

## What Makes Work Worthy?



<http://centerforfaithandwork.com/article/what-makes-work-worthy>

via [Institute for Faith, Work & Economics](#)

Lots of Christians in the workplace wonder if their work really matters to God. To them, as far as God's kingdom priorities are concerned, they believe their work at the office or plant or school is meaningful to God (at least they hope it's meaningful to Him) because it serves as a platform for evangelism.

While evangelism is part of our responsibility as Christians in the workplace, it is not what makes our work valuable to God. If the work we do is not valuable and honoring to God in and of itself, adding an evangelistic motive does not make it a worthy pursuit.

Austin Burkhart's article entitled "Is Tent-Making Enough to Create Real, Christ-Honoring Value for the Community?" takes a look at the idea of "tent-making" from a biblical perspective and was published by our friends at [The Institute for Faith Work and Economics](#).

The other day, I talked to someone who explained their friend's career by saying that, "She's going to China to be a tent-maker and teach at a school."

By "tent-maker," she was referring to Paul's career as he traveled while preaching the gospel.

While Paul and his companions shared the good news, he says in [1 Thessalonians 2:9](#) that they "Worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to [anyone], while we proclaimed the gospel of God."

Too often, our modern interpretation says that Paul earns money by making tents for the sole purpose supporting his real ministry of witnessing to Christ.

**This view is too narrow, because it doesn't see that the tent-making itself creates real, Christ-honoring value for the community.**

Christians outside of vocational ministry too often feel that they need to clarify or justify their purpose, as if to say, “My work isn’t spiritual, so to prove that I’m a ‘Christian’ I need to make clear that my real mission is to preach the gospel.”

Should we view teaching students (or any job) as simply a means to proselytize those who don’t know Christ?

As if educating the next generation wasn’t a mission worthy of this girl’s life. As if pouring out her time and talents to help some of the poorest children in the world wouldn’t honor Jesus enough to qualify a ‘life well spent.’

**Instead, let us bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus in our entire lives.**

A passionate schoolteacher in rural China (or America for that matter) can do that just fine.

So can a pastor in Mississippi.

And a construction worker in Manhattan.

And a boss in San Francisco.

If Paul had not been a preacher and apostle, he would still have been a witness to Christ simply by the way he engaged in making tents, toiling for the sake of the community and working for the good of others around him.

Paul never says that everyone should follow his example of preaching.

But he does say everyone should follow his example of working to help the weak and being generous in giving, as Jesus himself taught.

The goal of the Christian life is not to work hard enough and make enough money so that we can support a church or missionary with our free time.

The goal of the Christian life is to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus. To serve our neighbors. To redeem culture. To work. And rest.

**And do whatever we do, in word or deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God.**

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Channel(s): Calling and Career, Community Impact

Media: Faith Based Media

Tags: theology of work, teacher, teaching, mission field, 1 Thessalonians, Paul

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