

## Faith and Work Part 6

2018.11.18



# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of **THE DISCIPLE**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent, action. I Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “**Talking Points, Walking Points**” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**”, are perfect for private reflection.

## Questions for Reflection

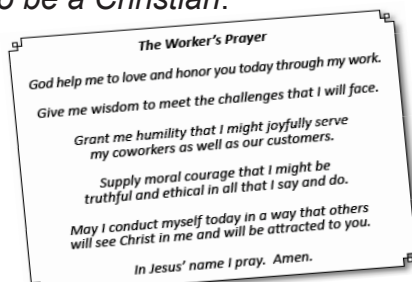
- The world is “broken”—it doesn't work as God intended it to—because of Adam and Eve's sin. Tell us about the most “broken” work environment you've ever experienced. Did you try to improve it? If so, were you successful? Tell us about it.

Tell us about the **godliest** work environment you've ever experienced.  
Who was most responsible for creating it?  
Was he/she the boss or an employee?  
How did he/she do it?

- Have you ever tried to improve a workplace? What did you do? How did it work?
- **What** did Pastor Doug **mean** when he said: “If you are a salesman (etc.), you are a Christian who happens to be a salesman, not a salesman who happens to be a Christian.”
- Do you know how to share your faith in Christ? If not, how will you learn how to do so?

- Have you used the “Worker's Prayer” yet? Tell us about your experience.

You can learn to honor God through work.  
Let a biblical counselor help!  
[counseling@tcc.org](mailto:counseling@tcc.org)



## Application-Challenge

- Remember that you represent Jesus Christ. Pray “**The Worker's Prayer**” daily.
- Determine to conduct yourself on the job in a way that will make God attractive.

**Take One Step:** What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



# Sermon Summary

Have you ever wondered why work requires such a huge effort to achieve a modest result? For example, if you're in sales, you may contact 30 customers to make a single sale. Plus, customers complain, bosses grumble, and co-workers gripe! Sometimes it seems like the whole universe is aligned against you. Why is work so hard? The Bible is clear that work is a good gift from God, but work became more difficult after sin entered the world (Genesis 3:17-19). Because of man's sin, nature would no longer respond to man's work initiative with the same efficiency it did before the Fall. Blood, sweat and tears would now be required to coax fruitfulness from our labor. Please note that it is not "work" itself that God cursed, but the ground. This is a subtle but crucial distinction. The curse made work and the work environment much more difficult, but work itself is still a good gift from God, and we need to remember that.

Sin also negatively affects us as workers in the system. When Adam and Eve sinned, it resulted in a change in man's basic nature. Before the fall, mankind had no sinful inclinations and no guilt. Their hearts, which once were inclined toward God, now were inclined toward evil. And Adam's sinful inclinations became our sinful inclinations. Sin is failing to let God be God and placing something or someone in God's rightful place of supremacy. It is any evil action or evil motive that is in opposition to God's will. The frustration we experience in the marketplace can be traced directly or indirectly to sin. Think of how much better things would be if everyone were honest. What if everyone took personal responsibility for their actions? What if people didn't worry about who got the credit? What if company executives were as concerned about their employees as they were about making a profit? What if everyone was consistently gracious and kind and forgiving? Work itself is not the problem. Sin is the problem.

But as Christians, working together, we can make a difference in the workplace. Remember that you represent Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-20). You are a Christian first and a policeman or insurance salesman, or engineer second. Your faith is not incidental to your job, it is instrumental. You are not a plumber who happens to be a Christian, you are a Christian who happens to be a plumber. The difference is huge. Determine to conduct yourself in a way that you will make God attractive (Titus 2:9-10). Have a positive, "can do" attitude. Do your best to reach or exceed your supervisor's expectations. Don't be argumentative. Be honest; don't pilfer at work. Five dollars here, a pad of paper there. A few postage stamps here or a computer mother board there. No one is going to miss it. A few hours pilfered away here, a few hours there. No big deal, everybody does it, right? Everybody may, but it is still wrong! It is stealing, and it mars your Christian testimony (Romans 2:23-24).

Christians need integrity. All of life is sacred. All of life is lived under Christ's Lordship. Christians are not perfect, but they should be consistent, and that makes God attractive. So be trustworthy, dependable, reliable, responsible, truthful, and honest. God's way of dealing with sin's negative influence in the workplace is to change the worker. That is where Jesus comes in. Through "regeneration" God imparts spiritual life to us. We are forgiven and reconciled to God. We are adopted into God's family, and we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit then works to form the character of Jesus within us. Transformed people glorify him on the job and make Christ attractive to others (Romans 12:1-2).

## Talking To God About This Week's Message

*"Heavenly Father, today I want to be a 'doer' of the Word, and not just a 'hearer'. Amen."*

## Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, *"What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?"*, how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? How would you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

## Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time

*The origin of work is found in the Book of Genesis.*

*The explanation for why it word "doesn't work" as God intended is found there too! Let's see...*

**Monday**—Read Genesis 1:1—2:3 straight through, aloud, in order to get an overview. Then...

- Who is the subject in v. 1? \_\_\_\_\_. Before v. 1, what (who?) existed? In your Bible, underline or highlight the phrase, "Then God said..." in each of the following verses: 1, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, and 26. The same word follows "Then God said..." in each of those verses. What is it?
- Complete the following verses (note that "..." means that some words are left out):
  - v. 1 Then God said, "Let there be light" and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - v. 6-7a Then God said, "Let there be an expanse...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."
  - v. 9 Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."
  - v. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."
  - v. 14-15 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."
  - v. 24 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."
  - v. 26-30 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image...and it was \_\_\_\_\_."

**Tuesday**—Read Genesis 1:1—2:3 again today, and review your answers from yesterday. Then...

- Each time God commands something, what happens?
- Circle the word "good" in verses: 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, and 25. God is good, and so everything he created by his command was "\_\_\_\_\_".
- In v. 1-25 God made non-human creation. In v. 26-30, God created humans. Underline the phrase "after their/its kind" in each of the following verses: 11, 12, 21, 24, and 25. In v. 26 things change: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image...'" All non-human creation is "after its kind". What "kind" of creation are we? God is clearly "in charge"; how do v. 26-28 show that humans are "second in command"?
- When God made non-human creation he called it all "good". But after God created humans, he said all his work was "\_\_\_\_\_ good" (v. 31)!
- According to Genesis 2:2, God "rested" after he did all this. Why do you think he rested?
  - ☐ Because he was sweaty and exhausted.
  - ☐ Because he was finished and pleased with his very good, harmonious creation..

**Wednesday**—Read Genesis 2:4-25

Whereas Chapter 1 of Genesis presents creation in a straightforward, chronological approach (note "time tags" such as "and there was evening and morning, a second day") Chapter 2 focuses on the pinnacle of God's creation—mankind—in a thematic approach. Now, read Genesis 2:4-25 straight through, aloud, in order to get an overview. Note the following progression of ideas:

- v. 4 God made the earth and sky—but gives no more details.
- v. 5 The earth is plain and empty.
- v. 7 God made a man out of the earth's dirt.
- v. 8-14 Now God makes it all delightful—garden, trees, rivers, gems and gold!
- v. 15 God put man in charge of it all...
- v. 16-17 ...and made just one rule!
- All of this was "good, good, good, good...very good" (we saw it in Chapter One, v. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 and now we see it continued in Chapter Two, v. 9 [twice], 12, and 17). In v. 17, we catch the first ominous note of these two chapters. What is it? And then, in v. 18, God says something in his delightful creation is "not good"! What is it? What is God's solution to this omission (v. 18b)?

**Thursday**—Read Genesis 2:4-25 again today, and review your answers from yesterday. Then...

- So...you'd expect that the very next thing God would do would be to make Eve—right? No doubt that's what Adam expected too. But what did he get (v. 19-20)?
- There are about 75,000 species of vertebrate land animals and birds, and Adam named them all (v. 20)! What was his conclusion about their suitability as a helper (v. 18, 20b)? Then God created Eve (v. 21-22). Obviously, this was NOT a second attempt by God to "get it right"! Why do you think God put Adam through the process of v. 18-20?
- What did Adam think of Eve (v. 23)? How delightful do you think Eden was (v. 24-25)?
- If you had lived in the world of Genesis 1-2, what would your life be like?

**Friday**—Read Genesis 3 straight through, aloud, in order to get a "feel" for the content.

- Then, recall to mind the "feel" of Genesis Chapters 1 and 2. Now "connect the dots", matching the "feel" of following movie soundtracks to the appropriate chapters of Genesis
- An idyllic paradise (which never had to end!). An intruder—a vicious predator—enters. Harmony, beauty, goodness, peace and life—destroyed in an instant! How very sad.
- What resulted from Adam's and Eve's sin?
  - v. 16
  - v. 17-19
  - v. 24



*The soundtrack from "Bambi" ●*

*● Genesis 1 & 2*

*The soundtrack from "Jaws" ●*

*● Genesis 3*

*Since "the punishment should fit the crime",  
did God "blow it" and "over react"?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

*(Careful—you may want to use pencil!)*

- Wasn't it "just a piece of fruit"?! Turn to Psalm 145:17 and fill in the following blanks:  
"The Lord is \_\_\_\_\_ in all his ways, and \_\_\_\_\_ in all his deeds."

**Saturday**—Read Genesis 3 again today, and review your answers from yesterday. Then...

- Hmm. Something bigger, more significant, must be going on here. Maybe Adam and Eve weren't as innocent or helpless as the unsuspecting swimmer in "Jaws"! According to Genesis 3:1, what spoke to Eve?
- According to Genesis 1:28, Adam and Eve were to "fill the earth and \_\_\_\_\_ it and \_\_\_\_\_ over...every living creature that moves on the ground." That includes snakes! Even (Satan-indwelt) lying snakes! God gave Adam and Eve the responsibility to "cultivate and keep" a trouble-free garden and the freedom to eat from every tree except one (Genesis 2:15-17)! They had Paradise, fellowship with God—and just one rule.
- It wasn't an issue of "this fruit not that"—it was treason against a good, loving, Father-God. They weren't hungry—they were rebellious. There weren't thousands of rules—just one. The consequences weren't vague—"if you eat from it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17).
- Often we call our sin "mistakes" or "little white lies". They are not. They are rebellion and treason against a loving Heavenly Father. And "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). How do you view your sin? .