



Centre for
**Christian
Living**

THE DIGNITY OF WORK



Wednesday 17 May 2017



MOORE
COLLEGE

PART 1

THE DIGNITY OF WORK

Chase Kuhn

“Does my job as a dentist/accountant/caregiver matter?”

1. What is the question behind the question?

2. Some necessary definitions

(not formal, but functional for our presentation)

3. How do we think theologically about work?

a. *Creation, humanity, Christ, the new creation ...*

Where do we begin and how to we make sense of it all!?

b. *Ethics*

4. What is our location?

a. *Already and not yet ...*

b. *Cities, kingdoms ...*

5. What dignifies our “vocation”/work?

a. Evangelism, endurance and ethics

6. Who does the work of transformation?

a. Salvation, sanctification and “vocation”

PART 2

MY WORK AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Peter Orr

1. Does my work as a [lubrication engineer/commercial real estate agent/dog-walker] “extend” God’s kingdom?

When we declare truth even in small measures, the kingdom of God is advanced. This can be true when we draft documents, sell products or mark exams—indeed in any activity we do in our working day.¹

The kingdom of God is ‘the sphere of God’s goodness’ in the world. We are called to advance that kingdom, sharing the ‘sphere of goodness’ and extending it as we operate with God’s values. Our actions at work have the potential to advance the kingdom of God and his ‘sphere of goodness’, or to hinder it.²

We partner with God in the redemption of our world. [...] We do extend the kingdom of God in daily affairs and activities and actions done in the name of Jesus.³

a. *What is the kingdom of God?*

b. *How does the kingdom “extend”?*

The only way the kingdom of God—the redemptive rule of God—is extended is when he brings another sinner to renounce sin and self-righteousness and bow his knee to King Jesus.⁴

¹ Ken Costa, *God at Work: Living Every Day with Purpose* (London: Continuum, 2007), 30.

² Costa, *God at Work*, 28.

³ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church* (Rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 146.

⁴ Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom and the Great Commission* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 121.

2. What is my “other” work?

a. *The work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16)*

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph 4:11-16 ESV adjusted)

b. *The work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:10; 16:15-16 cf. Philippians 2:29-30)*

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the *work of the Lord*, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58; ESV).

So receive [Epaphroditus] in the Lord with all joy, and honour such men, for he nearly died for the *work of Christ*, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me. (Phil 2:29-30 ESV)

3. Can we speak of “priorities”?

1 Corinthians 7:25-31

We need another speed. We need a speed that is somewhere between *of the utmost importance* and *of no importance*. Something like *really, really important* might do the trick. The fact is, we as Christians have lots of things on our plate. There are many things that the Lord calls us to do that are not of the utmost importance, in the sense that they are earth-shattering, kingdom-building, eternity-making things. And yet they are really, really important, and we are called to be faithful in doing them. If we’re honest with ourselves, we already have this speed, and we use it all the time. Think about our marriages, for example. Our marriages are not going to make it into eternity; they’re not of the utmost importance (Matt. 22:30). And yet they are really, really important, and we give much of our lives and our love and our energy to them. We don’t default to saying that because they’re not of the utmost importance, they must be of no importance at all.⁵

4. Should I cease my work as a [lubrication engineer/commercial real estate agent/dog-walker] and devote myself more fully to the “work of the Lord”?

⁵ Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom and the Great Commission* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 230.



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THE CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Bringing biblical ethics to everyday issues

2017 EVENTS

The Psalms in the Christian life (Andrew Shead)

Wednesday 30 August, St Cuthbert's

Naremburn Anglican Church

Deadling with guilt and shame (Dan Wu)

Wednesday 25 October, Moore Theological College

Register online at ccl.moore.edu.au/tickets/

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