

WHAT'S THE POINT OF THE 9 TO 5?



**BECAUSE OF  
JESUS...**





## BECAUSE OF JESUS...



### WHAT'S INSIDE

Jesus changes how we work. These studies explore a chapter in William Taylor's very helpful book, *Revolutionary Work*. We highly recommend reading *Revolutionary Work* to gain a biblical perspective of your work. It is brief, eminently readable, and extremely helpful book.

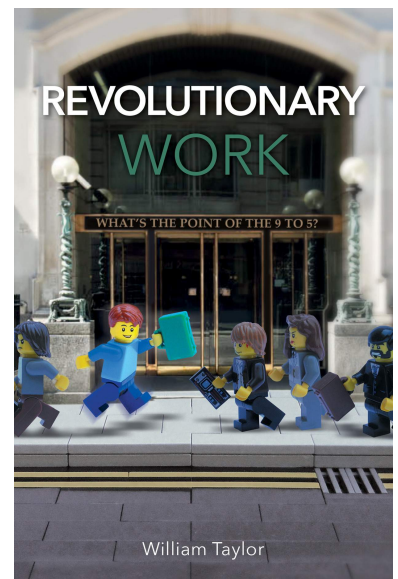
### STUDIES

We have a new boss

We have a new goal

We have a new reward

We have a greater work



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### HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES



These studies are short modules to help workers think more deeply about different areas of your workplace witness. They are designed to be used in Evangelistic Prayer Teams (EPTs), but can also be used in any small group setting.

# BECAUSE OF JESUS

## - WE HAVE A NEW BOSS

# 1

**Who has been your best boss?  
What made them great?**

### BIG IDEA

Being a Christian means we have a new boss – king Jesus! We now work in service to him, and so work wholeheartedly for our earthly boss.

### From the Bible

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. <sup>6</sup> Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. <sup>7</sup> Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, <sup>8</sup> because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

<sup>9</sup> And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with him.

**Ephesians 6:5-9**

What does this passage have to say to workers?

## Key Truths

1. While an employee is not the same as a slave, we are nonetheless under authority as we work.
2. Christians have a new boss, king Jesus! As we work under our current boss, we must never forget that they rank under Jesus.
3. But, “You’re not the boss of me!” is not our new motto. Instead understanding our place as under authority as we seek to serve Jesus, means we sincerely serve our bosses as we would Christ.
4. Having Jesus as our boss increases our responsibility to work well. We should work with our hearts engaged.

## Application

Australian workplaces can often be cynical of people in authority – though occasionally people revere those in authority. Across our careers we will have good bosses, bad bosses, and maybe even meet some absolute tyrants – but each one of them will be a flawed person – just as we are. As a result often Australian workers can be motivated to work well by fear, or by desire for promotion – rather than from a desire to do good work.

If we are motivated by fear we will do as much as we can to avoid the sack, but we may slack off when the boss turns their back.

If we are motivated by advancement, we will work until we’ve “made it” and then seek to back off, or else we’ll be embittered as we get overlooked, or we discover what we have worked so hard for is really not any better.

What difference does it make to you knowing that you are working for Jesus and not just your boss?

## Prayer

Pray you would work this week with the service of Jesus in the front of your mind.

Pray as you serve Jesus, that you would have opportunities to take the next step relationally to help your colleagues come to know Jesus.

# BECAUSE OF JESUS - WE HAVE A NEW GOAL

# 2

**What do you think are your colleagues' goal for their work?**

## **BIG IDEA**

Being a Christian means we have a new goal – to do the will of God from our hearts!

## From the Bible

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. <sup>6</sup> Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. <sup>7</sup> Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, <sup>8</sup> because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

<sup>9</sup> And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with him.

**Ephesians 6:5-9**

(Optional) How should we live as workers?

## Key Truths

1. If Jesus is our new boss, then doing God's will is our new goal. What is God's will? That we would serve in our workplace wholeheartedly.
2. This drives us to be better workers as we work, not only for our earthly boss' favour, or out of fear, but we now work for Jesus – seeking to do God's will. (and that's a tall order!)
3. Doing the will of God has far ranging implications to how we work. We have a new motivation to work with integrity, accountability, and service to others.

## Application

Think through the difference working to do the will of God with all our hearts will make. It will no longer be enough to work through our to do lists, we are driven to accomplish our tasks while also showing kindness to our colleagues. It won't be enough to speak up and carry the day in a meeting if our language or our humour dishonours Christ. It will be a travesty to be well liked in the office, but also known to betray confidence or engage in gossip.

Unfortunately, we know we've all slipped up at some point. But the good news is when we slip up, it is the perfect opportunity to demonstrate kingdom virtues! How often have you witnessed someone owning their mistake and sincerely apologising? It's rare in our culture and can be a good way of demonstrating the humility we can have when Jesus is our boss and we have God's will as our goal.

Is there anything you need to humbly apologise for? How might you do that?

(Optional) *Sometimes we might be asked to do something by a boss that would upset our ultimate boss – Jesus. What should we do in those instances to honour our earthly master and our heavenly boss?*

## Prayer

Pray you would have the insight to discern how you can work to serve your colleagues and company wholeheartedly as if serving Jesus himself.

Pray that you would go deeper in your relationship and love for your colleagues so you can serve them wholeheartedly. What is the next step with your colleagues?



# BECAUSE OF JESUS

## - WE HAVE A NEW REWARD

# 3

**Why do you work? What do you aim to get out of work?**

### **BIG IDEA**

Being a Christian means we hope for a new reward – the pleasure of our God.

### From the Bible

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, <sup>8</sup> because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

<sup>9</sup> And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with him.

**Ephesians 6:7-9**

You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. <sup>35</sup> So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

**Hebrews 10:34-35**

### Key Truths:

1. We serve the Lord, not people, because we look to the reward he will give to his people.
2. Hebrews is clear, our reward is better and more lasting than anything our jobs could give us – our reward is so great we can joyfully accept the confiscation of our property!
3. What is our reward? It is the coming kingdom of Jesus. What a wonderful day it will be to see the radiant face of King Jesus finally crowned over all!

## Application

“Well done, good and faithful servant” Imagine hearing those words in your ears as you stand before Jesus. The hope of the reward that will be ours when Jesus returns changes how we work. If our goal is the pleasure of God, we can work – irrespective of the conditions – with our eyes on the joy that will be ours when Christ returns. We can endure the worst job, the harshest boss, because we know Jesus is coming. And hope is attractive in our world.

How does our hope for a future reward change how we work when things are going well?

## Prayer

Pray for each other that our eyes will be on the reward we will receive when Jesus returns.

Pray for the next relational step for your colleagues to come to know Jesus.



# BECAUSE OF JESUS

## - WE HAVE A GREATER WORK

# 4

Alpha International Chairman, Ken Costa, has said "our prime task at work is not to be evangelists. That is not what we are employed to do."<sup>1</sup>

Compare to Neil Hudson, "...what if, for the Christian, ...the primary calling is not in regard to employment but to Christ? Our primary vocation is to be a disciple, an agent of the kingdom."<sup>2</sup>

**To what extent do you agree or disagree?**

### BIG IDEA

Being a Christian means that we have a greater work to do – to bring in the harvest that God is developing.

### From the Bible

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no-one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"<sup>28</sup> Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,<sup>29</sup> "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"<sup>30</sup> They came out of the town and made their way towards him.

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something." <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." <sup>33</sup> Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" <sup>34</sup> "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

**John 4:27-34**

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

What is the work of the Lord?

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Costa, God at Work, p34

<sup>2</sup> Neil Hudson, Imagine Church

## Key Truths:

1. Compare the concerns of the disciples and of the woman. The disciples are worried about food. The woman is eager to tell everyone in her town about Jesus.
2. Jesus' concerns are focused on the work of his Father.
3. We, like the woman, should give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord.

## Application

Of course we aren't paid to evangelise, nor are we paid to love people, to care for them when they're hurting or sick, to befriend people at work, to advocate for better conditions or on behalf of a charity. But as Christians, how can we not?

William Taylor says that for the Christian "work should be governed by the gospel. We now have a new master at work, a new goal in work, and a new reward as we work for the Lord Jesus in our workplace. What matters now is not so much what we do but who we are and who we are serving. Furthermore, wherever God has placed us... we have seen there's a greater work going on. The work of the Lord Jesus is to bring in his harvest and, wherever we are, he has given us a privileged part in his great eternal work."<sup>3</sup>

To what extent should the mission of Jesus impact what we do in the workplace?

Evangelism can be costly. It costs time, energy, even money (and perhaps courage!) to develop relationships and seek to help people meet Jesus in the pages of the Bible. What do you think stops you from sharing Jesus more with your work colleagues?

## Prayer

Pray you would give yourself fully to the work of the Lord.

Pray for opportunities this week with your colleagues to take the next step towards meeting Jesus.

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<sup>3</sup> Revolutionary Work, p80-81