

Faith at Work: Work and Spiritual Formation

In previous weeks we've seen that, first and foremost, we are to serve Christ through our work. We've also seen that we should seek to serve/love our neighbors through our work. Our work is a way to promote the common good. Today, we are looking at the truth that God wants to use our work to form us spiritually. Since our work is such a big part of our lives, we should expect that God desires to use our work as one of the major areas in which he wants to refine us and to conform us into the image of Christ. Today, we are considering Paul's instruction to Timothy as a template for how all of us should view our work.

Opening Question: "I am regularly mindful of God when I'm at work." How would you rate yourself on a scale from 0 - 10 (0 = not at all; 10 = constantly)?

Read 1 Timothy 4:16

1. After communicating a number of things to Timothy, what were Paul's specific instructions to Timothy in this verse?
2. How was Timothy to pay attention to his work of teaching (see 2 Tim. 2:15)?
3. If you were to apply Paul's instructions to Timothy (i.e. to do your work diligently and accurately), what might that mean in your work context?
4. Paul also told Timothy to "pay close attention" to himself (1 Tim. 4:16). What does this mean?

Read 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:16, 22-26

5. In what areas of his life does Paul urge Timothy to pay close attention?

Steve said:

This past week I asked three people to think about their work and how they need to pay attention to themselves. I asked them to tell me 1) one thing God has taught them through their work - perhaps a virtue or a skill, and 2) one thing their work has exposed that God needed to change or refine. As I read their responses, think about yourself in relation to your work.

6. Can you think of a virtue or skill that God has taught you through your work? If so, what?

7. What kinds of things does your work reveal about what is going on in your heart?

8. What has your work exposed that God needs to change or refine in your life?

Steve said:

I think you'd agree that it would be wrong if we said goodbye to God when we leave worship on Sunday morning and say hello again when we meet with Him on Monday morning. It would be wrong to say goodbye to God when we're done meeting with Him on Monday morning and hello again on Tuesday morning. Rather, the vision given in Scripture is to set apart times to seek God corporately and individually, and then to **continue paying attention** to God **the rest of the week**. Of course, this would include the hours we spend working. We remain teachable and attentive to God as we work. To do anything else is to push God to the margins of our lives.

9. What might it look like this week to pay attention to God while you are at work?