

3 Fruitfulness on the frontline

4/10/20

Making Good Work

Pray

We are reading Fruitfulness on the Frontline together
And discussing it in our home groups
And today's sermon is about **the second M = Making Good Work**

I have 4 points I would like to make

I When we work we are reflecting God's image

Please turn with me to **Genesis 1.27, 28** which you will find on page 4

**So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.**

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'

Humankind is given a job to do

'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.

And then in **Genesis 2.15**

there is an elaboration of what rule over the earth means

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

I usually summarise it like this

The Psalmist writes in Psalm 24 "The Earth is the Lords and everything in it"
And that is true the earth belongs to God
But he entrusts us to care for it – if you like we are **"Earth's Caretakers"**
And we work for God

So in **Genesis 1 and 2**

God worked for 6 days - and when we work we are like God
And God is immensely Creative – and when we are creative we are like God

I When we work we are reflecting God's image

2 Our work brings Glory to God

And this comes in **Matthew 5.14-16**

So please turn with me to page 969

¹⁴ 'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

We the people of God in Hungerford - Are to let our light shine in the town
So that they **see our good deeds and Glorify God**

And it seems to me there are two ways in which we do this

I When we work we Co-Operate with God

And this is probably best illustrated by gardening

You may have heard me say this before

"A cockney gardener was showing a vicar the beauty of his garden, with his herbaceous borders in full bloom. Duly impressed the vicar broke out into spontaneous praise of God. The gardener was not very pleased however that God should get all of the credit. So he said "you should have seen this here garden when God had it all to himself!"... And he was right. Without a human caretaker every garden quickly degenerates into a wilderness.

When we work we Co-Operate with God

2 We bring Glory to God when we see the big picture

We all know what it is like when we have too much work on

And we cannot see the wood for the trees

And many of us have discovered the huge benefit of standing back

And considering the big picture

Quote Issues facing Christians today - page 162

We bring Glory to God when we see the big picture

And one of the purposes of canal work parties or tree planting or litter picking
Is so that the town **see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**

2 Our work brings Glory to God

3 Our work gives us fulfilment

And a well known example of this is in the film **Chariots of Fire**
In which Eric Liddell says “When I run I feel God’s pleasure”

Or for me one of the things which gives me greatest fulfilment

Are the people from our congregations - who have been licensed as LLM’s
and wear a blue scarf like Mike Morecroft and Alison
and those who have been ordained priest
I love nothing more than I have been part of equipping others to serve God

And so each of us needs to know ourselves well
Are we extravert or introvert?
Are we ordered or are we creative?
Are we thinkers or feelers?
Do we like decisions or do we like things open ended?

And we need to know our gifts
Are we **Apostles** who start new things?
Prophets who hear Gods heartbeat?
Evangelists who are like midwives bringing others to new birth?
Pastors who care for others?
OR **Teachers** who equip Gods people for works of service?

Or another way of thinking about this is –and that is
What makes you come alive?
And then go and do that

The point is –
When we do what God has equipped us to do then we feel fulfilled

3 Our work gives us fulfilment

4 When we work we serve the community

And there is a great illustration of this in the book
Quote fruitfulness on the frontline page 84
So for example, God wants people fed.
But what does it take to feed people in a modern economy?
You need farmers to do a good job, to have good seed, good fertilizers, reliable
tools and good storage facilities.
You need good distribution systems to get the produce to processing and
packaging facilities, good drivers to transport it to good shops, good people to
shelve it and sell it, good marketers to alert people to the benefits of the
products and good cooks to prepare it.
In sum, apart from providing the rain and the sunshine, God needs a lot of people
to do a lot of work in order to achieve the goal of getting people fed.

and this is true of the church as well
we serve the community
when we run a toddlers group or Sunday school or youth group
we serve the community through coffee corner or the parish lunch
we serve the community in our work parties on the canal or tree planting

and I guess the question for each of us is
What are we doing to serve the community?

For those in paid employment it is an easy question
Your paid employment is how you serve the community

But for those who are retired it is a bit harder
and we would love to invite you to join us
in running ABC or Sunday school of the youth group or coffee corner etc

4 When we work we serve the community

So let’s pray
That each of us finds the role which is fulfilling
And serve the community
And brings glory to God