All Your Best, All for Jesus, All the Time - Pt. 3

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Good morning. It is great to see you as it is each Lord's Day.

Let me invite you to open your Bibles once again to 2 Thessalonians chapter 3. And while you are finding that, let me just share a few things for you to know.
One, as Jeff mentioned, I'll just add my voice to what he has already shared. I just want to say just a heartfelt appreciation and gratitude that we have for all of you who helped us with Vacation Bible School last week.
We had a tremendous turnout with children who were here and so thankful they came. And for families and parents who brought them, just a tremendous group of volunteers that were here.
It was really remarkable to see how many servants were here to be a part of Vacation Bible School. It was the largest week we've ever had. Had the largest turnout, individual days we've ever seen.
[1:11] And that can't happen without great servants and teachers and leaders and volunteers. So from all of you who served as staff overseeing that, those who had key roles in organization, those who taught, those who came and volunteered your time, those who decorated, those who prepared things even beforehand.

And I know not everybody can be here physically during the week, but for many of you who prayed for VBS, thank you for that. Also, every week as you give, you're supporting the ministries of our church.
VBS is free. We don't charge anyone to come, but there's a bit of expense to it for sure. And we're able to do that because you give. And so even if you weren't physically here, as you faithfully just give to the Lord through this local church, you have a hand in helping us do things like VBS.
And so I just want to say how much I appreciate that. We had so many adults who were here serving and also just a huge group of teenagers that were here serving.
On Thursday, there were all these youth in our youth cafe, and Joy was feeding them pizza. And I said, what is this about? What are you doing? And he said, well, we're feeding pizza to all those who are helping with VBS.
[2:31] I said, well, who are the rest of the kids who are here? He said, these all helped with VBS. There was like 90 of them. It was just amazing. And that's important because we believe and work hard to ensure that we don't see our youth ministry as a church within a church.

Our students are a part of the church. And them being here to serve and volunteer during things like VBS is a big part of that. And so I really appreciate them and all the adults who were a part of that.
Let me also let you know, you've seen the last couple of Sundays in the back of your sermon notes, some information about an upcoming trip to Israel next March, March 12th to 21st, 2026.
We're going to have an interest meeting on June 29th at 4 o'clock for those of you who are interested in that. Some of you already signed up to go.
That's great. You're welcome to come to that meeting. You don't have to. You're welcome to come. But for others who are just thinking about it, want to know more about it, wondering what are the sites we're going to see, the itinerary, the cost, what does that trip look like?
[3:39] If you are curious and want to learn more about that trip, the interest meeting is June 29th at 4. And we would love to invite you to come and be a part of that.

We had people, more people already signed up this past week too. You can go and sign up now. But if you want to come to the interest meeting and learn more about it, we invite you to do that as well.

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And then last thing I want to share with you is that for many years in the summer, we did one Sunday school hour and one combined worship service.
We did that for a long time in the summer and we loved being all together. We outgrew being able to do that. And so last year, our original plan was to do it just for the month of July.
But when June came, our summer attendance did not let down any, which was wonderful. So we had to pivot away from that.
[4:35] And so we've simply outgrown being able to be in one service for the summer or even for the month of July. However, we are going to have one service one time this summer.

It's going to come up on Sunday, July the 6th. We'll have no Sunday school that day. One service at 10. That's not an invitation to go to the lake and skip church.
It is an awareness that that's what some do. And so because the holidays on Friday the 4th, we anticipate we'll have a bunch of extra chairs out.
We'll be full, but we anticipate we can do one service that Sunday. So July the 6th, one service, 10 a.m. We'll look forward to being all together.
We've loved doing that for so many years. And we're grateful the Lord has added to our church and brought more people to us. We just simply cannot do that space-wise. But on that one Sunday, we believe we can make that work.
[5:39] July the 6th, one service, 10 o'clock. It'll be a special day. It's always fun. We're able to all be together. So make note of that. Both services will be in here together at 10 o'clock on that day.

Well, we return to 2 Thessalonians chapter 3. Lord willing, we'll finish our study through this letter next Sunday as we look at verses 16 to 18.
But for today, we return again for a third week looking at this passage in verses 6 to 15 around the theme of all your best, all for Jesus, all the time.
And we're looking at what the Bible says about how a Christian works, how our work ethic should magnify Christ and should be worthy of the gospel.
And so as we look at this, let's start by just reviewing what we've already observed from this passage. And then we will build upon it as we keep going today.
[6:43] The first thing we saw from this passage, number one, is that we are to avoid the one who is lazy. Verse 6, now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

We avoid the one who is lazy. And there's a reason for that. And we'll pick up more into that as we go through this. But this is how important this idea is.
This is something that's not talked a lot about. And I think it's important for churches and for families to understand and to pass on a Christ-honoring work ethic.
So much so, Scripture says, avoid the one who is lazy. Second was this lesson that we do not look for handouts. Verse 7, for you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it.
But with toil and labor, we worked night and day. The third thing we learned is that we are to strive to not be a burden to others.
[8:04] That comes from the end of verse 8. With toil and labor, we worked night and day that we might not be a burden to any of you.

Fourth, we learned that we are to let our work ethic be worthy of imitation. Verse 9, it was not because we do not have the right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.
Let your work ethic be worthy of imitation. Let's pick up on that now in verse 10, and we learn a fifth lesson, and that is that you have an obligation to provide for your family.
You have an obligation to provide for your family. Verse 10, The Bible's instruction is that we are to work to provide for our families.
That we are to strive to be responsible and to take care of those that the Lord has given to our care. 1 Timothy 5.8 says, It's a very strong language here.
[9:41] That if someone is able to provide for their household, 1 Timothy 5.8 says, He's actually denied the faith. Which is an interesting thing because that verse doesn't mention inerrancy, or the virgin birth, or the deity of Christ, or security of the believer.

How have you denied the faith? Well, you've denied the faith by living in a way that's contradictory to the gospel. We live in a time where so many people are comfortable being lazy and not fulfilling

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their responsibilities, and then expect others to come and to fix it for them.
We live in a day where people are very comfortable not being responsible, and then want to blame other people and say that it's your job to come and take care of this for me.
The scripture says that if you're not faithful to provide for your household when you're able to, that you shouldn't even eat. Because that kind of living and that kind of thinking is contrary to the very faith that we possess.
So we have a responsibility to provide for our family. I think about a high school student who has a class, and during class doesn't pay attention, doesn't turn in assignments, doesn't study for their tests.
[11:31] And the week of final exams rolls around, and they look at their grade, and they have an F, and realize, I'm going to flunk this class. If I flunk this class, I'm going to have to take it again. If I take it again, I'm going to get in trouble for my parents, and I may not be eligible to play on the ball team next semester.

And that student goes to the teacher and says, hey, I'm flunking this course. What can I do to pass the course? And the teacher says, here's what you can do.
Show up to class. Pay attention. Take notes. Turn your assignments in on time. Study for your test. You'll pass the course. And the student says, well, I have an F, and I can't raise it to pass it. You've got to give me some extra credit. What can I do to pass it now? And the teacher says, there's nothing you can do now. You've had 17 weeks to take care of it.
There's nothing you can do. And that student, at least many times, gets mad at who? The teacher. The teacher won't give me extra credit.
[12:41] The teacher won't help me out. Well, the teacher was there every single day teaching. The teacher is there every single day providing opportunities for you to learn.

It's not the teacher's fault. It's not the teacher's fault you didn't turn your homework in. It's not the teacher's fault you blew off the midterm.
It's not the teacher's fault that you stayed up late playing games instead of doing your homework. And now you get you into the class, and that student wants to blame the teacher or blame the school or blame their friend or they'll keep working until they find someone to blame.
That's how the world does it. It's not how our high school students do what I trust. You should be different than that, better than that, but that's what the world does. But that kind of thinking is antithetical to the gospel.
To be lazy and negligent and then blame someone else is not the way a Christian lives.
[13:59] We're to provide for ourselves, provide for our household. We're not to be lazy, shirking our responsibilities and then waiting for someone else to come and clean it up for us.

Because the reality of it is everybody wants the fruit of hard work. Everybody does. Everybody wants to enjoy the fruit of sacrifice and diligence, but not everyone is willing to faithfully pay the price for that.
Let's apply that within the church context. Everybody wants to be a part of a friendly church. Nobody wants to go to a church where people are mean and cold and unfriendly.
Everybody wants to be a part of a friendly church, but that's only true if we individually pay the price and are kind.
Everybody wants to go to a praying church. Everybody wants to go to a church where you see the power of God made clear through answered prayer, but for that to be true, you've got to be willing to take responsibility to pray.
[15:18] Everybody wants to go to an evangelistic church and see people being saved and baptized. Everybody wants that. But for that to be true, you've got to be willing to do the work of sharing the gospel.

And so when our text says in verse 10 that if you're not willing to work, you don't deserve to eat, the idea is that those who are able to have the responsibility to provide for them to have what they long to enjoy.
That we're to be faithful to do what we are supposed to do. That we don't sit back and neglect our responsibility and then just wait and look at other people and say, when are you going to come fix this for me?
That's not the way the believers are to live. There's a sixth thing we learn from this passage. It's a bit of a summary of what we've already seen and that is that we are to teach people to be faithful

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workers.
We are to teach people to be faithful workers. Verse 11, for we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busy bodies.
[16:41] Remember the context. We looked at this the last couple of weeks that part of what's going on in this church that Paul writes to, he had established the church, taught the church, Paul and his missionary friends have left, the church continues on, but part of what has happened is there are some, it appears, who have been thinking about the return of Christ and the last things that are to take place, which is good, but the problem was they wrongly concluded that because Christ is coming again and because this earth is going to be judged and because our time on this earth is short, they wrongly concluded that they didn't need to be responsible.

They didn't have to be faithful. They didn't have to provide for their families. They didn't have to serve in the church and do what scriptures called them to do because, I mean, after all, life is short and Jesus is coming again and so they wrongly concluded they didn't need to be responsible.
Paul is, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, combating that wrong belief head on and says that's exactly backwards.
That when you think about eternity, that's not a license to be lazy, that's a call to urgency. That's a call to make the most out of your day and the time that you've been given.
He says some of you are walking in idleness. To walk in idleness as we've looked at means to not be where you're supposed to be.
[18:18] The Christian life is all about being where you're supposed to be. Being faithful. Moms and dads, you're raising kids at home.

Be where you're supposed to be. Be dependable. Be counted on. Show up where you're supposed to be.
Let your sons and daughters know that while you're imperfect and you still make mistakes, that they can know that you're going to be faithful to be where you're supposed to be.
And most of your life as a parent is going to be very, very normal days. There's a few days that are different.
A big birthday, turning 16, graduation. There's a few days that are special and you put your heart and soul into it, but most of your days as a mom and dad are going to be very routine.
[19:28] Don't be idle. Be faithful. Same thing is true in ministry. We've got hundreds of people in our church that teach one way or another.

And if you're a Sunday school teacher, the lesson you just taught last hour, the people that were in your class are not likely going to remember the points you made six weeks from now.
that may not remember them six days from now. That may not be able to tell you what you taught by lunch. So, should we just wing it?
Does it mean it's unimportant? important? I mean, if they're not going to memorize it and be able to have instant recall of it, if they may not even remember the points you made in a few days, should we just blow it off and pretend that it's no big deal?
If you ever think like that, return to 2 Thessalonians 3 where it's the very mindset Paul is addressing. because as you taught your class last hour, you were strengthening them.
[20:51] You were informing their minds. You were confronting their wills. You were strengthening their faith. You were informing their knowledge.

You were connecting with them, serving them, loving them, helping them. And it's not a question of will they remember every word you said.
It's the result of the benefit they get from you having poured into their life. That's where spiritual growth takes place. It's just day after day and week after week of being faithful to do what God's people should do.
I don't remember many lessons I learned in Sunday school. I can't take you back to specific lessons and specific teachers and specific things I was taught.
What I can tell you is my family had me in church every single Sunday with faithful men and women who taught me and trained me and equipped me.
[21:56] And while I can't remember the individual pieces and parts of that, it shaped me and it formed me and it helped my mind and my heart to know and love the truth and if any of those teachers think that because I can't recite to them a specific lesson they taught, therefore the work they do would be unimportant, that would be to completely miss the calling.

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You keep showing up. The opposite of idleness is being dependable to be where you're supposed to be. So don't ever look at your class and think it's a small class, it's not important, it's the same people every week, it's not that big of a deal, they're graduating out of our class in August anyway, it's not that big of a deal.
Listen, every time you're faithful and dependable and sowing seeds of truth in the hearts and minds of people, you're doing spiritual work that produces fruit.
You may not always see it and the ones you're teaching may not always recognize it, but it's the faithful, daily, consistent work of showing up where you're supposed to be that ends up paying dividends the rest of your life.
And notice still in verse 11, some of you are walking in idleness so you're not showing up where you're supposed to be, you're not busy at work but busy bodies.
[23:37] Not busy at work but busy bodies. You've seen this. Our church is so, we're so blessed, I'm so thankful.

Our church for years has enjoyed such a sweet unity and I'm so grateful for it. but some of you come from churches where there is lots of gossip and lots of dissension.
I'll tell you why that happens. When you have people who are serving, their hearts and minds and calendars are too full of good things to do to make time for gossip and slander.
You don't have time for it. But if you go to a church where people just stand on the sidelines, they don't serve, they're not laboring for the Lord, they just watch and criticize, they've got all the time in the world to gossip and criticize.
And Paul addresses that and says, there's a lot of you, you're not busy at work, you're not doing what you've been called by King Jesus to do, you're just busy bodies. You're not busy being faithful, you're not busy being dependable, you're just running from house to house and phone to phone and text to text and conversation to conversation to criticize and to ridicule.
[25:08] You don't know all the truth, you don't know all the story, you just know a part of it, you fill in the blanks with what made it kind of more juicy and interesting and now you're running and telling that and so you're busy bodies, you're not busy doing work, you're just busy stirring up dissension and the difference is the one who is faithful doesn't have time for that.

But the ones who stand on the sidelines have all the time in the world for that. And Paul addresses that head on.
Some of you, he says, are walking in idleness you're not showing up where you're supposed to be. You're not doing what you're supposed to be doing.
You're busy but you're busy in gossip not busy in ministry. I remember as a little kid playing little league basketball and my dad was my coach and I would run around and you know putting out all kinds of energy but not always where I was supposed to be and jumping and diving and falling and all this kind of stuff and I remember my dad telling me one time that you know you don't want to confuse activity with accomplishment.
There's a difference. He said you're active but you're not doing anything. There's some people who live their life that way.
[26:46] They're active and accomplishing nothing. That's what Paul says. You're not busy at work you're just busy bodies.

Now look at verse 12. Such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.
We command you and encourage you do your work quietly. Just be faithful.
dependable. Don't go through your life trying to be heroic. Just be faithful.
Work quietly. Be where you're supposed to be. Be faithful with your kids. Be faithful to your spouse. Faithful to your church.
[27:58] Use your gifts to serve the Lord. Enjoy friendship. Enjoy conversation. Enjoy rest. Enjoy your labor. Enjoy recreation.

Just live a faithful quiet life. Not looking for drama. Not looking to convince everyone how hard your life is.
Not trying to bring people down to be discouraged. Just enjoy a faithful diligent quiet life.
life. And you say, but there's things I disagree with. Then work to change them. But live a quiet life. But there's people who do things I don't like.

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Yeah, join the club, but live a faithful quiet life. This is consistent with what he had written in his first letter. In 1 Thessalonians 4, I think it's verse 11.
[28:58] Aspire to live quietly and to mind your own affairs. If you ever say, I wish the Bible was more practical, there you go.

Be faithful, mind your business. Don't get caught up in the stress and strain and garbage of everybody else.
Be faithful and live a quiet life. Notice the words he uses back to chapter 3 here in verse 12.
Such persons we command and encourage. Make note of this. There are times where we command and there's times where we encourage.
Wisdom is knowing which of those to use. you don't let your four-year-old run the house. That's dangerous for them.
[30:03] You don't negotiate with five-year-olds. That's dangerous for them. Instead, you command them. These are the rules.

this is what you eat. This is when you go to bed. This is what you do. It's time to go to school. I don't want to go to school.
Okay, let's go to school. But I said I didn't want to go to school. I heard you. Let's go to school. Don't I get a vote? No. Why? You're six.
six. You don't run your life. You'll ruin that child. That child needs commands.
You're 13? Great. There's some new freedoms you get. But you don't run the household and you're not in charge of your life.
[31:00] You're 13. You'll ruin that 13-year-old if they're in charge of their life. they need commands. You're 16?

You don't get to pick your curfew. Not at 16. You'll get yourself in so much danger. They need commands.
There's other times your kids need encouragement. They know they messed up. and they're heartbroken over their sin.
In those moments they don't need a lecture. They know the commands. They need encouragement. Wisdom is knowing the difference.
There's a time as a parent your child needs a push in the back to push them forward to obedience. That's the commands. There's other times they need an arm around the shoulder and you just weep with your child.
[32:11] And you hurt with them. And you feel with them. That's encouragement. encouragement. I could take 50 and 60 year old men in this service I promise you and you could give me examples of where you had given anything for your father to have gotten it right in the command or encouragement.

Some of you men at 50 and 60 years old still regret that your father didn't have the courage to command what you should do and he gave you too much freedom too fast and it blew up.
And others of you could tell me about times where you knew you'd messed up and you were broken over it and you needed the love and compassion and encouragement of your father and you didn't get it and you still feel it to this day.
Take what he's saying inside your home and live it out. We command and we encourage. There's a time to say these are the rules and they are not negotiable and there's a time to say you know the truth, you're broken over your sin, you've repented, you need love and encouragement and support and help not being yelled at or lectured to.
And wisdom is knowing what voice is needed in this moment. Preaching is the same way. teaching is the same way.
[33:51] Where God commands, we command. If you take the commands of God and make them nothing more than good ideas or helpful suggestions, then you've been unfaithful to God's word.

What God has commanded, we command. What God has made clear, we boldly proclaim. claim.
Now, if you're the teacher or the preacher, we better make sure that our commands are the commands of God.
That we're not trying to build a kingdom unto ourself. Our commands are what God has commanded. But if you're a preacher or a teacher, you better know the difference too when people under your shepherding care need to be encouraged.

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Sometimes people that you're teaching and discipling, shepherding, sometimes they do need that hand in the back and say, you need to be faithful.
You need to put this into practice. God's commanded this. I'm pushing you to do this. And other times, you sit down beside them and you put your arm around them and you just encourage them.
[34:59] They know the truth. They believe the truth. They've messed up. They've repented. and they need to know that you love them. We command and we encourage in the Lord.

And every Christian in this sanctuary needs to understand how to utilize both of those voices, the voice of command and the voice of encouragement.
If you don't, you're going to lead people astray. Both are essential.
Wisdom is knowing when to use which voice. Verse 13, as for you brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.
A lot of you know the verse, sounds just like it, Galatians 6, 9. Let us not grow weary in doing good.
It says the exact same thing, Galatians as 2 Thessalonians 3.
[36:10] And if you wonder, well, why does the Bible need to say it again? Why does it need to repeat that? Here's why. Because it's really hard to be diligent when no one around you is doing that. It's hard.

If you're on the football team and everybody else is horsing around in the weight room, it's hard to push and challenge yourself.
You're running sprints and everybody else is cutting corners and not touching the line. It's hard to force yourself to touch the line. You're working your job and your co-workers are being lazy and they're not showing up on time and they're leaving early and they're getting by with it.
It's hard to be diligent. It's hard to be faithful if no one else is. If you've ever, praise the Lord, this isn't what we experience here, but if you've ever been in the church where very few people work in the church and very few people serve in the church and it's just a handful of people that serves, it's discouraging.
It gets hard. You grow weary when you look around and see there's a there's not very many people willing to do this. So scripture says, don't grow weary.
[37:29] And you remind yourself in those moments of discouragement that your teammates, your co-workers, even your church members, they're not the standard.

Christ is. Your lazy co-worker is not your standard.
The disobedient church member, it's not the standard. Christ is your standard. And so rightly does he caution us, do not grow weary in doing good.
I mentioned a couple of weeks ago that laziness is contagious. Laziness is contagious person to person. Highly transferable disease.
Laziness is also subtle. Look for areas in your life where you've tolerated laziness. laziness. Because laziness will be contagious within your own heart too.
[38:46] Number seven. It's a really strongly worded ending to this section here. It is shameful to be lazy.

Look what he says in verse 14. If anyone does not obey what we have to say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed.
If someone's not doing what this letter says, if someone's being idle, if someone's not showing up where they're supposed to be, if someone's not providing for their family, if somebody is not being diligent, waiting for other people to always bail them out, if someone is making excuses, if somebody is busy with gossip and tearing down instead of being faithful to serve, if someone is not quietly providing for their household, if someone is growing weary and they've stopped being obedient, if that is what you observe, verse 14, take note of that person, know who they are, recognize that, and have nothing to do with them.
That's pretty strong. It gets stronger. So that he may be ashamed.
It's a shameful thing to be lazy. It's not just bad manners.
[40:36] It's not just bad work ethic. It's not just bad for your grades. It's not just bad for your career. It's not just going to get you in trouble at home.

To be lazy biblically is a shameful thing. Jeremiah 6.15 Were they ashamed when they committed the abomination?
No. They were not ashamed. They did not know how to blush. Blushing is what your body does as a reaction to getting caught.

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There's a shame in this. Jeremiah says the people were so disobedient they didn't even know how to blush.
Nothing made them feel ashamed. I think of that verse every time I see the news. No one's ashamed.
[41:47] Lazy, negligent, rude. Nobody feels shame anymore. And we live in a culture that has taken this lie that you should never feel any shame.

You should feel shame when you disobey the Lord and you claim the name of Christ. You should absolutely feel ashamed for your sin. Not for the sake of just self-pity but to drive you to repentance. Big difference. The shame we feel as a believer is not just about guilt. It's a shame that says you know what I've been bought with the price.
Jesus laid down his life for me. He shed his blood for me. I don't want to dishonor his name. I don't want to discredit the gospel. And that shame we feel drives us to repentance.
That we would seek restoration with the body of Christ. but where people feel no shame there's no repentance.
[42:54] Is laziness a big deal? Well verse 14 says if you see someone in your church who's not doing what we're saying you should do, make note of who they are, avoid them because it's a shameful thing.

It's pretty staggering. So we got high school students here at the front and next semester some of you may take geometry, algebra two, and you're going to say what everyone who came before you said, every adult knows what I'm about to say, never going to use this in my life.
I took geometry, I've never used it a day in my life, including when I had geometry. So hard for me. I took algebra two, I've never solved for X since. So the class doesn't matter. It's irrelevant.
Or is it? Practically speaking, I'll tell you what's good for you. It's good for you to be challenged and be forced to practice things that you're uncomfortable doing.
[44:35] Practically speaking, that's a life skill that will do you well. I've never used geometry or algebra too, but every day of my life, I've benefited from the lessons I learned of pushing myself to learn something that did not come easy to me.

Spiritually speaking, when you take that class and you think nobody cares about this class, does it matter? God's word speaks to that.
Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. You're taking algebra two, all your might. I'm never going to use this.
Well, maybe, maybe not, but when you say, I'm a student, my greatest desire is to glorify Christ. This isn't easy, this isn't comfortable, I don't even desire it, yet Christ is worthy of my best. Trust me, that will be for your good the rest of your life.
[45:57] Every day of your life. When the scripture says that the lazy person should feel shame, it's a wake-up call to the church to remind ourselves that we need to be faithful to what God has called us to do.

And there are some of you, and you're living, your dream job. You worked hard for it, you studied for it, you started at the bottom, you worked your way up, you've endured all kinds of hardship and suffering and low pay, and now you've got your dream job.
You're doing exactly what you dreamed of. That's you, all your best, all for Jesus, all the time. there's others of you, you're on the very beginning of that. You don't have your dream job. The only dream you have of this job is dreaming of a different job.
But you're going to work tomorrow if that's you and you're getting paid, be faithful. and the fact that you wish you got paid more is no license to be lazy based on what you're making tomorrow.
[47:25] Your standard is not your pay rate. Your standard is Jesus. Whatever your life brings you, all your best, all for Jesus, all the time.

Now as we close, I just want to ask and answer a few very quick questions by way of application. Number one, does all of this mean I need to be employed? Does this mean that everybody needs to have a vocational job?
And the answer is no. You can have a full-time job, have a part-time job, have a few hour a week job, have no pay, no vocation, that's fine.
This isn't about being employed, this is about being faithful and diligent at whatever it is you're doing, whatever it is. If you're paid for it, be diligent.

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If you volunteer at it, be diligent. If it's outside the home, be dependable. If you're laboring inside the home, be dependable. This isn't about you've got to get a job or a paycheck or a title or a degree, this is about a lifestyle that says what Christ has done in me is so thorough and so life-changing that it will impact the way I do every task in my life because everything I'm doing as a believer, I'm doing unto Jesus.
[49:00] Now, every task has meaning and value and a standard, standard. And that standard is all my best, all for Jesus, all the time.

Second question, does this text rule out retirement? No. The problem is not with stepping away from a career, the problem is when you see retirement as checking out of life or checking out of ministry.
If you have the idea that I'm going to work until I'm 60 or 65 or some of you 110, whatever your life state demands, if you think when I can finally retire now, I'll do my own thing, can I remind you, you were bought with a price.
And you belong to him. And your retirement changes nothing about that. The problem with retirement isn't that you stop going to the office.
The problem with retirement comes in when you start thinking like an owner instead of a steward. The problem with retirement is when you start to think like, I've put in my time, I'm checking out of ministry.
[50:28] Someone else can do it. I saw this just last week, VBS. all kinds of teenagers here, all kinds of young parents. We had young moms, young dads. We also had people who were retired.

We had people who took off work, by the way, to be here in addition to that. But we had people who were retired. But see, that only makes sense. Because if you think like an owner, then you're going to say, I did my time, I'm done.
If you think like a steward, now you say, I'm retired, I've got more time than I've ever had to serve the Lord. I've got more time to pray, more time to read, more time to make disciples, more time to do evangelism, more time to serve with the church for the glory of Christ.
I've got time freed up not to do my own thing, but to live as a servant of Christ. If you don't live like that, retirement will ruin you.
This isn't about whether you go to the office or not. This is about remembering that all of your life is about doing what he's called us to do.
[51:49] It's a beautiful, beautiful thing to me to see men and women who are retired running around here last week at VBS.

They maybe couldn't have done it ten years ago because they had to go to work, but today they can. Things change as you get older.
The way you serve may change, your energy level may change, your physical capacity may change, your endurance may change, change. But please never check out of being faithful.
You never age out of being dependable to live all of life for the glory of Christ. Last thing, does this text mean I should really care about every single thing I do?
you know the answer. Absolutely it does. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.
[53:02] Mow your yard with all your might. Create with all your might. Study with all your might.

work in that U.S. history class next semester with all your might. Change those tires with all your might.
Clean those cars with all your might. Do your laundry with all your might. Whatever you're doing, your standard is Jesus.
And your goal is to offer up a life that cares deeply about living in such a way worthy of imitation.
There's something else every parent here knows.
They teach us this when you become a parent. Go to a class, you get a manual of little cliches to say. Every parent here knows it. Do as I say, not as I do.
[54:14] But no one will follow that. No child will fall for that. Your children will do what you say as long as they have to.

But the lesson that got ingrained in them deep, deep, deep down is what they saw you do. when you say do as I say, not as I do, you're doing the exact opposite of what scripture says, imitate me as I imitate Christ.
Child, teenager, single, married, parent, empty nester, grandparent, widower, wealthy, poor, starting out in your career, at the highlight of your career, wherever you may be.

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Those kinds of circumstances are going to shift like sand. Those seasons are going to come and go. What remains is the legacy of a life lived worth imitating for the glory of Christ that did not depend upon who was watching or what you were getting paid, but upon a Savior who was worthy of your very best.
Not for the sake of your career, not for the sake of your reputation, but the sake of the glory of the one who saved you. All of your best, all for the name of Jesus, all the time, because he's worthy of that.
[56:21] And if there would be no educational, vocational, monetary gain from those things, it would still be worth it all, because Christ is worthy of it all.

Let that be the way the people of God live. Lord, we thank you for your word this morning and pray that it would bring us conviction and encouragement, that it would bring us correction and hope. Lord, for those who may not know you as Savior this very day, may they understand that their works will never save them. We don't do good things to earn your grace or earn our salvation. We do it as a response to what you've done for us. We do it not to make you love us, but because you have graced us with salvation. We live that way in response as an act of worship, not to earn a wage.
church. Lord, I pray that we as the church would lead the way in living this way, not for the sake of our name, but for the sake of your Son's name.
[57:38] Never we pray for the sake of our own glory, but to magnify His alone. We love you today and praise you for your word and your work in our life.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Love you, church family. God bless. You're dismissed.

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