

Occupation and Community life: the spheres of our life that expand beyond our family and our family of families.

- Remember that we're talking about planning with regard to various pieces of what is our 'lifework'. So while we may already be practicing some of these truths, keep an open mind for how to implement any of these things that might not be incorporated yet into our lives.

Occupation (wage earning):

Why do we work?

➔ 1 Thes 4:11-12:

- 1) because we are commanded to
- 2) to provide for our own needs
- 3) to provide for the needs of others (Eph 4:28, Phil... the local community, the missional work of the gospel)
- 4) because that is the proper way to behave to those outside the church (1 Thes)

How should we work / How do we define a good work ethic? (40hrs / wk? fulfilling our job description?)

- ambitiously (Prov 10:4, Prov 12:24)
- "as to the Lord" (Col 3:17)
- with integrity (Titus 2:9)
- strategically, above and beyond (Prov 10:5, harvesting in the summer)

➔

- **goals:** to be ambitious, to excel,
- **milestone / benchmark:** benefiting your employer, blessing your employer, increasing sphere of influence at work,

Practical considerations:

For women who are not married but who wish to be, how might your work ethic today relate to your transition to the role of a married woman / mother?

- reduce the baggage of debt brought to the marriage
- perhaps even bring in a surplus
- for *women who are married, without young children at home:* same as above
- note: there is a role for women to work (bring in income) as is clear in the description of wife of noble character in Proverbs. But there we see that the wage earning work of the woman is complimentary to, not in competition with, the womanly roles (Titus 2, etc.) for which God has designed her.

Wives, how can you / do you support your husbands in their effort to carry out their jobs in the manner to which God has called them?

- by living within your means / being thrifty
- embracing their efforts as part of a 'shared' life-calling
- for mothers, by taking on the life calling in the home (giving their husband confidence in their handling of the home and children)
- by encouraging them to in their work, rooting for them
- by carrying out the 'work' at home in an enthusiastic way
- ➔ Titus 2:3-5 (notice that all the above are incorporated, and that the rationale is so that the word of God might be honored)

Husbands, how can you (or how do you) support your wives and lead your family, while probably working more than 40 hours per week?

- by being efficient with your time (not wasting time)
- by *loving* your wife and continuing to know her more deeply (I Pet 3:7, Eph 5: 25, 26) ensuring that she sees she remains important to you / by making sure you are diligent about encouraging your wife (time, discussion, etc) and protecting the time that you do have set aside to spend with your wife / by making sure that things that aren't as important as your wife don't supercede them in terms of your attention
- by being mindful of her spiritual development

goals: a family having the sense of shared mission in the husband's proper conduct in the work sphere, wife not feeling pushed to the side or unimportant, children observing the father's hard work and the mother's joy and effort in her role as a wife and mother in the family and family of families, harmony in the home...

benchmarks: our children repeating the pattern....

➔ notice how the progress of the gospel shapes this whole situation...

Community (Properly living in, and bringing the gospel to):

How do we define community?

- neighbors, fellow parents of kids who are classmates of our kids, unbelieving friends, (broadly) people we work with...

Generally, before looking at some specific Scriptures, how do you think we are to minister to the community?

- (STW is a *part* of the overall. There is a very relational quality to our engagement of the community life that should be evolving)

basic foundations:

- 1) How the world sees us *relate to each other broadly*: John 13:35,

- 2) How the world sees us *relate to our family members*: Eph 5:22-24, Titus 2:5
- ➔ our families and our churches need to be orderly and loving to set the stage...

(from this summer):

- ... Paul states in Titus 2:11-12, the reason that we are to live in the orderly way described and not according to the disorderly way which was natural to us apart from Christ. We are to order our family of families according to the pattern Paul described to Titus because it creates a *contrast* which will be evident to all who are apart from Christ. This contrast, effectively lived out, will provide us with a very potent opportunity to explain our faith to those outside the church. Essentially, the order in our families and the family of families will provide us a platform to share and explain the gospel with those who interact with us, and we should see this as a significant tool in our evangelistic effort.
- 3) How the body engages society as a whole (Rom 13:1-7, Titus 3:1-2)

Goals: be known for having strong families, be known for being a church that loves each other, be known as peaceable, respectful, law-abiding citizens...

Benchmarks: questions from outsiders about how our families stay together, ability to work things out as a body and find unity...

Col 4:2-6

- notice the need to engage the community with *wisdom*... (an eye toward the Proverbs series)
- how does this passage inform the way we engage the community?
- 1) prayer, re: Paul's ability to speak the word (practical opportunity tomorrow morning)
- 2) making the most of our opportunities (what would be examples of making or not making the most of our opportunities?)
- 3) 'speech seasoned with grace', *so that you will know how you should respond to each person*
- ➔ (from this summer) A very real aspect of this intentionality with those outside the church relates to the way we speak. Notice that this idea of being very mindful of our speech directly informs our efforts to build relationships with unbelievers. Are we having a difficult time knowing how to act around them, are we wondering how to engage them in conversation? Paul states that the reason we are to be careful to speak with grace, as though we were seasoning it with salt (making it tasteful), is that it will allow us to know how to respond to them. How do I learn how to appropriately interact with a nonbeliever? – Paul says that a key part of gaining that ability is simply to be careful to speak gracefully.

Inhibitors / Considerations: shyness, indifference, lack of inclusion as part of the 'one life' principle

Goal: know your neighbors / make relationships, share the gospel with those others, shine as representatives of Christ

Milestones / benchmarks: relationships with neighbors and others outside of the church, opportunities to share the gospel