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September 15, 2013

EPHESIANS 6:5-9

Ephesians: Recognizing Who You Are in Christ

Turn with me to Ephesians 6:5-9. This is our second to last week in the book of Ephesians.

If you get my email that I sent out, you know that the next week what we're going to study is the book of Esther. A great book that will help us understand the providence of God and how God is at work in each one of our lives. Sometimes we get stuck in the nitty-gritty of our lives and we need to be reminded to take the bird's eye view. That is really what we're going to do in the book of Esther in the Old Testament as we go there.

That won't be next week. Next week we're going to look at that guy there and the armor of God. So maybe I'll bring him down here and stand next to me as we teach next week about the armor of God in Ephesians 6.

Now let's look at Ephesians 6:5-9. *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we thank you again for your word. We know that in these words we can understand your heart and we can apply them to our lives in specific ways. So we ask now that you would do that. Enlighten our hearts, illumine the message of your word from your Spirit into our lives this morning. In Jesus' name, amen.

Slavery was quite common in the first century. Rome was the governing government at that time and there were over six million slaves in the Roman government. We're going to take this whole passage that has to do with slaves and we're going to apply it to the business relationships of employers and employees, what license do we have to do that.

The reason we do that is because there are a lot of similarities between the slave-master relationship and between the employer-employee relationship that exists today. There is the tendency sometimes to slack off, to do the minimum to get by, to complain or undermine authority. Those are just common problems that take place, not only in slavery in the first century but also in the marketplace today.

Furthermore, many people today feel as if they're slaves in their work. They feel as if they're being driven by a slave driver and particularly true in this economy when the pressure's on with finances and employers have to squeeze more out of their employees in order to get and meet the objectives and get and meet the bottom line. Workers are often the ones who bear the brunt of the pressure of our economy today. Tension increases in the marketplace. Job security isn't as secure as it used to be.

What does God have to say about work? That's what we're going to look at today. Because the similarities of the slave-master relationship are becoming greater and greater to the ones in the marketplace or the business employee-employer relationships today.

I saw a study this week that said only one in ten people are satisfied with their work. What I want to do today is I want to help you understand from this passage, I think God wants us to understand how we can have more enjoyment in our work. No matter what that work is. What can we do in order to do that?

Let's look at verse 5. *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.*

So the right behavior there is to *obey*. The right attitude is with *respect and fear*. The right perspective is *as you would obey Christ*. But notice the words right in the middle there – *with sincerity of heart*. The idea of genuineness, the idea of commitment it's all about the heart.

I think sometimes today workers or Christians in the marketplace sometimes are not known for being loyal and honest. We're followers of Jesus Christ. That's who we are. So we come to this passage. As we're going through verse by verse we come to a passage about work, how is that going to apply to us?

Paul says here *obey in fear and trembling*. I think that *fear and trembling* can be translated or interpreted as with respect or seriousness in the relationship that we have with others. You might be saying, "You don't know my boss. My boss is mean. My boss is hard." It says obey him or her and respect the position of their oversight.

Paul reminds these people they need to be wholeheartedly committed. Their heart needs to be in it. Be obedient to your masters, do what they tell you to do. It's really hard to imagine what it might have been like to live in slavery in those times. The harsh treatment, the unclean, unsafe workplace that they were involved in. Yet Paul is still saying as a follower of Christ Jesus you want to be obedient to those people.

I think what he's saying if we translated into our vernacular here is give your boss a full days' work. The application could be this. I want you to think about this for just a moment. As you come to this and you say, "I have a hard boss," or "I don't like the place where I work," you might be able to accept this command of obeying by saying, "I really don't respect the person, but I'm going to respect the position." I think that may be a good thing to do.

But I want you to understand I think there's something different talked about in this passage. The passage isn't just saying respect the position even though you don't respect the person. It's saying respect the person as you would Christ. In other words, our focus needs to be on Jesus Christ, who He is, what He's done for us. So we keep our eyes on Jesus even while we're serving in this particular situation.

Let's go back for a moment and look at the history of work, the biblical history of work. Where was work created in the Bible? Because some people look at work and say, "Work is a part of the fall. When Adam sinned then we all had to work." That's not the case. Work is not a result of the fall, it's a result of creation.

Let me show you that work was established and developed and set up even before the fall as God placed Adam in the garden in Genesis 2:15 it says this: *The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*

Adam's job was to go around in the garden and do whatever he had to do. I don't know what you had to do to be in that garden at that time, but he's taking care of bushes and trees. He's taking care of flowers and fruit. He's taking care of all those things and was to manage them. That's what he's doing. So Adam had a job to do even before the fall.

What is your work? If you're a student then your work is going to school and doing your homework. If you're on the road, then you're serving God on the road. If you're in the office or a shop then you're serving God as your boss in that location. If you're home taking care of family then that is your work.

If you're unemployed then your work is to get a job. You understand more than anyone else that God is your boss because you get up every day and you have to go out there and you have to put yourself out there to find that job. You've got to follow up on leads. There's no praise that you get from that. There's no paycheck. In fact, there's a lot of rejection in that process. It is really hard to find a job when you don't have one. It is tough. And all the more reason to think about God as your boss. He is the one that you're pleasing. So every day when you get up you're serving God on that day in order to do what needs to be done.

Look at the words there at the end of verse 5. It says, *just as you would obey Christ.* The Christian is different than the non-Christian when it comes to work because the Christian views work as an extension of ministry. There's an attitude of sacredness about it. Work is an extension of the relationship with God. The primary goal of the Christian at work is to extend the gospel of God, to serve God wholeheartedly, to do a good job so that they're a light and so that they can share the message of who God is with other people.

It reminds me of Bob Van Antwerp. Bob Van Antwerp was a major in the army when I met him thirty years ago probably. In Hawaii in my first church where I was pastoring he started coming to church and he really loved the Lord. He graduated first place at West Point out of his graduating class and he was on a fast track. But he loved Jesus Christ. So every day he would put his Bible on his desk. He was very open about sharing his faith on the job in the military.

His colonel, that is the governing person on the base there really loved Bob and learned how to love his Lord too. Bob ended up leading his boss, his colonel to Jesus Christ. So the colonel started coming to our church as well. It was really fun to be a part of what was going on in their lives and to see what was happening.

When the changing of the guard takes place that is when one manager of the whole base moves to somewhere else then they have the new person coming on. There's a change of the guard. The guy going out, the colonel, spoke and I went to that because I knew a lot of the guys there for that reason. I listened to his speech. It was fascinating because one of the things he said was, "I'm really grateful that while I've been here at the post I met Bob Van Antwerp because he introduced me to Jesus Christ." That's what he said in his speech to everyone out there. I'm saying, "This is amazing." This is the example of using our workplace as a place where we can shine for Christ.

There are some limitations that some have when it comes to sharing Jesus Christ with others. There are limitations that your boss puts on. But I'm not saying we have to be witnessing outwardly. Sometimes it's just the person who's doing a good job and people ask you questions. They see that you're different than someone else. There's an attitude about work that I want to challenge today. That attitude is that my work determines my identity. Our identity is not determined by our work that we do every day. Our identity is determined by our relationship with Jesus Christ. It's played out in places like our work or in our home.

I like the movie *Chariots of Fire*. I especially think it's good for young people to look at that movie because it poses some ethical dilemmas and it's good for young people to wrestle with the ethical dilemmas. No matter where they come out with their conclusion, they have to wrestle with some very important ethics.

Eric Lidell is the guy in the movie who's a runner. He runs and the whole family's committed to Jesus Christ. He runs and he loves running. His sister at one point, recognizing the potential that this man has, says to him, "Why don't you just become a pastor and give up running?" I love what Eric Liddell says. His answer was this: "When I run I experience God's pleasure." I love that.

See, there's a sense in which the ultimate goal is not to become a pastor or to be in ministry unless we view ministry as every one of us in ministry doing the work that God has called us to do at home, at work, in the neighborhood, wherever we are. That we are doing what God wants us to do. Our ultimate goal is to serve Him. That's why the URL for our website is Take Jesus Home. The idea is not just here in these walls but take Him home to work, take Him home to your neighborhood, take Him home to your home. When we leave here we're taking Jesus out of here so that there's this relationship that we have with Him that is so special and other people see how much we value who Jesus Christ is for us.

Work is the theater of God. It's His movie screen as you will. Who's the main attraction? Who's the star? You. Because that's where the world watches you work. Work is where the Christian is on display. All the stresses and strains and the tensions and the tasks and the tests that we face in life, there's lots of demands, there are lots of pressures that exist. The world in that moment gets

to see one of Jesus' own. How does that person handle things differently? So they end up wondering why do you respond so well when things are so hard? Why do you work so hard in the first place? Our work is our opportunity to witness till people see that we are serving God.

It's not the person above us that we're serving on the ladder in the corporate chain. We're serving Jesus Christ. God has given us a perspective of work that is strategic for us to understand. When we catch it not only are we better employees, but we can enjoy work all the better. So what he's saying here is that we need to serve Christ.

He elaborates on that in verse 6. Notice verse 6 what it says. *Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.*

Do you see the *from your heart. Doing the will of God from your heart.* The verse is describing internal motivation. Not just when the eye is on you but when something else is going on inside your heart. The emphasis is on the heart.

When I'm teaching young people about responsibility and what responsibility is, one of the definitions that I suggest is that responsibility is doing the right thing even when no one else is watching. That's internal motivation. That's what's being described here. Young people will often say, "I feel like I'm a slave in my own house. My parents are bossing me around. They're setting unrealistic expectations. They're being demanding of me."

I say, "Okay. If you feel like you're a slave in your house let's go look at what the Bible has to say about slaves." But you're serving in your home. You're doing what you're doing in your home because you're serving God."

That's what this passage is saying. It's describing we're living out our faith. We're understanding what God would have for us in the home. When we do, amazing things happen. Amazing things happen when a slave starts to do the right kind of thing and starts to exceed that that's the person who gets promoted. That's the person in a home where parents start treating that person, because he's trying to be more responsible, treats him in a more responsible way. It's amazing what happens.

That's what happened to Joseph in the Bible. You remember that Joseph was sold into slavery. How unfair. How discouraging that might have been. But he knew that God was in control. And so he worked hard. He did the best he could and he moved up the ranks all the way through to be the second of command in Egypt. What a powerful statement about doing well in work. Joseph is a good example of that.

Notice the words *doing the will of God from your heart.* See that there? From your heart. There's this internal motivation that I'm doing the will of God. The implication is that the will of God is to be at your job. So yes, you're doing your work enthusiastically recognizing that you work where you work. You get paid. The hours you have are those hours. That's all the will of God and you're going to serve the Lord wholeheartedly at work. You're taking the will of God that you have there and you're serving the Lord in the midst of that. You're walking in to work with

an attitude, a good attitude, not a bad attitude. An attitude that says, “I’m serving God. He’s the one that I’m trying to please here.” Doing the will of God from your heart.

I think that some people have a hard time with work because they view themselves living under the curse, Adam’s curse in the Old Testament. They view themselves in that place where work is hard because of Adam and “I’ve just got to go there and I’ve got to put up with this Monday through Friday and that’s what I’ve got to do.”

I want to go back to Genesis because I want you to see a little bit of truth to that. I want you to see how work was affected by the fall. Although God gave work to Adam before he fell, it was affected by the fall.

Look at these words in Genesis 3:17-19. After Adam sinned He said to Adam, “*Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.*”

What makes work worthwhile? What makes the difference? For Adam it was the relationship he had with God in the midst of that. So yes, God had a work that he gave to Adam before the fall. It was damaged. It was made more difficult by the fall. That means a significant difference takes place in our lives when we’re talking about this.

What we see is that work can be meaningful, fun, exhilarating, or it can be horrible, difficult, challenging. What is going to be the difference in that? It’s going to be the relationship that you have with God and that’s what happens when Adam has that relationship with God. That’s what happens in each one of our lives. When we see God and we understand what He’s doing in our lives, great things can happen at work for us because we’re serving God.

Look at verse 7: *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.* The word *wholeheartedly* there means doing good will. The idea is having good will and giving that to other people. Looking for ways to give goodwill, seeking to do good, trying to do your best, trying to put your heart into the job. You’ve seen the bumper sticker that says “my boss is a Jewish carpenter.” That’s the reality for all. As we’re going to work, we’re focusing on Jesus as the boss.

There was a man applying for a job. The manager reviewed the application, said, “I’m sorry. I can’t hire you. There’s not enough work to keep you busy.” The applicant replied, “You’d be surprised at how little it takes.” The reality is it’s true for many people. They go to work and they see how little they can do. Every time the boss isn’t watching, they’re on their cell phone, checking their Facebook, or doing other things.

Not the Christian. The Christian has this wholehearted zeal. Bishop J. C. Ryle wrote in his book this about zeal: “Zeal is a burning desire to please God, to do His will, and to advance His glory in the world in every possible way. A zealous man is preeminently a man of one thing. He is

more than earnest, hearty, uncompromising, wholehearted, and fervent in spirit. He sees only one thing, cares about one thing, lives for one thing, swallowed it up in one thing, and that one thing is to please God. Whether he lives or dies, has health or has sickness, whether he is rich or poor, pleases people or gives offense, whether he is thought wise or foolish, gets the blame or the praise, whether he receives honor or is given shame, he burns for one thing, and that one thing is to please God. Such a one will always find a sphere for his zeal. If he cannot preach, he will work and give money, he will cry and sigh and pray. If he cannot fight in the valley with Joshua, he will hold up the hands of Moses until the battle is won.”

For the believer, work is more than just a payday or a title or a promotion. It's those words from God that say, “*Well done, good and faithful servant.*” Those are the words we're looking for, not from our boss; we're looking at those words from God. Are we doing the right thing? How is Christ going to live through us in the difficult situations?

There are some people who say, “I don't even want to live in New Jersey. This is definitely not the place for me. I wish I could go somewhere else, but I can't.” I love New Jersey. I chose to come to New Jersey. I think it's a great place, but some people wish they could be out of here.

It reminds me of Daniel in the Bible. He was taken from Jerusalem and he was transported into a place where he didn't belong, Babylon, two to three thousand miles away, far away, doing work he wasn't even qualified to do until he was trained. But he took on the challenge and he became intent in working on those things that he was given. He was raised in the kingdom to be something very powerful.

Daniel used work as a way to demonstrate his love for God. He didn't please people. That's really the story of Daniel. He wasn't eager to just please people, he was eager to please God. There are some people who are tempted to be people pleasers in their lives.

I remember in my first church I pastored with my father. I learned more being under my father's leadership than I learned in seminary about how to teach the Bible verse by verse. We did not learn that in seminary. You would think they would teach that in seminary. They didn't. But my father taught me how to teach and I am so grateful for my dad.

I realized in the course of my time working with him that I had something wrong inside of my heart, that I was seeking to please my father in the workplace. It was creating a problem for me and my work as a pastor of the church. God did a real work in my heart at that point and helped me to see the importance of my own need to serve God first. It really increased and improved my relationship with my dad as we worked. God did some great things inside of me. See, when we become people pleasers, when we're trying to please other people, then we end up carrying a rather heavy burden.

I like this fable and you can remind yourself of this fable whenever you think about pleasing people. An old fable that has been passed down for generations tells about an elderly man who was traveling with a boy and a donkey.

As they walked through a village the man was leading the donkey and the boy was walking behind. The townspeople said the old man was a fool for not riding, so to please them he climbed up on the animal's back. When they came to the next village, the people said the old man was cruel to let the child walk. He enjoyed the ride, so to please them he got off and set the boy on the animal's back and continued on his way. In the third village the people accused the child of being lazy, for making the old man walk, and the suggestion was made that they both ride. So the man, to please people, climbed on and they set off again. In the fourth village, the people were indignant at the cruelty of the donkey because he was made to carry two people. The frustrated man was last seen carrying the donkey down the road.

The point of the story is this. If you're always trying to please people, you're going to find yourself carrying a heavy load. We always need to be aware of that because our goal is not to try to please people, but as the verse says we are pleasing the Lord in our work. That's what we're doing. We're pleasing the Lord and helping Him and acknowledging Him in everything that we're doing.

Let's go to verse 8 – *because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.*

Some people come to Monday mornings and it ought to be called Monday moanings because they get there and they're so disappointed. It's Monday. I can hardly wait till Friday. They're already talking about Friday and it's only Monday. They're moaning about it. All of these things.

The Christian does not get caught up in the gossip of the workplace. The Christian does not spend his time complaining. The Christian does not murmur or isn't lazy or isn't stealing things from work. The Christian is different in the workplace. That's what he's saying here.

Now maybe you're saying, "Scott, you're out of touch with the work world here. I wish I had your job. You work in the ministry. You get to be with angels all week. You read the Bible, you pray. Every day that's all you do. No problems. No hassles. What do you do all week anyway? You only get up on Sunday and teach for thirty-five minutes. You've got the best job in the world. I suppose on Monday that you're playing tennis and Tuesday you're golfing and Wednesday you're riding bikes and Thursday you're playing video games." That's not true. I don't ride bikes.

You might be saying, "You just get up there, thirty-five minutes and you teach on Sunday. You work for the Lord. You're in a sacred place. We're in the secular world. It's hard being a Christian in the real world."

Look, I spent some time just evaluating this in my own life this week in my work and what I'm doing as a pastor at Calvary Chapel Living Hope. I have never worked harder as a pastor than I'm working right now. I've been a pastor for thirty-three years. I'm working fifty to sixty hours a week trying to do what I'm doing here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope.

Now I am in charge of teaching every week. I am in charge of doing announcements. I am in charge of doing worship, leading, preparing that. I am in charge of the nursery. I am in charge of

the men's ministry. I am in charge of a home fellowship during the week. I am doing all kinds of things and I love Calvary Chapel. It is harder pastoring a church that has seventy-five people than a church that has three hundred people. I work really hard. I don't even get paid for working at Calvary Chapel.

I am committed to this church and the thing that makes me really excited is it takes a certain kind of person to come to a church like this. With only seventy-five people it's hard. There are a lot of people who might come here and say, "Well they don't offer this and they don't offer this." We can't offer the services that a larger church can offer. It takes a special person who has pioneering spirit in their hearts who says, "I'm going to make Calvary Chapel Living Hope my church." So when I get up on Sunday mornings I go, "Wow. I can hardly wait to see who might come today." I'm always surprised that any of you come to church here to hear me teach. I know you're coming to hear God speak and what He wants to do in your lives, but I am just thrilled about all of that.

You know Pastor Lloyd Pulley at Calvary Chapel Old Bridge. He and I were talking this week and he said to me, as others have said to me over time, "Why don't you just go full time with the National Center for Biblical Parenting?" Which I could do. Great question to ask me on a week when I'm studying work. Where I'm studying my time praying and reading and looking at the Bible and what it has to do with work.

I realize the answer is this. As I've told other people before, but not in these same words, I realize the answer is this. When I pastor I experience the pleasure of God. God has called me to be a pastor. That's why I'm here. I'm serving God. I love pastoring and I am very grateful that you guys come to church on Sunday, that you're involved. I'm grateful for the many leaders who are serving here as well to do the work that needs to be done to help this church exist. It's a privilege for us to minister.

This is my church family, all of those things. It is also my work or my ministry. I was taking the principles and trying to apply them to myself this week and just again, recognizing the value that work has for me personally and what God has called me to do.

Let's look at another passage of scripture that talks about work. Just similar, just a cross reference in case you might be interested in doing some deeper work in thinking about this concept of work. Colossians 3:22-24 says, *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Henry Blackaby said this: "You never find God asking persons to dream up what they want to do for Him. Without doubt, the most important factor in each situation in the Bible was not that the individual wanted to do for God. The most important factor was what God was about to do. God reveals His purposes, His tasks so that you will know what He plans to do. When God came to Noah He did not ask, "What do you want to do for me?" He came to reveal what He was about to do. It was far more important to know what God was about to do. It really did not matter what

Noah had planned to do for God. God was about to destroy the world. He wanted to work through Noah to accomplish His purposes of saving a remnant of people and animals to repopulate the earth.”

The point is, God is at work and God is at work at your work. You want to be working where God is working. And seeing what God is doing and participating in that. That is the treasure of work. That is the treasure of serving God in a powerful way.

We’ve talked in verses 5-8 about employees. There’s one verse about employers. Look at verse 9. It says, *And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*

In other words, there’s something very humbling about being a Christian boss. You know that there is one God in heaven and we are humbled together before Him. Yes, you might have a position of authority in one place or another, but you must recognize that we all stand before the king. We are all serving Jesus together. He says don’t be threatening your employees. Not motivating them out of fear but replacing that with godly motivations as you’re working with them.

The reason I think this passage is here is because there may be a temptation among employers, even Christian employers, to abuse their authority in the workplace. Christians bring something to the workplace even if they’re employers. They’re bringing something special in that place.

Christian employers still must hire and fire. They must still discipline people. They must still call people to account. They still must watch the bottom line. They have goals that they must accomplish and they must rally people to do that. But the Christian employer does it differently than the non-Christian employer.

When I was working on my doctorate degree, my doctorate is in organizational management and strategic planning. It’s about leadership. That’s what my doctorate is in. One of the things we did in one of the classes, we listed the tasks of a leader. They’re coordinating, they’re communicating, they’re evaluating. All these different things we listed.

One of the things that we studied in that class is the difference between the Christian leader and the non-Christian leader. One of the main tasks that’s on the list for the Christian leader that’s not usually on the task for the non-Christian leader is that the Christian leader cares about those people that are working under him or her. Caring is one of those tasks. That’s strategic. See, the Christian employer or employee brings something to the marketplace that the non-Christian cannot bring.

The point today is that we are Spirit-filled. And as we’re Spirit-filled we work it out at home, we work it out at work, we work it out in the neighborhood. That is God’s desire for us. That we take our Spirit-filled lives and we are Spirit-filled in every one of those states, every one of those situations of our lives.

I hope you as a believer will take that message back, that you will take it to heart in your own life and you'll look at work differently tomorrow morning when you go to work and you'll trust God to do something special through you in the midst of being an employer or an employee.

But I want to say one thing. If you're here today and you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I want to draw attention to one thing. One question that I want you to ask yourself. If you were to die tonight, would you find yourself in heaven? How would you answer to God when He asks the question, what allows you to come and enter heaven? Would you have the answer to that? Because if you don't know the answer to that, which is that I have Jesus Christ living inside of me, then you want to make that decision today.

You do not know when you'll be taken off this earth. You do not know when your life will be over. You must make that choice. Personally, each one of us. So I want to encourage you, if you've never made that commitment to Jesus Christ that you make that commitment today. That you say, "I want you to live in my life. Lord, I want you to control me. I want you to run my life."

We're going to sing a couple songs in just a moment and as we do it's an opportunity for you to come before God, for you to say, "God, I want you to live in my life." Whether that means for you at work or maybe you're here today and you've never accepted Jesus and you need to say, "I want Jesus in my life." This is your time to do that as we sing. Talk to the Lord or maybe talk to our prayer counselors that will be on the side. Come up and see me during the song and I'll pray with you as well and help you understand what it means, just like those two little boys over the last two or three weeks have accepted Jesus in their hearts, you can make that commitment today in your life as well.

Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Father, thank you for changing the way we look at life. Thank you for giving us an attitude about work, about our homes, about the things we do. It's more than just the task at hand. Really, Lord, we're serving you and allowing you to be seen through us. We ask that you would do that this week in each one of our hearts. We want to be committed to you in every area of our lives. Lord, I pray for anyone here who has not made that commitment to trust you as their Lord and Savior, that you'd give them the courage to make that decision today. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.