEADER: Multiply our work and our effort whether physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.
- LEADER: Support our weak bodies as we bear the cross you have for us each step of the way.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.
- LEADER: Take our laughter and loss that both may become gifts of your mercy for someone else.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.
- LEADER: Every artifact made by our hands every idea conjured by our minds. We lay down at your table, eager to see how you might multiply it for your glory.
- PEOPLE: You are able to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine.

Amen.

***\*\*Written for the Worship for Workers Project of Fuller Seminary by Chris Walker from Covenant Life Church in Grand Haven, Michigan\*\****