

Do Something Great With Your Life

What Is the Difference Between a Job and a Calling?

Edited Transcript

Patrick Morley

Okay, well good morning men. Please turn in your Bible to Colossians, chapter three, verse 23. Well, you picked a good one. You picked a good one. We're in the series, "Do Something Great With Your Life." We had a speaker last week. For those of you who joined us for the first time last week, welcome back. And we're going to continue on with that theme for four weeks. Do something great in your work, your family, your marriage and in the community, your community.

But before we get started, we always do a couple of shout outs and today we're going to recognize Real Amazing Men led by David Gibson in Twin Falls, Idaho. Wow, that's cool. So these are nine men. They meet on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM at Amazing Grace Fellowship. You get it? Amazing Grace Fellowship. Real Amazing Men. Get it?

You must be a no man left behind church because that's something that we would, just a sidebar. If your church is Amazing Grace Fellowship, don't name your men's group Iron Men, because then guys that are in the church will say, "Well, I'm not part of Iron Men," but anybody in the church can be a real amazing man, right?

What David sent in is that they're men. I love the simplicity of this. Men helping men be real men of God, all stages, all ages. Isn't that awesome? So would you join me in giving a very warm, rousing Man in the Mirror welcome to Real Amazing Men? One, two, three, hoo rah!

Welcome, men. We are really honored to have you as part of our Bible study and then we're going to give a shout out to one of our area directors today, Ron Greer in McKinney, Texas. And Ron writes, "My passion to reach and impact men comes from my own experience of growing up in a community destroyed by the decline of traditional godly men in households and what God did in my own life through faithful godly men." Ron is a great man. I think he's been with us for five or six years. I wonder if you'd join me in giving Ron Greer a Man in the Mirror shout out this morning?

One, two, three. Hoo rah!. Ron, thank you for your service. And may God give you a profound ministry out in the Texas area. There is McKinney. What's that? Dallas. Yeah, I get Dallas and Houston mixed up. I don't know why. I mean, they're like nothing in common, well, they do have Texas in common, so, all right.

So what is the difference between a job and a calling? That's the topic for today. So there is a conference board report on job satisfaction and it's really, really good. I wish I could just go through the whole thing with you, but I'm going to give you the bottom line. Half the people in America are satisfied with their jobs and half the people in America are not. And while the numbers vary a little bit, I mean,

there was less job satisfaction in the Great Recession. Yeah. And maybe a little bit more at some point, but roughly about half of the people in America are satisfied with their jobs. And half the people are not satisfied or leaning towards neutral.

So the question is, which half are you in? Or the people that you are mentoring, what half are they in? Are they satisfied with their jobs or are they not? And so we're going to look into this a little bit, the subject of job satisfaction. And let's talk about, let's brainstorm. What are some of the immediate and ultimate reasons that we work?

JOB SATISFACTION: WHAT ARE THE IMMEDIATE AND ULTIMATE REASONS WE WORK?

And you can call out an answer here. There are no wrong answers. Well, actually there probably are some stupid answers, but I'm not going to draw attention to your answer if it's stupid, so you can say it anyway. But anyway, what are some of the immediate and ultimate reasons that we work? Okay, income. Pay the bills. Money, right? Both immediate, uh, and then also financial security. Okay. What are some of the other reasons? What is it?

To get out of the house? Is that because you want to get out of the house or because your wife wants you to get out of the house? They're both. Okay. All right. So something to occupy your otherwise worthless, wasted life. Okay. Got it. All right. What are some other reasons?

Purpose. All right. So, getting to more to the ultimate reasons that we work is looking for that deep why. Looking for that deep why: a purpose. All right. What else?

Build a team. Okay. So just the joy of relationships and building the team and being part of a team if you can't build one, be part of a team. But the, the social aspects of it, also.

I'm just remembering an article in Fast Company about the Kleiner Perkins principal, John Doerr, that's the main thing he looks for when he's doing a venture capital offer. He's the one who did Google. He did Netscape before that. He did Facebook. He did all these, I mean, he's one of the great guys, venture capitalists of all time. And he said the number one thing that he looks for when making an investment is the team. The team.

He said, because it's going to be hard and if the team doesn't have the right skills, and then doesn't also have the right mindset. In other words, he said, basically, if you want to start a company, go find some people that you're willing to get in trouble with over the next few years and not hate each other. So, all right. So yeah, build a team. What else? That was very profound. So, basically when you put your whole heart into something, people see it and then they respond, and God gets the glory if you're a Christian.

And how about just to impact people? The idea that we all want to, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but the idea of serving other people, helping them better themselves. Yeah, so having an impact on people, and that would be people we work with. That would be investors, that would be vendors, that would be the customers. Just everybody, right? Okay. What else?

When it gets to be work, I want to quit. All right. So, that would be finding something that you really love. Okay. To convert it to the reasons we work.

To learn something. Okay. So one of the reasons we work is that we want to grow and continue to, yeah. Okay. Perfect. Daniel?

Okay. All right. So one of the ultimate reasons we work as to fight something that we can actually believe in, that we think is going somewhere. Everybody wants to be part of something that's going somewhere. Right?

So I was reading an article. Okay, so I didn't bring it in because it was too heavy to carry. I took all the books that I've read on calling, in work and so on, that are just the Christian ones, not the non-Christian ones, because I've got several hundreds of books that are not Christian based, but just, I picked the Christian based books on calling, not just work, but work and calling combined. I left out the ones that are just on work, but the ones that have to do with work and calling and I put them in a Trader Joe's bag. And if I were to pick it up by the two handles, it would tear off because it's just so heavy. There's so many books in there.

And what I did, I mean, in one of those books, I mean a couple of those books were fine. I have one whole book called *A Man's Guide to Work*. So I mean, I've been involved in this area extensively for a long time. This is one of the hardest talks I've ever put together. And I'll tell you why.

Because I decided, okay, I want to start with a blank sheet of paper. I don't want to just rehash with these men. I just don't want to, you know, do one out of my back pocket, pull one on in my back pocket and lay it on you. I want to give you something that's fresh. So, that's why it's not going to be a good message probably. We'll see.

So Charles Duhigg is a Pulitzer Prize winning author. I think his book is *The Power of Habit* or something like that. And he wrote this in the New York Times, the subtitle of the article is ... Well, the title of the article is "The Future of Work: Wealthy, Successful and Miserable." So you know where it's going, right?

The subtitle of the article, "The upper echelon is hoarding money and privilege to a degree not seen in decades, but that doesn't make them happy at work." Then he goes and explains how you went to his 15th Harvard Business School reunion and he points out that he was turned down by all the companies, all of the investment banking companies, that's how he ended up working for the New York Times as a writer. He couldn't get a job with one of the banks, but he said that of all these people there, he said so many of them were just absolutely miserable. He tells a story about one of his classmates, who his job was to invest \$5 million a day, which sounds like fun, right? But the problem is, is that if he only invests \$4 million today, he has to invest \$6 million the next day. And to do that wisely and not lose money and the pressure's enormous. He makes \$1.2 million a year doing this.

But he talks about how his job is unfulfilling and tedious. And he says this, I'm going to quote his classmate. "I feel like I'm wasting my life. I'm making \$1.2 million a year. I feel like I'm wasting my life. When I die, is anyone going to care that I earn an extra percentage point of return? My work feels totally meaningless."

Back to our series on Solomon's 12 secrets, for some of you who were here for that. Meaningless, meaningless, utterly meaningless, says the teacher. Everything is a chasing after the wind. "I feel like I'm wasting my life." He recognized, this is the author speaking. "He recognized the incredible privilege of his pay and status, but his anguish seemed genuine." And quoting back to him, he says to the man who

makes the two, "If you spend 12 hours a day doing work you hate at some point, doesn't matter what your paycheck says."

There's no magic salary at which a bad job becomes good. So he decided that he wanted to change, but he said, "I felt locked into this lifestyle. I told my wife I wanted to change and when I told her, she laughed." She laughed. And so there he is, miserable. Stuck in a job that doesn't satisfy.

So what is the way that a man can take the work that he does? And what's the word? Not bulletproof. Maybe that's it; I don't know. How can you make yourself bulletproof from a sense of meaningless and a lack of purpose? How can you satisfy all of the immediate as well as the ultimate reasons that we work? And the way we do that is the verse of the day. And if you're in Colossians chapter three, verse 23, let's take a look at that.

"Whatever you do," So, it doesn't make any difference. My wife and I had this discussion last night. Discussion last night because, I was trying to explain to her that I wanted to be able to give a message first of all, that brought a fresh perspective to this subject. But I also wanted to give a message so that if somebody is here today and they are a landscape maintenance worker, or if they ride the back of a garbage truck, that it would be true for them. If the Gospel isn't true about work for that guy, if it's only true for the guy that's trying to figure out how to make \$1.2 million mean something in his life, that's not the gospel. And so, this is a message that has to work for everybody.

And so, but my wife was arguing, well, how can you say to a man who is riding on the back of a garbage truck that that's his calling. That God has called him to that or exiled him to that as his calling? And so she, she said, well, I think it'd be better just to talk about the nobility of all work. Well, we're not going to talk about that this morning. Every vocation is holy to the Lord. Okay? I mean, this has been my central theme here for 33 years, that every vocation is holy to the Lord.

But we want to go for something else today. And what we want to do is I want to figure out, I want, well, let's just read the text. So whatever you do, so whether it's making \$1.2 or riding the back of a garbage truck. So whatever you do, this is Paul's instruction. This is the word of God. This is Paul speaking on behalf, speaking under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

"Whatever you do, whatever you do, work at it with all your heart." There's this idea of being wholehearted. Wholehearted. And you have been around people who are wholehearted. People who make a lot of money, who are wholehearted what they do. And people who don't make up a lot of money, who are wholehearted about what they do.

My wife had back surgery. And so I was there, you know, every day to visit her. And she's in there for three or four or five days, extra couple days, whatever it was. And on more than one day, we had the same housekeeper come by and mop up and to take care of the trash. And she was radiance. She was a jewel. She was joy and she had peace. She had contentment.

And so after the second day, I followed her into the hall. I said, I didn't know exactly which way I wanted to approach it. So I just told her I said, "I'm having a really blessed day." So I decided to just, you know, start with me and then see if that would go anywhere. And it did. And so she said, "Well, I'm really blessed, too." And then she proceeded to talk about how she was working at this hospital because she

was in the business of healing people and getting them back, and their families back, to their rightful way of living.

She said, "I'm a healer." She understood, this is the Advent Health System. They've got some great leaders down there. Right? But she had caught the vision, the understanding that, whatever you do, she was a housekeeper, work at it with all your heart. And this was the part that was very true for her: "As working for the Lord, not for human masters." She was doing what she was doing, not because of her bosses, but because of her allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Verse 24. "Since you know," and here's why we do it. "Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward." This is why. This is part two. "It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

So when we do our work wholeheartedly, with our whole heart, when we put everything into it, we're serving the Lord. And when we don't put everything into it, what are we doing? Well, there are different ways to say it. God's given you \$100 bucks and you're not reinvesting it, you're shortchanging him. So here's the Big Idea for the day. Let's do one more.

Let's look at 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 58. You notice I didn't bring my big, four pound Bible in this morning I just didn't feel like I had the strength today to pick that sucker up. All right, verse 58.

"Therefore my dear brothers and sisters stand firm, let nothing move you. Always give yourself as much as you can to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Doesn't say that, does it? It says, "Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord." That's that wholehearted kind of an idea again. "Because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

So when you're slinging trash cans and they don't do that anymore, you know, they've got machines that grab 'em and you know, you basically are supervising that machine thing. But when you're doing that and you're doing it fully for the Lord, you can do it that way because you know that when we do our labor, we are not laboring in vain. And a lot of this is just simply understanding that there's a higher purpose for every vocation. Let me go ahead and give you the Big Idea.

The Big Idea for today is this: **If you can't do your job with your whole heart, you need a new theology or a new job.** I mean, there may be some other option, but this is what it looks like to me. If you can't do your job the way these scriptures talk about, with your whole heart, then you need a new theology or get a new job.

Now my guess is, is that for the half of the people that are satisfied, they still need to get a new theology, some of them. Okay? But for the half that are not satisfied with their work, I'm going to guess that many of them do need a new job, but probably a great percentage of them don't really need to change jobs. They just have to start thinking about what they're already doing in a different way. And that is as though they are doing their work for the Lord, this wholeheartedness kind of a thing.

Gee, I was going to tell you another story. I forgot what it was. I hope it comes back to me, 'cause it was really cool. And if I don't tell you this story, your life will never be the same again. All right? So this is the Big Idea, right? **If you can't do your job with your whole heart, then get a new theology or new job.**

A NEW THEOLOGY: WHAT TURNS A JOB INTO A CALLING?

So, let's take a look at this new theology. What does turn a job into a calling? And so we've looked at these texts. There's some other verses that you can look up on your own. I think that's enough Bible for right now. Can you ever really have enough Bible? But you know, you get the idea.

So, when we look for this ultimate reason for working and we looked at this scripture and we see this idea of doing whatever we do as unto the Lord, it is for Christ that we are working and serving, then what we do is we find that there is a higher purpose to our work. It's not just the work itself. There's a higher purpose to the work that we do. And then of course the question is, how do we achieve the point of view that the work that we do has a higher purpose than just the work itself?

And for that, some of you were not here, but before John Rivers last week, we actually had looked at some of the attributes of a Christian who wants to do something great with his life. And now we're going to look at four roles of a man who is a believer and wants to do something great with his life. But when we looked at those attributes, what we really focused in on is the idea that Jesus says the greatest among you is the one who serves. And we looked at the mindset of a servant and Jesus said, "I came to set an example for you. I am among you as one who serves."

And so the arc of discipleship is to go from one who wants to be served, I don't think we ever give that up, shouldn't need to. But the arc of discipleship is going from someone who whose primary focus is, how can you help me? How can you serve me? What can you do for me? The primary arc of discipleship is to move from that to how can I help you? How can I serve you? What do you need that I can offer you? And then I want to do that as unto the Lord, as though I'm serving Christ, as though I'm following his example because he said that he's among us as one who serves.

We said here that the highest honor, the very highest honor to which a man can aspire is to be a disciple of Jesus. But then I asked the question, okay, well what is the highest honor then to which a disciple can aspire? Because being the son of God is, I mean, that's it. For a man to be a son, to be a disciple. But once you are a disciple, then there's more.

So what's the highest honored to which a disciple can aspire? And the highest honor to which a disciple could aspire is to be a servant. The greatest among you, the greatest, okay? The highest honor, the greatest, is the one who serves. So 1 Corinthians chapter four, verses one and two, which we won't look at. Maybe we should. Nah, we don't have time.

I'll just tell you. Paul writes, he said, so this is how you ought to look at us. Now we're the disciples. We're the men who became the disciples and now we're disciples. But here's how you gotta look at it: as servants of Christ, entrusted with the mysteries of God.

As servants in Christ. So we're trying to figure out what is this new theology that can turn a job into a calling is to understand that we are servants of the most high God.

So, Luke 17:10. "And when you have done everything you were told to do, you should say we are unworthy servants. We've only done our duty." This is the mindset of his servant. Shifting from what's in it for me. What's in it for me? To keeping some of that, because you have to take care of your own responsibilities, but getting over to this idea of serving others.

And then the second verse, 1 Corinthians 4:2, says "Now whomever has been given this trust," a trust, something to steward, to look after. And that can be your training, your skills that you have, the job that you have, the power that you have to help people. "Whoever's been given a trust must be found faithful."

And so God calls us to be what? Faithful. And so, one of the two questions a servant is asking is what does faithful look like? So in our work, what does it look like to be faithful? A faithful real estate professional. A faithful contractor. A faithful fishing guide. A faithful auto mechanic. A faithful architect. A faithful machine shop owner. A faithful pastor. A faithful lawyer. I mean, what does it look like to be a faithful lawyer? I mean, really. I'm sorry. I apologize.

In fact, I need to take some of the heat off of that statement about lawyers maybe by diverting it over to bankers. You know, why if you need a heart transplant, you should go see a banker? Because that way, you'll know you've been getting a heart that's never been used before.

So what's faithful look like? It looks like allegiance to Jesus Christ. It looks like doing whatever we do as though we're doing it for the Lord. It looks like we're doing it because we think it's the Lord that we're serving and because we don't think our labor's going to be in vain. We believe that. That's the new theology.

And then a servant, since he should only say that he's only done his duty. So a servant is not asking, a servant is not asking when he's in his work situation. He's not focused on the question what do I want? What do I want out of this deal? A servant is asking a different question. A servant is asking, what does the master need? What does the master need? Those two questions, what does faithful look like? What does the master need?

Now, what if after adopting this theology, you still think your work sucks? Okay? All right. The Big Idea today is this. **If you can't do your job with your whole heart, you need a new theology or a new job.** So let's take a look at a new job. Okay? And where does this leave us?

A NEW JOB: WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE YOU?

So there are basically, and this is stuff I've taught before, but there are basically four things, four questions you ought to be asking yourself if you're not satisfied in your work. Number one, what are my motivated interests? You know, what are the kinds of things that interest me? Do I like numbers or do I like meeting with people? What am I motivated in? And we don't have time to go into detail on these, but you should probably write these down if you're not satisfied. What are my motivated interests?

Number two, what are my natural abilities? Because God has endowed you with certain mental and physical abilities. I've said, I like to kid around. If you're five foot six and can't dribble, you're probably not going to be an NBA basketball star. But you might make a great accountant if you're really good with numbers.

And then, what are your acquired competencies? I love it when I get a chance to talk with one of you and ask you about your work and you begin to unfold the training that you've gone through, the accomplishments that have been involved, your specific skill.

Sam, over here for example, when he starts talking about machining things for the Department of Defense. You know, and you just picture, wow, this is like really big, and that he would be skillful enough to be able to get a DOD contract. Right. So, I mean, that's a big deal. And there's some others of you I think in the room that work with DOD, too. Does one of you go around disarming nuclear bombs or something like that? Raise your hand if you do that. Just look for the guy with the blinking badge.

So where was I? Okay. So yeah, motivated interests, natural abilities, acquired competencies, and spiritual gifts. So spiritual gifts are a great insight because they're going to match up with some of your natural abilities as well. So, like if you might have the gift of leadership, well, you can use that in the kingdom, but if you have the gift of leadership, you might also be able to use that in management and so forth.

I'd encourage you, if theology doesn't solve this problem for you, that's okay. Get a new job. We're going to be doing marriage in a couple of weeks, and I won't be saying this. If you can't do your job with your whole heart, you need a new theology or you need a new job.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for these men. Thank you for where you have each of us on our journeys. Lord, because of the obvious desire that you have for us to be able to know that our work is not in vain, I pray that you would help each of us to have either a new theology or a new job. We ask this in your name, Jesus. Amen.