

Faith & Work ⑧

INTRODUCTION | The idols of work: success, money, power

I want us to look out life and work through the lens of Zacchaeus' life story. First, let's think about what is the main target we are pursuing in our lives. If we are not pursuing the gospel of grace as delivered by our merciful God, then what other thing (idol) are we pursuing? Secondly, let's think about how the gospel touches upon our root life and work problems(idols). Meeting Jesus causes us to be changed. Lastly, as our lives are led by grace and refocused we can discover joy in work.

SCRIPTURE | Luke 19:1-10

He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. 3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. 4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." 6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

QUESTIONS |

- 1: (verses 1-2) Before Zacchaeus met Christ and had his life changed, what kind of man was he? What was the pursuit of his life? (Reference: Tim Keller)

- 2: (verses 3-4) Was Zacchaeus' life fulfilled by his pursuits? If not, why not?

- 3: (verses 5-6) Zacchaeus' life was changed by meeting Christ. What happened in that meeting? How did you meet Jesus? Share your experiences.

- 4: (verse 8) When Zacchaeus' heart is changed he says something shocking. What shocking thing does he say? Discuss how you think Zacchaeus' life and work changed from that moment.

- 5: (verse 7) Zacchaeus' change of life foundation is described in verse 7 and this foundational change can be said to be the heart of the scriptures. How was he changed into a new person?

- 6: (verses 9-10) In what ways can or should an identity changed by an encounter with Jesus or the gospel of grace influence one's work life? Discuss.

READING |

The Bible's answer is that the human heart is an "idol factory"... God was saying that the human heart takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things. Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives, because, we think, they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them.

PRAYER |

- What prize or desire is to be found outside of our God? His love which pursues and overwhelms and is found beyond measure in the love and sacrifice of Jesus Christ has saved us. While in praise to our God we can see how even in our work He reveals himself.
- Reflect on the idols that are present in your heart. Anger, fear, desperation, loneliness, isolation and failure can often be feelings that overwhelm and at the root of these feelings are some kind of idol. However much you pursue these idols it is only Christ who can give your life significance and true meaning.

UPCOMING EVENTS | This Week & Next Week

Lunchtime meetings (7/5 Akasaka, 7/6 Kasumigaseki, 7/7 Otemachi)

Sunday worship (7/10)

Bible study series (7/10 Walk through the Bible)

Gospel Yukata concert (7/10)

Lunchtime meetings (7/12 Kudanshita, 7/13 Marunouchi, 7/14 Otemachi)

Obento Project (7/16)