

UNDERSTANDING THE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

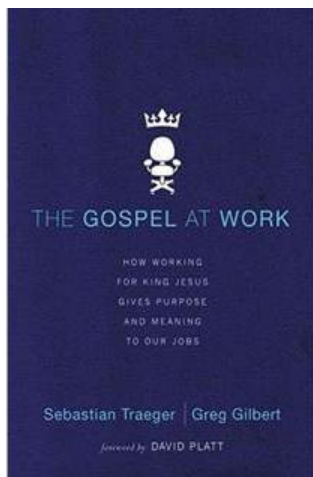




UNDERSTANDING THE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

WHAT'S INSIDE

The Christian life is never simple, and in contemporary society even more so. Our lives are now lived in several different contexts: work, home, school, sport, etc. How should we live as a Christian in each of those contexts? This study concentrates on the work place and draws upon a very helpful chapter in Sebastian Traeger & Greg Gilbert's book, *The Gospel at Work*. Please do read their book to gain some good insights into how the gospel changes how and why we 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.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

**Is it possible to achieve a work/life balance?
How do people in your workplace try to achieve it?**

BIG IDEA

Do not be idle, instead pursue faithfulness to God, then seek fruitfulness, but beware of idolatry.¹

From the Bible

...we urge you brothers and sisters, to do so more and more,¹¹ and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: you should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you,¹² so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

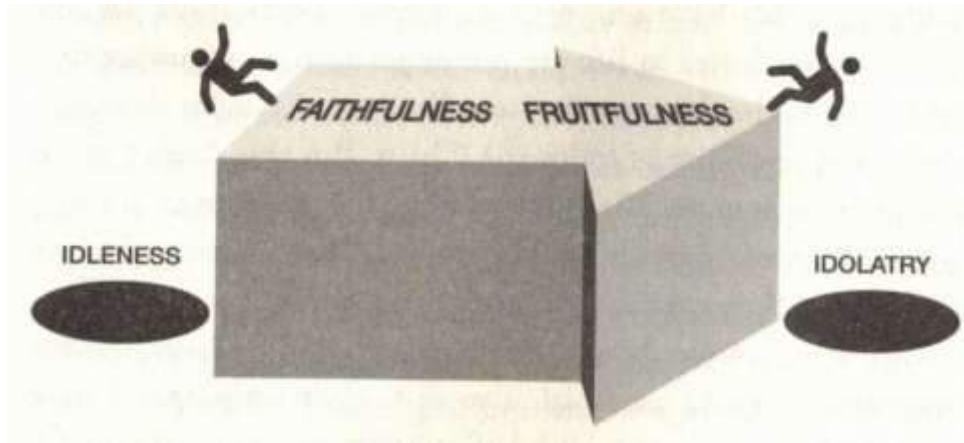
1 Thessalonians 4:10b-12

Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.

Proverbs 23:4

What does God require of us in the workplace?

¹ This concept is from Sebastian Traeger and Greg Gilbert's book, *The Gospel at Work*



Idleness Faithfulness Fruitfulness Idolatry

1. As we seek to live as Christians, there is a bare minimum required of us by God– this is faithfulness. If we fail to meet this bare minimum, we are idle.
2. When we start performing above and beyond being faithful, we can start to bear fruit. In the workplace this is the difference between doing what's required of you, and really performing.
3. When we start devoting ourselves to our workplace – beyond being fruitful – we are in danger of falling into idolatry.
4. Idolatry is where you are mastered by your work instead of serving the Lord and others.

Key Truths

1. For the Christian in the workplace, living as a Christian means living faithfully, and perhaps pushing forward to being fruitful.
2. The minimum threshold for the Christian worker is to work so as to provide for yourself, to care for your family, and to share with others. Further, being faithful at work is doing your job.
3. With extra energy, time, and attention paid to your job you can start to see fruit. But when this extra starts encroaching on other areas of responsibility, you are in danger of idolatry.

Application

Is sharing Jesus with our work colleagues a part of being faithful, or is it what happens when you push into fruitfulness?

There's no one size fits all when it comes to working out our work/life balance as a Christian. We have different capacities. It is essential to be faithful, great to be fruitful, but sinful to be idolatrous (or idle). The reality is we can't be fruitful in all

areas of life, we need to choose where we can be happy with being faithful, and where we can push into fruitfulness. In some stages of our lives, being faithful may be all we can achieve.

So here are some hints from Sebastian Traeger and Greg Gilbert's book, *The Gospel at Work*:

1. Determine what it means to be faithful in all your areas of responsibility
2. Evaluate yourself against what it means to be faithful
3. Repent of sin
4. Consider where you might be able to press forward into fruitfulness

How might living faithfully (if not fruitfully) in the workplace help you as you seek to share Jesus?

What might it look like to be fruitful in your workplace?

Could there be a situation where there is conflict between being faithful to God and faithful to your boss?

Prayer

Pray you would be able to discern where you might be in danger of idleness, and where you might be in danger of idolatry in your life.

Pray that living faithfully at work would result in a good testimony before your colleagues.