Stewards by God's Design: The Three R's of the Christian Steward

Relationships – Responsibilities - Resources

Robert Kolb writes that when we talk about work there are several things we need to keep in mind. "First, all economic activity falls under God's control and is designed by God to meet human needs. The use of economic responsibility in a defensive, selfish, self-serving way disrupts human life and brings judgment. Second, all economic activity should be conducted for the welfare of all affected, employers and employees, and also of consumers and those from whom the raw materials for production are received—even if they live half the globe away."

Kolb continues, "Believers will work within either labor or management and their institutional forms for the good of all involved and for justice in the marketplace and the workplace." *Teaching God's Children His Teaching* page 8-6 and 8-7.

My Responsibilities at Work

When God created human beings, He gave them work to do. He directed them to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Gen 1: 28) He commissioned Adam and Eve to work the garden of Eden and keep it. (Gen 2:15) He brought the animals He created to Adam to be named by him.

Why is it important to keep Colossians 3:23-24 in mind as we go about the work we care called to do?

What attitude should we have toward work according to the following passages?

- Proverbs 16:3
- Ecclesiastes 3:12-13
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Colossians 3:17

How does 1 Corinthians 16:14 apply to work?

In *Luther's Small Catechism* "Table of Duties," Martin Luther gives two Bible passages relating to work. Why do you suppose he chose these two?

- Ephesians 6:5-8
- Ephesians 6:9

What is to be the result of work?

- Hebrews 6:10
- Matthew 11:28
- 1 Corinthians 15:58
- 2 Timothy 2:6

"Genesis tells us God created us to work this earth and to live in harmony with it. But with the Fall came a distortion in our vision of this work. We came to see it as burdensome…We also forget that it all belongs to God. We forgot that in the final analysis there is no such thing as human or private property (Psalm 23:1). Not merely the tithe belongs to God—it all does. We are stewards of God's property, and this must necessarily change entirely our view of work. We are God's servants, God's employees, God's workers…There would be no life without work, and no work without life." *Work*, Ben Witherington III. Page 20-21.

- What is the significance of John 9:4?
- How does knowing that God owns it all change our view of work?
- What are some ways that work is burdensome and hard?
- How is the Christian steward to respond when work is burdensome and hard?
- How is the Christian's view of work different from the culture's view?

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