

Being a Disciple at Work

Some different comments and views on work and its value

- A** One of the truths of revelation is that man shares by his work in the activity of the Creator . . . thus, in a sense, Genesis gives us the first 'Gospel of Work'.
Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 1982
- B** The work which men do is of transient worth . . . it is only the act of obedience to God's law which possesses abiding significance.
World Council of Churches, 1954
- C** Man in the Christian view has not been placed in the universe as one thing among others . . . he cooperates in its genesis.
J H Oldham, 1954
- D** We are fixers by divine appointment.
David Welbourne, 1984
- E** These words echoed the view of Alan Richardson and above all the view of Karl Barth who was 'bitingly critical of the phrase "co-creator"'. For him the main human work was to believe in Jesus Christ, daily work was a background activity.
Richardson, *The Biblical Doctrine of Work*, 1952
- F** In the 16th century, Luther has stood out against the view that 'the only proper way to serve God and to respond to his call was to become a monk or a nun, and he asserted that ordinary activities, the day to day business of earning a living, no less than other activities, were the vehicle of one's response to God.
A sense of vocation is reflected in the spirit of doing. Two men, working side-by-side, were asked the same question. The first replied "I am a stone-cutter." The second said "I'm building a cathedral for the glory of God." Their jobs were the same, but their perspectives were vastly different. Luther's view is that all of us can perform our daily tasks with a sense of vocation and service to community.
- G** Good practice at work is the good news in action, making the revealed word of God incarnate, enfleshed, in our everyday situations.
- H** Work is the expenditure of energy (manual or mental or both) in the service of others, which brings fulfilment to the worker, benefit to the community and glory to God.

John Stott