

# Peninsula Bible Church Cupertino Men's Retreat, November 2023

## *Daily Grind, Higher Purpose.*

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### **Session 1**

Text: Genesis 1:26-28

Title: The Origin and Calling of Work

### **Session 2**

Text: Proverbs 8:1-3, 22-31

Title: Faith and Work from the Book of Proverbs

### **Session 3**

Text: Psalm 127:1-2

Title: How You Do Your Work and Where You Find Your Rest

### **Session 4**

Text: Revelation 2:8-11

Title: *Faithfulness* and Your Work

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#### Questions for Discussion Following Session 2:

1. A lot of people have a negative view of work as their default understanding. They consider work something they have to do, rather than something they are gifted to do, and that they are invited to do, alongside God in his created world. Prior to today, would you say that you considered your work a gift or a curse? Why?
  2. How does your faith inform your work? What would be a practical example?
  3. Look at the list of six categories of God's work in the world, which he carries on in part through our work in the world. In what ways does your work reflect the work of God in the world?
  4. What is one practical way you can engage the daily grind with a higher purpose?
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Quotes are from *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good* by Amy L. Sherman and are the original categories put forward by Robert Banks.

• Redemptive work (God's saving and reconciling actions). Humans participate in this kind of work, for example, as evangelists, pastors, counselors and peacemakers. So do writers, artists, producers, songwriters, poets and actors who incorporate redemptive elements in their stories, novels, songs, films, performances and other works.

• Creative work (God's fashioning of the physical and human world). God gives humans creativity. People in the arts (sculptors, actors, painters, musicians, poets and so on) display this, as do a wide range of craftspeople such as potters, weavers and seamstresses, as well as

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interior designers, metalworkers, carpenters, builders, fashion designers, architects, novelists and urban planners (and more).

• Providential work (God's provision for and sustaining of humans and the creation). "The work of divine providence includes all that God does to maintain the universe and human life in an orderly and beneficial fashion," Banks writes. "This includes conserving, sustaining, and replenishing, in addition to creating and redeeming the world.' Thus, innumerable individuals-bureaucrats, public utility workers, public policymakers, shopkeepers, career counselors, shipbuilders, farmers, firemen, repairmen, printers, transport workers, IT specialists, entrepreneurs, bankers and brokers, meteorologists, research technicians, civil servants, business school professors, mechanics, engineers, building inspectors, machinists, statisticians, plumbers, welders, janitors-and all who help keep the economic and political order working smoothly-reflect this aspect of God's labor.

• Justice work (God's maintenance of justice). Judges, lawyers, paralegals, government regulators, legal secretaries, city managers, prison wardens and guards, policy researchers and advocates, law professors, diplomats, supervisors, administrators and law enforcement personnel participate in God's work of maintaining justice.

• Compassionate work (God's involvement in comforting, healing, guiding and shepherding). Doctors, nurses, paramedics, psychologists, therapists, social workers, pharmacists, community workers, nonprofit directors, emergency medical technicians, counselors and welfare agents all reflect this aspect of God's labor.

• Revelatory work (God's work to enlighten with truth). Preachers, scientists, educators, journalists, scholars and writers are all involved in this sort of work.

She concludes by saying, "In all these various ways, God the Father continues his creative, sustaining and redeeming work through our human labor. This gives our work great dignity and purpose. Vocational stewardship starts with celebrating the work itself and recognizing that God cares about it and is accomplishing his purposes through it."