The Day's Work
The Day with Others: Part V

Discussion Question:

1. What are your expectations of work post-graduation?

After a good time of prayer, begin your work.
Work is important because it is from God and though it is now a struggle, work is actually good. One reason is that it helps us from being lazy.

> *"Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."* (Proverbs 6:6 ESV)
>
> *"Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense."* (Proverbs 12:11 ESV)
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> *Work of the world can be done only where a person forgets himself, where he loses himself in a cause, in reality, the task, the "it." In work the Christian learns to allow himself to be limited by the task, and thus for him the work becomes a remedy against the indolence and sloth of the flesh.* (Bonhoeffer p. 70)

Work and prayer go together.

> *After a time of prayer in the morning, every day should be marked for the Christian by both prayer and work. Prayer is entitled to its time. But the bulk of the day belongs to work. And only when each receives its own specific due will it become clear that both belong inseparably together. Without the burden of labor of the day, prayer is not prayer, and without prayer work is not work.* (p. 69-70)

When work gets tough, prayer will make it better
Prayer will help us take our focus from the task itself to God. Work is not easier because of prayer, but it will remind us whom the work is ultimately for.

> *"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."* (Colossians 3:23–24 ESV)
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> *The prayer of the morning will determine the day. Wasted time, which we are ashamed of, temptations that beset us, weakness and listlessness in our work, disorder and indiscipline in our thinking and our relations with other people very frequently have their cause in neglect of the morning prayer. The organization and distribution of our time will be better for having been rooted in prayer. The temptations which the working day brings with it will be overcome by this break-through to God.* (p.71)

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> *Thus the prayer of the Christian reaches beyond its set time and extends into the heart of his work. It includes the whole day, and in doing so, it does not hinder the work; it promotes it, affirms it, and lends it meaning and joy. Thus every word, every work, every labor of the Christian becomes a prayer;* (p.71)
>
> *Decisions which our work demands will be simpler and easier when they are made, not in the fear of men, but solely in the presence of God.* (p.71)

Discussion Question:

2. Do you think work and prayer are linked?
3. Do you think prayer can make work better?

After a long day of work, pray before you sleep

Being able to reflect on God's word at the end of the day is as helpful as it is at the beginning. Concluding with prayer is an appropriate way to finish a day that began with prayer and was filled with prayer throughout.

> *When are we more ready for the prayer of blessing, peace, and preservation than the time when our own activity ceases? When we grow weary, God does His work.* (p. 74)
>
> *The evening prayer of the family fellowship should include particularly the petition of forgiveness for every wrong done to God and our brothers, for God's forgiveness and that of our brothers, and for readiness gladly to forgive any wrong done to us.* (p. 74)

Don't let the sun go down on your anger.

> *It is a decisive rule of every Christian fellowship that every dissension that the day has brought must be healed in the evening. It is perilous for the Christian to lie down to sleep with an unreconciled heart.* (p. 74)

Pray before you sleep because there we are helpless.

> *The ancients had a persistent sense of man's helplessness while sleeping, of the kinship of sleep with death, of the devil's cunning in making a man fall when he is defenseless. It is the prayer that God may dwell with us and in us even though we are unconscious of His presence, that He may keep our hearts pure and holy in spite of all the cares and temptations of the night.* (p. 75)
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> *Even in sleep we are in the hands of God or in the power of evil. Even in sleep God can perform His wonders upon us or evil bring us to destruction.* (p. 75)

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