



Part 8: God's Gracious Economy

Deuteronomy 24:14-22

*Does God care about the economy or even about businesses?
Does what we do and how we do it in our place of work make any
difference to God?*

Context: Deuteronomy 24:14-22

- Deuteronomy is a blueprint and constitution for a new society as the Israelites head into the promise land. It reflects the heart and ways of God, creating a social, economic, and judicial system. And yet the Israelites needed their minds and hearts to be rewired to an alternative economy.

“While the Israelites had, in an overnight dash, physically left Egypt, the ravenous habits and practices of Pharaoh’s economy were still deeply imprinted on their hearts. Egypt’s economic patterns of overwork and rapacious acquisition were the only ones these liberated slaves knew. Extracting the Israelites out of the Egyptian economy was one thing; extracting the Egyptian economy out of the Israelites was another thing entirely.” – Matthew Kaemingk, *Work and Worship*

- The Israelites needed to learn how to rest, rely on God, freely offer and freely receive, to share and to celebrate. And so, God is rewiring their hearts and minds through festivals, offerings, sacrifices, and prayers. God was leading them out of the exhausting labor practices of Pharaoh into the life-giving labor practices of Yahweh, into a gracious economy.

God's Gracious Economy

- Treating employees with fairness and respect (v. 14, 17)
- The value of profitable work (v. 19, 20, 21)
- Considering the most vulnerable (v. 19, 20, 21)
- A life-giving bottom line

“All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk lead only to poverty.”
Proverbs 14:23

“Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” 1 Timothy 6:9-10a

Seattle Pacific University Faith and Co. film, “You Have a People Problem”
<https://faithandco.spu.edu/film-detail/you-have-a-people-problem/>

Work and Worship

“When you have entered the land...take some of the firstfruits...and put them in a basket...The priest shall take the basket from your hands and set it down in front of the altar...Then you shall declare...”The Lord brought us out of Egypt...and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, Lord, have given me.” Place the basket before the Lord your God and bow down before him. Then you and the Levites and the foreigners residing among you shall rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household.” Deuteronomy 26:1, 2, 4, 5, 8-11

- An early church example of offering the fruit of their labor in worship to God. Floor Mosaic at Aquileia’s Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, 313 – 333 AD, oldest surviving liturgical art in all of Christianity.
<https://www.christianiconography.info/Venice%202018/Aquileia/donorPanels.html>

A Benediction from *Work and Worship: Reconnecting Our Labor and Liturgy* by Matthew Kaemingk and Cory B. Wilson

No go, church.

Leave here.

Go in the name and in the power

Of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Go and extend your worship into your work.

Go and extend Christ’s service into your service.

Take the grace that you’ve received at this table

And extend it to all for whom your care.

Remember the hospitality you’ve found here.

Offer it to others tomorrow.

Go and work.

Honor the One who is working on you.

Do so by making beautiful things,

By serving in beautiful ways,

By speaking up for the weak whose beauty is being maligned,

By filling this city with the aroma of good and beautiful work.

Reflect the beautiful work of your heavenly Father,

*Nourished now by the grace and mercy of Christ,
In the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*God has already accomplished the great work.
God goes before you and behind you.
God works at your side.*

Suggested Resources:

- *Every Good Endeavor* by Timothy Keller
- *Work and Worship: Reconnecting Our Labor and Liturgy* by Matthew Kaemingk and Cory B. Wilson
- <https://faithandco.spu.edu/films>
- *God of the Second Shift* by Jeff Haanen
<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/october/theology-of-work-god-of-second-shift.html>

Sermon Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever felt a disconnect from your work or business to God's heart and His gracious economy?
- How do you feel like God is calling you to integrate your work as an act of worship? What is the fruit of your labor that you can offer to Him?
- How can your work and business reflect the heart of God and serve the vulnerable and hurting?