

Don't Quit Your Day Job (God @ Work): TGIF

Reconnect – May 2, 2010

Text: II Corinthians 4:1-18; Hebrews 12:1-4

Key Thought: Our bad day at work is God's chance to shine, if we will let Him.

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going. Through suffering, these bodies of ours constantly share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be obvious in our dying bodies. So we live in the face of death, but it has resulted in eternal life for you. II Corinthians 4:8-10, NLT

Pre-Intro: Bad Day (Daniel Powter) - clip

Intro: Had a bad day?

Q: Anyone have a bad day at work on Friday? What happened? Talk about a bad day you had at work, once – the worst ever? What were you doing? What went wrong? What happened as a result?

(Me – losses at the Bank, money being out, etc. – the 15 minutes later fax)

Q: What makes a “bad day” for you at work, as opposed to a “good day”? Or even just a “normal day”?

- Sooner or later, no matter who you are, you're going to have a bad day at work
- Maybe your boss was in a bad mood, maybe you messed up in some way, or maybe it was just really busy – but those days are going to come when you just wish that you were at home – or you dream about running out the doors and never coming back
- There's a phrase that sums up for many people what those days are like – what those weeks are like at work – and that's TGIF
- Sometimes that's the most spiritual part of the week

TGIF – we all know what it means – spirituality at work

- I went to Bible College right out of high school, and I didn't have my first Monday-Friday, day job until about four years ago – so I never realized what a sacred place a Friday holds for so many people
- How sweet it is – especially before a long weekend – or even how sweet a long weekend is – until I became a banker
- There's a rhythm to the week when you work a regular shift Monday to Friday – and no matter how innovative your shift work might be, there seems to be something ingrained in us and our society that pushes us towards regulating in terms of the work week and the week end
- That is changing, especially with the rise of the service industry – they're even changing, or talking about changing, the Ontario laws that force businesses to close a (very) few days of the year, like Easter and Christmas – shifts are everywhere, and many people don't have the luxury of TGIF anymore
- And the more you work, the more you yearn to just get through and get out of there
- Paul knew what it was to work long hours – and his work, his calling, enveloped his life
- His second letter to the churches of the Greek city of Corinth has his comments on his work lifestyle

And so, since God in his mercy has given us this wonderful ministry, we never give up. We reject all shameful and underhanded methods. We do not try to trick anyone, and we do not distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know that.

- We are who we are – we’re honest, we’re real – we’re not trying to fake it for anyone
- **Fear of having a bad day at work** – that God will be dishonoured, that He will disavow us – give up on us – that He will be shocked and saddened at our dysfunction and potty mouth, like a stern great-aunt who last was in touch with reality in the 1950’s – when really, a good dose of reality could be just what our “image” at work needs – because after all, who wants to work with someone who wears a mask?
- **Ill. – Conor getting the mask at a birthday party** – shocking to see people in masks (especially when you work in a bank) – but it really is off-putting, isn’t it? If it’s not Hallowe’en? Is that why some people get creeped out when the Christians come around?

If the Good News we preach is veiled from anyone, it is a sign that they are perishing. Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe, so they are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News that is shining upon them. They don’t understand the message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.

- We are in a struggle – this is walking uphill for the most part – it’s not supposed to be easy for people to see our faith, because they have a set of blinders on

We don’t go around preaching about ourselves; we preach Christ Jesus, the Lord. All we say about ourselves is that we are your servants because of what Jesus has done for us. For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made us understand that this light is the brightness of the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

- It’s not about us – it’s about Jesus and what He’s done, and who He is

But this precious treasure – this light and power that now shine within us –is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own.

- He is in us, but we are weak – the container doesn’t match the contents, so the contents are that much more held in high regard and on display

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going. Through suffering, these bodies of ours constantly share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be obvious in our dying bodies. So we live in the face of death, but it has resulted in eternal life for you.

- When we take hard knocks, when things don't go well for us – it's a chance for Jesus to shine through, and when He shines through, life comes as a result of that light

Q: What do you do when you're under pressure? How do you respond?

- Some say that stress/pressure reveals who you really are – well, let it – because we turn to God in those moments and ask Him to demonstrate who HE really is, in us, to us, through us, to others
- Every whack at us, every hit, every blow is only, ultimately, one more chance for light to come through

But we continue to preach because we have the same kind of faith the psalmist had when he said, "I believed in God, and so I speak." We know that the same God who raised our Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us to himself along with you. All of these things are for your benefit. And as God's grace brings more and more people to Christ, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.

- We do this because of what God has done and what He will do for us and others – the reward, the payday is huge.
- We go back to grace – it's not a matter of "try harder" (Deep Church quote?) or "do better", it's that without Jesus, we don't have anything, and He's the best we have
- We fail, we get back up again in His strength – we lose a battle, we run back to Him for comfort and rest and healing – and then we get back in the fight again

That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.

- The inside keeps the outside going, and we keep our eyes on the prize to keep moving forward.

Key Thought:

Our bad day at work is God's chance to shine, if we will let Him.

...Let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward. Now he is seated in the place of highest honour beside God's throne in heaven. Think about all he endured when sinful people did such terrible things to him, so that you don't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.

Hebrews 12:1-4, NLT

Conclusion: What should you do when you're having a bad day at work?

- 1) Try to relax in the middle of it – take a deep breath, let some of the stress go – put your agenda aside of all the things that you WANTED to get done that day, and instead roll with what has come – do your best to cope and quit worrying about the rest – all you can do is your best
- 2) Ask God to help you when you're in it – sometimes your nose is too far to the grindstone to even think of the God-option, but open up your heart to Him and ask for His help to get you through it– bring him into your day and let your thoughts, even for just a few seconds, dwell on him
- 3) Remember “This too shall pass” – time will continue on – at some point you will be telling funny stories about it, instead of just trying to live through it – everyone has those days, you're not immune
- 4) Let it go – let the bad day go and do something that will help you take your mind off it – learn to leave it where it is, and not affect you or the ones you love further – one bad day for one member of the family is more than enough...
- 5) Monitor your situation – if you're having bad day after bad day, why is that? Do you need to change jobs? Do you need more training or support? Is there something that your boss could do for you, or are there changes that you could make that could address some of these root causes? Your employer doesn't want you to have bad days – they are going to try to help you have good ones – because it helps them in the end even more

Response: Q & A (on the series)