

Flourishing in the Workplace – Part 2 God, Our Father

Introduction

Is there an ideal that the worst toxic work environment can't destroy, that the best job in the world can't create? – Yes, the Love of God!

It is easy to get wrapped up in our work. When work is going well, and we are working in a great environment it is easy to focus on our achievements. When we don't like our work environment it is easy to get caught up in the negative talk of the work place. At work we can experience a range of emotions from joy and satisfaction of a job well done, to loneliness, disappointment or frustration.

What happens when we press the pause button and for one moment and shift our focus to God, Our Father?

Study

1. We are God's children

Read - Romans 8:14-17

¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

a) – God has not given us methods and techniques or a six-step formula to apply to the situations we face at work. Instead God has given those of us who believe in Jesus the privilege to call God our Father, and to cry out "Abba, Father". What are the implications of calling God 'Our Father'?

b) – What does it mean to be one of God's children while dealing with the joys and struggles of work?

2. Focusing on God our Father

Read - Matthew 5:6-9

⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹"This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

c) – What happens when you focus on our Father in Heaven instead of what's happening at work?

d) – What makes it easy or hard for you to shift your focus to our Father in heaven?

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3. The blessings of knowing God as our Father

Read - Luke 11:13

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Read - Eph 1:17-21

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

e) – What are some of the blessings of knowing God as your Father?

f) – How do these blessings relate to what is happening in your work?

4. God our Father – expects ...

Read - Matthew 26:39, 42

³⁹Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

⁴²He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.”

g) – Praying to God our Father is more than just acknowledging his existence, or his holiness. It is a willingness like Jesus to trust his will and to be obedient. When you shift your focus from your work to your Father in heaven, what does our Father expect of you? Why? What does God not expect of you?

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Summary

Our Father is not the “I need” who needs you to maintain the order in your workplace. Our Father is the “I am” who requires nothing of you and who can lift your burdens and extinguish your fears.

Because you have placed your faith in Jesus, you have the privilege to stand in God’s presence today wearing his robe, his ring and his shoes as one of his heirs (Rom 8:15-17). When you stand in faith expectantly before God, our Father, you can fearlessly face any work situation with overflowing hope.

When you cry “Abba Father” you are standing in complete transparency before the one who sets the standards and penetrates your secret motives.

To know the Father, is to know the vinedresser who prunes your life back into a balance of inner poise and outward expression of peace and joy.

Jesus proved through his life that our Father is bountiful in his provision, reliable in his promises and utterly faithful in his love. Therefore, you can walk with obedience, dependent upon the love and power of our Father with boldness, hope and expectation knowing that today and tomorrow are God’s.

To pray “Our Father” is to have your relationships transformed (Mat 6:14-15); your attitude towards money and possessions changed (Matt 6:19-24); and to be delivered from all fear and anxiety (Matt 6:25-34).

Application

Share with your partner something about your work situation. Are you feeling like a square peg in a square hole, or a square peg in a round hole? How healthy is your work environment?

Commit to pray Eph 1:17-18 for each other so that you may be able to give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph 5:20).

Next Week – Honoring God’s Name