

**Intro:** Hollywood actor, Ryan Gosling, who has starred in movies like *The Ides of March*, *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, *Drive*, and *The Notebook* in 2004. Out of all of those movies, I have only seen the Notebook and cried like a baby at the end of it. Men, don't judge me. It was after he filmed the Notebook that became depressed and quite moody. His next move, a very surprising one, led him to take a job making sandwiches at a deli shop in L.A. While this is not what you'd expect from a rising movie star, you have to love his rationale for doing it: ***"I'd never had a real job. . . The problem with Hollywood is that nobody works. They have meals. They go to Pilates. But it's not enough. So they do drugs. If everybody had a pile of rocks in their backyard and spent everyday moving them from one side of the yard to the other, it would be a much happier place."***

Now, there is so much we could say and analyze about this statement, but Mr. Gosling, being the heartthrob that he is, gets to the heart of much of what we are saying in this series. Let me hit a few highlights: 1) God made us to work. As those made in his image, the working God makes us to work to reflect who he is and to bring him glory. We will be unhappy with anything less. Though work is often frustrating and seems like a drudgery, it is an opportunity to worship God rather than worshiping our work. That's sermon one. 2) In sermon two, we learned that God gives each of us particular assignments according to the gifts, skills and passions he has placed within us so that we might serve and love others while representing him in the process. That's what we called the doctrine of vocation. 3) Last week, we looked at how we as Christians should dwell in the place where God has sent us. Just as God sent his people into Babylon and told them to seek the good of the city, so we also are to "seek the welfare of our city and pray on its behalf." One of the ways we seek its welfare is by putting in excellent work that seeks justice and cultivates the good world God has made.

So when Gosling says it would be better to transport rocks in your backyard than hang out like a bum and eat potato chips or hit lines of cocaine, he is absolutely right. God made us to work, and he made us to glorify him through our work. This week we are going to look at the only person who glorified God perfectly in his work, Jesus Christ. Today I want us to consider what gospel driven work should look like. Please open your Bible to John 17:1-5, page \_\_\_\_.

### **"Gospel Driven Work"** **John 17:1-5**

We are going to focus on the first five verses, but if we were to read the whole chapter we would see that Jesus not only prays for himself (in 1-5), and for his disciples (in 6-19), but also for all of his disciples as we heard earlier (in 20-26). This is the end of what scholars call the "Farewell Discourse" of John 13-17. It is called the farewell discourse, because they provide the final words and actions of Jesus before he will be killed on a Roman cross. John, like the other 3 "synoptic" gospels, spends a disproportionate amount of space leading up to the crucifixion and the crucifixion and resurrection themselves.

#### **The Point: Allow the gospel to transform your work through the work of Jesus.**

There are 2 steps to allowing the gospel to drive and transform our work. Step one involves looking at Jesus who is the embodiment of perfect work. So the first thing we should do is

#### **I. Consider Jesus who performed his work perfectly (17:1-3).**

- *Read 1-3.* Just as we've seen throughout the gospel of Luke, Jesus is found praying. He consistently found occasions to get away and pour out his heart before God. So often we are curious as to why we lack power and clarity in life, but many times we track those seasons to a lack of prayer. We often lack power because we so often lack prayer.
- These words reflect the magnitude of the moment and the heart of Jesus for the Father and his disciples. Jesus "lifted up his eyes" to heaven and said "Father the hour has come . . ."
- When it came to his mission, Jesus operated on a divine clock. He constantly spoke of his "hour." (EXPOUND)
  - "My hour has not yet come..." John 2:4. He told his brother that in chapter 7 (8). He escaped death on more than one occasion because "his hour had not yet come." (7:30; 8:20). But then in chapter 12, Jesus says, "the hour has come" which pushes him to the cross.
  - The hour Jesus is talking refers to the events that would fulfill his divine mission of being the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. The hour is the hour of his cross, resurrection, and ascension.
  - All of this happened according to the promised plan of God, and his timing is impeccable and perfectly trustworthy.
- *App:* In our life and in our work, we need to acknowledge by faith that there is a larger plan at work beyond what we can see.
- Jesus says the hour has come, and he makes a petition: "Glorify your Son, that the son may glorify you."
- Kostenberger says, "the glorification of the Son" is "shorthand for the cluster of events comprising Jesus' crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation." Jesus would be honored by the Father through all of that. There is glory in the cross, glory in the empty tomb, and glory in his exalted place by the Father's right hand. At the same time, Jesus was all about the Father's glory. He says, "glorify me so I can glorify you." God does not share his glory with another, and therefore the implication here is that Jesus

is God. This is pointed to in verse 5 as well. Jesus, as God, shares in the very glory of the Father, because they are equally God. Now...

### Verse 2:

- The Father gave Jesus authority over all people to grant eternal life to all who the Father had given him, but here we see that his authority was a delegated authority. Even Jesus submitted to the will of the Father. On this same night, we find him praying these words in Luke 22: "not my will, but yours, be done."
- App: So as we think about work, how is it for you to submit to your supervisors at work? Do you welcome instruction, constructive feedback, and accountability. Do you do your job like it is expected to be done, not like you think it should be done? Our submission serves as a larger purpose. That doesn't mean we should never stand up for ourselves, ask questions, learn, grow, and even help our bosses grow through our example

He gives eternal life...

- Verses 2-3 explain how Christ has glorified, pointed to the comprehensive perfections of God, namely, he has given eternal life to all those given him by the Father.
- Christ gives life. "In him was life and the life was the light of man...". Believe in me and you will have life. I am the way, truth and life.
- If you want life, receive Christ.
- If you're cool with something less than eternal life, the flourishing kind of life God desires for you to have, then continue to reject Christ.

Trans: you won't want to miss v. 3. Could it be the question most every, if not every (because God has set eternity in our hearts), the question every person on the planet is asking at some level relates to the "Is there something more? Is there life beyond life and life beyond death? Is there eternal life, and if so, what is it? How can I have it? Jesus answers that question in his prayer in v. 3: "This is..."

- We will not have life apart from knowing the source of life! ("know")
- This knowledge is not merely intellectual. It's not enough to check off your philosophical box that you do indeed affirm that God exists and even know some details and facts about this God.
- Knowledge here is referring to a personal trust, a personal relationship, an exchange of love and unity, that is not the result of checking a true or false box to the question of God's existence or even some of his attributes. We can say God is loving, but it is an entirely different thing to experience his love to find life in his love. Someone can say God is just, but once they've felt God's justice in Christ, it's a totally different conversation.
- God wants every person on the planet to know him and have eternal life. "I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn and live." Here's the problem. It's a glory problem.
- 1) God made us for his glory. God is glorious, and we were made in his image to see, savor, live for and reflect that glory (Gen. 1:27; Is. 43:6-7).
- 2) We have not lived for his glory. God has a standard and we don't measure up. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The law has stopped our mouths... The law asks you a question and you have absolutely nothing to say... So what do we do? Jesus. What is the answer? Jesus. Who is the standard? Jesus. How can we meet the standard of God? The expectation of God? The law of God? The plan of God? Jesus.
- 3) Jesus came to save us from our sin by living a perfect life, dying as a perfect sacrifice and exchanging our sin for his righteousness. So that...
- 4) All who look to him, believe in him, "turn and live" will made life. & then Jesus transforms us from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:17-18) and will ultimately bring us into complete glory.

Trans: So Jesus glorified the Father by giving life to men. Consider his perfect work as the starting point for your work, but let's take that a step further. We should also...

## II. Do your work motivated by the finished work of Christ (17:4-5)

**Read 4-5** ~~MAYBE DELETE...~~ [I love looking forward. 2013 Vision... get it done! I'm all about forward thinking, but it's good to look back.] Jesus put in roughly 33 years of life, 3 of those years were intense public ministry (lame walking, blind seeing, rich men becoming poor and poor men become rich... fishermen becoming fishers of men... ) and right here in this moment: Jesus looks back. He looks back on the entirety of his ministry (water to wine, walking on water, raising Lazarus from the dead) He finished the work. John 19:30 "It is finished."

### *Utter Resolution*

- Jesus did work. He did what he does and continues to do what he's always done. He punched the time clock with missional force.
- Jesus was completely focused on fulfilling the mission he was sent to accomplish. Nothing would deter him. His resolve was unwavering and indefatigable. It could not be exhausted. In the garden, facing not just death, but wrath. If you don't understand that Jesus died in your place to be a propitiation. . . .

### *Get the job done...*

- — Address desire and resolve.. “Set his face...”
- Dangers: “I’ll get that done soon.” (procrastinate) “Wouldn’t it be great to...” (good intentions)
- Get hard jobs done first. It’s what Brian Tracy calls “eating the frog.”
- Fight against laziness and work with great commitment and strength. “Consider the ant you sluggard.” Get up out of bed man. Stop rolling around. Stop hitting the snooze button. **“As a door turns on its hinges, so does a sluggard on his bed.” Prov. 26:14**
- There is not a lion in the streets...d In other words, we are paralyzed by our excuses and laziness. How sad?
- Jesus did not just go the extra mile. There is not even a category for the lengths of his love for us.
- Working hard. Putting our heart into our work.. “We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed.” - Brother Lawrence, Practicing the Presence of God.

### *Get the job done right...*

- Integrity (who you are when no one is watching.. “Boss Button” - God sees; who you are when everyone is watching) The little lies that cover up a missed assignment or make us a look a little better in the eyes of our boss and coworkers.
- Ephesians 4:28... Work in order to give...
- Character, (Ethical dilemmas)

### *Witness*

- In all of this, we have opportunity to witness. Last week, we said that we don’t have to quote Bible verses to engage our culture and perform quality work. BUT, our workplace gives us an opportunity to not only have spiritual conversations and point people to Christ through sharing our testimony and the gospel, but here’s something to consider. The best person to reach your coworkers is you. It’s not me when I bump into them on the train or at the grocery store.
- This is what Gene Veith says: **“It is in vocation that evangelism can most effectively happen. How can non-Christians be reached with the Gospel? By definition, they are unlikely to come to church. . . . But in the workplace, non-Christians and Christians work together and get to know each other. Occasions for witnessing and inviting a colleague to church come up in natural ways—over the water cooler or during a coffee break, discussing a disaster like the World Trade Center attack or a failing marriage, or in times of joy such as the birth of a child. Christians penetrating their world in vocations have access to more nonbelievers than a pastor does.”**

*Trans:* Here’s the really great piece of doing work like Jesus... When we get the job done and get it right, there are two great results that I think we are all interested in... Energy & Joy.

- The works of God are designed to energize us! J.I. Packer says: “Those who know God have great energy for God.” (I love that!) Well, not only do those who know God have great energy for God, but those who do God’s will and God’s work have great energy for God. You remember what Jesus said to his disciples in John 4, right? His disciples had gone into to town . . . woman at the well... gotta be hungry... So v. 31 begins... **“Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” (John 4:31-35)**
- God has given us all assignments and assignments within those assignments and that includes our work. our 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 hour weeks. Students you have an assignment of preparation for your work . . . Joy motivated the work of Christ. And it should motivate ours as well.
- **“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)**
- Expound... The cross was more weighty than your condescending boss. sat down at the right hand... Verse 5. We bring God glory by finishing the work he sets before us!

### **Conclusion:**

Jesus put work in, so you could work it out.

**“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)**

You can’t work as God desires until you receive his work.

**“To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)**

Prayer... “every resolve for good and every work of faith *by his power*. “Take My Life.”