

Finding Meaning in Your Work

Our work reflects who we are in Christ—and that is not seen in *what* we do, but *how* we do it.

And my work for the moment is to step aside and let someone else speak. Martin Luther King Jr. had a phenomenal way with words, and in a sermon he delivered in April 1967, he addressed the way we carry out our work.

“We must discover what we are called to do. And once we discover it we should set out to do it with all of the



strength and all of the power that we have in our systems. And after we’ve discovered what God called us to do, after we’ve discovered our life’s work, we should set out to do that work so well that the living, the dead, or the unborn couldn’t do it any better. Now this does not mean that everybody will do the so-called big, recognized things of life. Very few people will rise to the heights of genius in the arts and the sciences; very few collectively will rise to certain professions. Most of us will have to be content to work in the fields and in the factories and on the streets. But we must see the dignity of all labor.

“When I was in Montgomery, Alabama, I went to a shoe shop quite often, known as the Gordon Shoe Shop. And there was a fellow in there that used to shine my shoes, and it was just an experience to witness this fellow shining my shoes. He would get that rag, you know,

and he could bring music out of it. And I said to myself, ‘This fellow has a Ph.D. in shoe shining.’

“What I’m saying to you this morning, my friends, even if it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, go on out and sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures; sweep streets like Handel and Beethoven composed music; sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry; sweep streets so well that all the host of heaven and earth will have to pause and say, ‘Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.’

“If you can’t be a pine on the top of a hill
Be a scrub in the valley—but be
The best little scrub on the side of the hill,
Be a bush if you can’t be a tree.
If you can’t be a highway just be a trail
If you can’t be the sun be a star;
It isn’t by size that you win or fail—
Be the best of whatever you are.”

God gave His absolute best for us, and our response to His love and grace should be to give Him our absolute best. Our work is a reflection of our relationship with Christ.

