

## **God's Man Represents God: Engaging Your Work as Worship**

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INTRO:

Famous letter from John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, shortly before their deaths.

In it Adams wrote, *"My friend, you and I have lived in serious times."*

Thank God that there were serious men like Adams, Jefferson, and the other Founders who rose up to the overwhelming challenges of their day. If they hadn't, the course of world history, and our lives would be very different.

Jefferson and Adams, who had become dear friends, both died the very same day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1826, as America celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a new country.

You and I live in equally serious times. And serious times require serious men.

So much has happened in my lifetime. Born in the 1950's – idyllic (Leave it to Beaver) time in American history. Judeo-Christian values permeated every part of life and culture. Yet, in less than a generation, everything has completely flip flopped. Christian values are on the out. Church attendance continues to drop drastically, and the influence of the church on society seems near non-existent.

**Leads to a Critical Question – *Is something fundamentally wrong with the message that's both been modeled and proclaimed by the Church?***

Unfortunately, we'd all say, the answer is YES!

So, to understand the Fruit, have to go to the Root, which is always Theological.

Question for us: If I were to ask the average Christian, "What is God's purpose was in the world?" What would they answer??

Most would probably say, "That everyone would be saved from their sin and restored to God through Jesus Christ."

True in one way, but God's purpose is much bigger than that... and the ramifications of those differences are profoundly significant.

Turn to Eph. 1:7-10

*“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as **a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.**”*

*God’s purpose, His Mission Statement, is not merely to save individuals souls, but “to Re-unite ALL Things In Christ, things in Heaven and things on Earth!”*

The Gospel of modern American Evangelicalism is a very simplistic Story.

**FALL**

**REDEMPTION**

Man’s Need	God’s Answer
Concern for Eternal, not Temporal Issues	
Focus on Inward, Personal Experience	
Values Spiritual versus Material World	

If this is accurate, when baptizing folks, we should just hold folks under the water and send them home. Mission accomplished! Why Not? Does God want more?

The Gospel of Scripture is very different. It’s a comprehensive storyline that doesn’t just impact individual souls, transforms every aspect of God’s creation.

**CREATION**

**FALL**

**REDEMPTION**

**CONSUMMATION**

God’s a Worker  
His creation reflects His Beauty & Wisdom  
**Man created in God’s Image, to  
Work & Keep God’s world for His Glory!**  
**Gen. 1-2**

God’s Triumphant Finish!  
**God’s ultimate reason for  
our salvation in Christ!**  
Christ Reign coming to Earth  
**Rev. 21-22**

God’s purpose isn’t just “a personal salvation experience”, but a *Personal Experience + Clear Calling + Practical Outworking, that all Produces Transformed Individual Lives, Churches, Families, Workplaces, Cities. ... and Reproducing Disciples whose lives are similarly transformed*

Most know Eph. 2:8-9 – *For by grace are we saved thru faith, and that is not of our doing, it's the free gift of God lest any man should boast.*

But next verse finishes the thought, there's another verse – vs.10 –  
*For we are His workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus for good works that He has prepared in advance.*

Author Wendell Berry, in book, *What Are People For?* says,  
**“The quality and significance of our Work is shaped by the story we find ourselves in.”**

Famous quote, Abraham Kuyper, Dutch theologian/Prime Minister of Netherlands.  
***“There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!”***

### **Ramifications to Our Work as Worship:**

1. **Theology of Creation** teaches us that our Work is not primarily about personal Identity or financial Remuneration, but a Calling to walk with God in the garden's he's entrusted to us to develop. We're called to use our God-given talents to contribute to God's good world & to the common good of people created in God's image.

Our work is not only a calling to reflect the beauty God's Nature as we do the task we do “In Christ”, but it's a context to Love and Serve others. To model the Gospel that we will eventually speak, as we build relationships.

When done well, Skillful Ability provided in a context of Loving Service is something so rare that people actually pay to get it. We'll also find great joy and fulfillment in what we do.

2. **Theology of the Fall** helps us to understand what's wrong with the world, what's wrong with the people around us, what's wrong with our own work, and even what's wrong with us... our own hearts.

Instead of producing despair and cynicism, we should be amazed that things aren't as bad as they could be, because of God's common grace. It should also produce compassion and relatability with all those around us, believers or not. Because we are all affected by the results of the Fall and need mercy.

3. **Theology of Redemption** teaches us that Jesus came not only to transform our Souls, but to transform every context of our lives with the Power of His Resurrection Life. A right Theology of Redemption isn't just about the Pie in the Sky, but the Ham where I am!

It should lead us to cultivate a Biblically rooted, Gospel-Centric understanding of every aspect of the life God has called us to. Marriage – Family – Work – Leisure – Relationships. We must know why what we do matters to God and to the world. We must know how each of these contexts provides opportunities to model the gospel.

Last, a healthy Theology of Redemption teaches us that we've been redeemed to redeem others. Means we must see every context of life as a context for sincere relationships that lead to meaningful friendships, and a setting of trust and respect in which to share the core of who we are. To speak the message of salvation. This requires major changes in our priorities and life schedule to do faithfully. The church schedule must serve this end.

4. **Theology of Consummation** teaches us that our work in the Lord is not in vain, but that Christ's triumph over sin and death will have its full expression. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

All wrongs will be made right. Justice will flow like a river. What began as a Garden will become a City where there will no longer be a need for the sun, for the glory of Jesus Christ will be our light.

And all that the Lord has formed in us, in all of this world's messiness, will all be perfectly employed in a whole new chapter of life and work with Jesus thru eternity.

# Who Am I?

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## 2 Cor. 5:17-20

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

<b>WHO AM I?</b>	<b><u>IN ADAM</u></b>	<b><u>IN CHRIST</u></b>
<b>SPIRITUAL CONDITION</b>	<i>Dead in Sin</i>	<i>Alive In Christ</i>
<b>RELATIONSHIP TO GOD</b>	<i>Enemy of God</i>	<i>Friend / Adopted as Family</i>
<b>MOTIVATION</b>	<i>Selfish Ambition</i>	<i>Love of God / Service to Neighbor</i>
<b>BEHAVIORAL</b>	<i>Works of Flesh</i>	<i>Fruit of Spirit</i>
<b>RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<i>Based on Personal Benefit</i>	<i>One Another Scriptures</i>
<b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; WISDOM</b>	<i>General Revelation from nature</i>	<i>General Revelation plus Special Revelation from God's Word</i>
<b>ULTIMATE END</b>	<i>Eternal Judgment</i>	<i>Eternal Life</i>
<b>WORK-LIFE AFFECT</b>	<b><u>IN ADAM</u></b>	<b><u>IN CHRIST</u></b>
<b>IDENTITY</b>	<i>Self-Centered / Independent</i>	<i>Christ- Centered / Dependent / Abiding In Christ</i>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<i>Money / Power / Freedom</i>	<i>Doing the Will of God from the Heart / the Gospel Lived Out</i>
<b>TEAM BUILDING</b>	<i>Conditional to Self Benefit</i>	<i>Love / Unity / Peace / Diversity</i>

<b>DECISION MAKING</b>	<i>Gen. Revelation (Nature)</i>	<i>Gen. &amp; Special Revelation (God's Word and work of Holy Spirit)</i>
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS</b>	<i>Common Grace</i>	<i>Common &amp; Special Grace (Divine Intervention)</i>
<b>LEADERSHIP APPROACH</b>	<i>Manage Sin (Carrot or Stick)</i>	<i>Make Disciples (Serve others to think and act Biblically)</i>
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	<i>Work for Personal Benefit</i>	<i>Serve for Glory of God / Good of Neighbor / Let Your Light Shine</i>
<b>HIRING CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<i>Will they make me money?</i>	<i>Are they called to our mission? Do they fit the job and culture?</i>
<b>WORK EXPERIENCE</b>	<i>Strife, Division, Discontent</i>	<i>Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit</i>