

Excellence –Bearing the Image of God

We as Christians need to set ourselves apart in the workplace because God expects more out of us. He expects excellence. To be excellent you must be intentional. The pursuit of excellence is far more than being highly skilled.

- Genesis 1 :26-28 defines man’s unique relation to creation
- Man bear’s the image of God
- His relationship is above all creation
- Man would oversee the operation of the earth and be productive for God’s purposes (As an image bearer of God)

God’s first commandment to the man and woman he created was to exercise dominion “over the earth.” (A responsible stewardship). Work is fulfilling God’s mandate to place His image on every aspect of our culture. Work is the expenditure of energy in the service of others, one’s family and oneself.

Genesis 2:15 further defines a parallel account of creation, adding detail to certain parts of the narrative of the first chapter. Notice God’s expanded instruction: “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” This greatly modifies the force of “have dominion” and “subdue it” from Genesis 1:26-28

- **Tend** (Hebrew ‘ahad’) “means to work or serve,” and referring to the ground of the garden it can be defined as to “till or cultivate.”
- Cultivate means “to put through a finishing process,” “to foster the growth of,” or to further encourage.
- **Keep** (Hebrew ‘shamar’) means “to exercise great care over.” In the context of Genesis 2:15, it expresses God’s wish that mankind takes great care of His creation

Work was an important and dignified part of representing the image of God and serving Him even before the fall of man. Work means fulfilling your God given design to make an impact on the world around you

Spiritual maturity is a requirement in the quest for Godly character (image bearing). There can be little progress toward reaching that goal without the pursuit of excellence. **Colossians 3:17; 23-24, is summarized in the following manner;**

Colossians 3:17

- Whatever we do or say we should do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ

- We represent Christ 24/7
- Our work should represent our Lord and Savior
- The way we do our work gives Thanks to the Lord

Colossians 3:23-24

- Since creation God has given us work to do
- We do all work unto our Lord. He is our ultimate supervisor
- We should treat our work as an act of worship or service to God
- Our problems on the job should be viewed as the cost of discipleship

God is calling his people to abound or excel in both what they are (inward character) and what they do (behavior, work, good deeds). It should be obvious that there is no way that anyone could truly Love God with all his heart without seeking to do his or her best to the glory of God.

The pursuit of excellence is both a goal and a mark of Spiritual maturity. However for this to be true, the pursuit of excellence must be motivated by;

- The right values
- The right priorities
- The right motives

If not, our pursuit of excellence can quickly become a mark of immaturity and just another mans obsession with his own significance.

Excellence is pursuing and doing the best we can with the gifts and abilities God has given to us. Our daily motivation is to be intentional in glorifying God in all we do. This is quite different from the world's definition of excellence. The world's view of excellence is the state, quality, or conditions of excelling, superiority; to do better than, surpass; to show superiority; surpass others.

Excellence is giving our best at all times absent from any spirit of competition. Excellence includes doing common things in very uncommon ways regardless whether people are watching or not. It is not limited to the nature of the task (all tasks are equally important). Excellence does not mean the absence of mistakes, but it requires the presence of faith and determination. You can be highly skilled, even "superior" to your peers and never achieve Excellence. Excellence requires the presence and power of God.