

## **SESSION 3**



**HONORING GOD IN  
OUR WORK**

# 1. Our “Why” Matters Deeply

## A. Godly ambition is at the heart of all good work.

- Our work is bound up in our “why.” God is deeply interested in why we do what we do.
- Ambition is not bad. In fact, ambition is essential because God is honored by hard work.

### **Colossians 3:17:**

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

### **Colossians 3:23:**

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...”

## B. Laziness is destructive and unprofitable.

*“... the opposite of ambition is not humility; it is sloth, passivity, timidity, and complacency.” - James K. A. Smith, On the Road with St. Augustine*

### **Proverbs 18:9:**

“Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.”

### **Proverbs 13:4:**

“The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied.”

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, almost 40% of the available working age population in the United States is not working. [Source: [https://ycharts.com/indicators/labor\\_force\\_participation\\_rate](https://ycharts.com/indicators/labor_force_participation_rate)]
- In 1950 over 85% of working age men were actively working. Currently, that number is below 65%. [Source: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2002/05/art2full.pdf>]

## C. Selfish ambition is rooted in the wrong values.

- Comparison and jealousy turn ambition into relational chaos in our work environments.

### **James 3:16:**

“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

- Pride turns ambition into self-exaltation and self-seeking.

### **Philippians 2:3:**

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”

- Greed turns ambition into self-indulgence and self-destruction.

### **1 Timothy 6:9:**

“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.”

## 2. Diligence Is at the Heart of All Good Work

**A. Diligence is what occurs when we responsibly use the gifts and talents God gives us to accomplish the work we have to do.**

- Paul models diligence when he speaks of his tireless work in trying to minister to the Colossians. Paul says in Colossians 1:29: “For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”

**B. A diligent man plans and prepares for his work.**

**Proverbs 21:5:**

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”

*“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” - Abraham Lincoln*

*“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.” - Yogi Berra*

- This means that a diligent man does practical things like:
  - Employ a calendar.
  - Enhance his skills and qualifications through education and training.
  - Establish reasonable but stretching goals and objectives.
  - Engage in relationships that make him more effective in his work.
- The diligent man is never looking for a shortcut, rather he is prepared for the long haul.

**Ecclesiastes 9:10:**

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might...”

**C. A diligent man minds his own business and does his job.**

**2 Thessalonians 3:10-12:**

“For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.”

**D. A diligent man is often noted for his work and promoted in his work.**

**Proverbs 12:24:**

“The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor.”

**Proverbs 22:29:**

“Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.”

- Daniel and Joseph are great biblical examples of diligence and skill that lead to advancement:

**Daniel 5:12:**

“...because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will

show the interpretation.”

**Daniel 6:3:**

“Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.”

**Genesis 39:2-4:**

“The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.”

### 3. Faithfulness Is at the Heart of All Good Work

**A. Faithfulness in your work follows the following formula: DILIGENCE x TIME**

- Diligence focuses on working hard during any given task.
- Faithfulness is consistently working hard through the course of the task.

**B. Faithfulness and commitment are key ingredients in *process-focused* work.**

- Process-focused work helps us stay the course and be patient for results.

**Proverbs 13:11:**

“Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”

- Process-focused work helps us release expectations and trust the Lord.  
*“We make the biggest difference when we stop calculating and surrender to an inspired indifference to results.. Perhaps we can change the world when we stop trying to do so and simply offer what we have.” - Daniel Doriani, Work that Makes a Difference, 89*
- Process-focused work is work done before an audience of One, namely,

**God.**

*“We who live before the Audience of One can say to the world: ‘I have only one audience. Before you I have nothing to prove, nothing to gain, nothing to lose.’”  
- Os Guinness, The Call*

*“Nothing is more dangerous...than to live in the temperamental atmosphere of a Gallup Poll – always feeling one’s pulse and taking one’s temperature.”  
- Winston Churchill*

**C. Faithfulness in your work faces five deterrents that you must be aware of and be prepared to deal with:**

**1. Distraction**

- To be faithful you have to be willing to stay the course and not waver.

**Proverbs 12:11:**

“Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.”

*“The successful warrior is the average man, with laser-like focus.” - Bruce Lee*

**2. Haste**

- To be faithful you can't cut **corners** and be impatient.

**Proverbs 28:20:**

"A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished."

**3. Waste**

- To be faithful you have to own the fact that you **steward** God's resources.

**1 Corinthians 4:1-2:**

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."

*"God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with."*  
- Billy Graham

**4. Triviality**

- To be faithful you cannot see small tasks as "**menial**" or "**insignificant**."

**Luke 16:10:**

"One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much"

**5. Short Sighted**

- To be faithful you need to see the grand scheme. You need to see how your work plays into the bigger picture of your life and the lives of others.

**1 Corinthians 15:58:**

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

## **4. Integrity Is at the Heart of All Good Work**

**A. Integrity is possessing a wholeness of character.**

- Integrity is the glue that holds all the good **attributes** of our lives together.
- Integrity is what makes us the kind of person that can be trusted with **responsibility**.

*"... only constant students of Jesus will be given adequate power to fulfill their calling to be God's person for their time and their place in this world. They are the only ones who develop the character which makes it safe to have such power." - Dallas Willard, The Great Omission, 17*

**B. Integrity shows itself in honesty and consistency in the workplace.**

**Proverbs 11:1:**

"A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight."

**Proverbs 11:3:**

"The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them."

**C. A man of integrity doesn't have to watch out for his own honor at work. He knows that God takes care of him.**

**Psalms 41:11-12:**

"By this I know that you delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over

me. But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever.”

- Character matters **deeply**. A lack of integrity will destroy all the work you, as a man, have attempted to accomplish.  
*“When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when **character** is lost, all is lost.” - Billy Graham*

## Your Table Discussion Questions

1. What is your why? Tell the men at your table why you do what you do.
2. What does healthy ambition in the workplace look like? What does unhealthy ambition look like? Explain.
3. Who in your life has modeled faithfulness in their work? Name 2-3 traits that make them faithful.
4. Who in your life has modeled integrity in their work? What does a man of integrity look like? Explain.

## Your “BetterMan” Reflection:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: How can you be more faithful in your work? What steps can you start taking today? Be specific and write your answer in the space below!