

HOW TO

Follow Jesus at Work

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Jesus + Work + Life

Following Jesus in the day-to-day at work looks different than following Jesus in the day-to-day at school. But this kind of life of faith is what life will look like for decades. Workmates, neighbors, and your church community will constitute the majority of your relationships. What does it look like to live out your faith in that context? This resource is designed to help.

Each week there is a resource for the first day of your work week (Day 1) as well as for the middle of the work week (Day 3). Each resource has a journal prompt and an action step. If you would like a resource for the other five days a week, you may check out the YOU Bible app. **Discipleship happens best when you take responsibility for your own growth.** Your pastor or staff worker is not responsible for your spiritual growth, you are, with dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Use this six week guide as you pursue becoming a student of Jesus (a disciple) at your workplace, in your neighborhood, and with your relationships.

What Does God Think about Work?



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Tim Mackie of the Bible Project talks about the biblical foundation of work. "When you see a human at work, you see the image of God," Tim says. Watch Tim's presentation to his church community about work until 35:33.

Journal Prompt

Read Genesis 1. How do you see God working and calling humans to work? How has God's command to humans (1:28) been taken exploitatively? How do you want to see beauty and benefit come from your work?

Action

Take something that is unusable and make it useable. In other words, restore something or bring usefulness or beauty out of something with your hands.

Vocation & Calling

WEEK

2

DAY 1

Is it godlier as a Christian to seek a vocation within the Church? Definitely not! William Wilberforce (1759–1833) wrestled with that question: should he choose a political career or to join the clergy? He chose politics and was encouraged by a group of faith leaders to lead the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade in Britain. God brought his kingdom to bear through his vocational choice. How might God use your career to accomplish his will in the world?



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Journal Prompt

How might my job contribute to God's work in this world? What are potential pitfalls and dangers to my faith in this job? How can I guard against them without removing myself completely (being in the world, but not of the world)?

Action

Do some research on the history of the place you work. How has it contributed to God's love for justice or for doing good in the world? Ask a co-worker or your supervisor what she/he likes about their place of work. Ask whether they have a sense of calling to the job that they have.

What Do I Do with My Money?



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How do we square what God says about money in the Hebrew scriptures and the teachings of Jesus with how we engage money today? Listen to this discussion between Brandi Miller and Mako Nagasawa (both InterVarsity staff alumni) until about 45:05.

Journal Prompt

How have I seen generosity lived out? What is my plan for saving and for giving? Jot down your thoughts on this area as you begin to earn money.

Action

In order to make a monthly budget, begin by writing down everything you spend. Create a document/spreadsheet on your phone in which you input all your automatic payments and then record expenditures every time you spend money. At the end of the month, evaluate the expenses and make a budget.

What Do I Do with My Money?



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Pick things back up with the video you watched at the beginning of the week. Watch until about 58:37.

Journal Prompt

How much debt are you holding? What would it take for you to pay off the debt in five years? In two years? Do the math. What personal life choices might you make in order to get out of debt? What might generosity look like for you and what would you need to do to be as generous as you'd like to be?

Action

Determine what a healthy amount of money might be for you to give away at the end of the month and begin setting funds aside each week or month to achieve that goal. Then, decide with whom (persons or organizations) you'd like to be generous with that money.

Building Relationships at Work

We were made to be in relationship with others, and those of us who are trying to follow Jesus are often in relationship with those who know little about him or haven't experienced Jesus through life-giving friendships. God has things to give to you through such friendships and things to give to others, especially around how Jesus and his kingdom are expressed through you. Take a look at the passage below and think about people at work with whom God has put you in relationship.

Matthew 9:9–13

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.

¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Building Relationships at Work

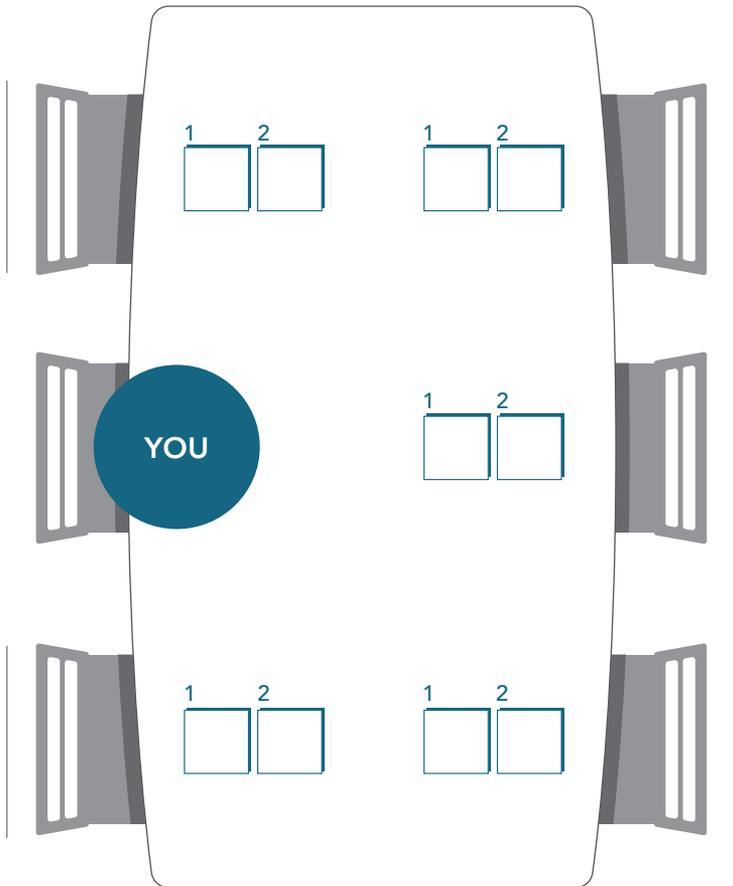
Consider these questions and write your responses below:

1. Based on the passage, who else was sitting at Jesus' table?
2. Why do you think these people trusted/ate with Jesus?
3. How do you think the disciples are feeling eating with tax collectors and sinners?
4. What would it have sounded like if you were at this meal? Would you hear swearing? Coarse jokes? How would you experience that?

Who Is at Your Table?

It takes more than one person to make a community. Are there ways that you can help build connections between your friends? How can they grow in trust with each other?

Think about who you want at your table. Write down their names behind the chairs and their "trust inventory" score in box 1 (see next page): Then, pick some trust-building activities to do with them. Afterwards, put the new "trust inventory" score in box 2:



Your Table

Trust Inventory List (1 point for each “yes”)

- Have they ever been real with me when they are sad or stressed?
- Do we ever just have fun together?
- Do you ever ask each other for advice?
- Do you share your personal problems with them?
- Do you intentionally spend time with each other on a regular basis?

Ref: pg. 39 of I Once Was Lost, by Everts and Schaupp

Common Trust Breakers

Do you do any of these?

- You cringe when someone swears around you.
- You make judgmental comments based on what your friend shares.
- You ask people to change their language around you.
("You shouldn't use that word.")
- You interrupt your friends when they are sharing their problems.
Are you quick to give advice?

Discuss: What are ways you can build trust?

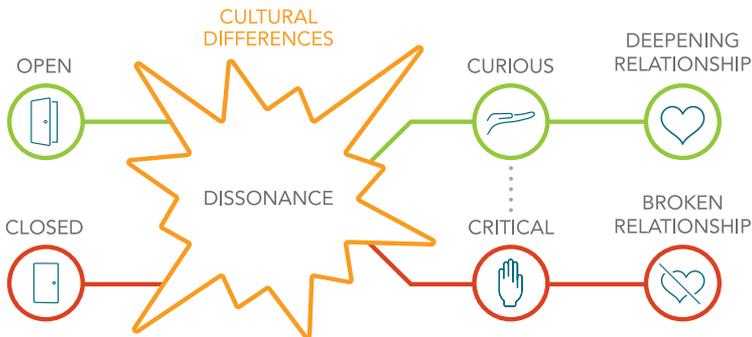
(e.g., pay attention to them as they talk, ask questions from what they share)

Building Relationships at Work

Watch this short video about work and culture. Consider the culture of your workplace as well as the individuals you're in relationship with. What does it mean for you to be competent at crossing cultures? Now watch the next video on approaching differences. Can you identify places you have "red lined" at work?



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Sabbath as Prophetic Resistance

Listen to this fascinating conversation between Brandi Miller, Barnabas Lin, and Angela Cho until 37:05 at the link. Consider how integral rest is in embracing our humanity. To rest is to acknowledge we are not in control. Understanding rest will be critical to understanding the place of work in our lives.



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Journal Prompt

What did you grow up understanding about rest? About productivity? What strikes you from the above conversation? Jot down some things you'd like to think about more deeply this week.

Action

Take a half hour this week sometime after your workday but before you go to bed. Meditate on how God loves you even when you are producing nothing for this world or the kingdom. Embrace God's acceptance of you when you are simply being and not doing.

Sabbath as Prophetic Resistance

Read this short article on sabbath.



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Journal Prompt

1. What are some activities that physically rejuvenate you?

2. What are activities that draw you closer to God or energize you spiritually?

3. What activities feed your emotional well-being?

4. Where are key points of stress in your life today, and what boundaries (temporary or permanent) can you put around them?

Action

Create a sabbath plan for your next day off and then do it!

My Work & Justice

WEEK

6

DAY 1

We are often part of worldly empires whose instinct is to increase the empire's share of the world at the expense of others. All organizations, even churches and nonprofits, feel this same pull. Listen to this talk from Urbana 18 and ask how you and your employer are embedded in empire, which Revelation calls 'Babylon.'



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Journal Prompt

In what ways does the industry your job is within benefit from low wages/cheap labor? How might the environment be impacted by your industry? What about the communities your company is located within?

Action

What methods does your organization have for receiving feedback? Is there one way you can think of in which your organization or job might modify its practices to become a blessing to the environment, your community, or to employees? Submit a suggestion or talk with your supervisor about it.

Act, Love, Walk

WEEK

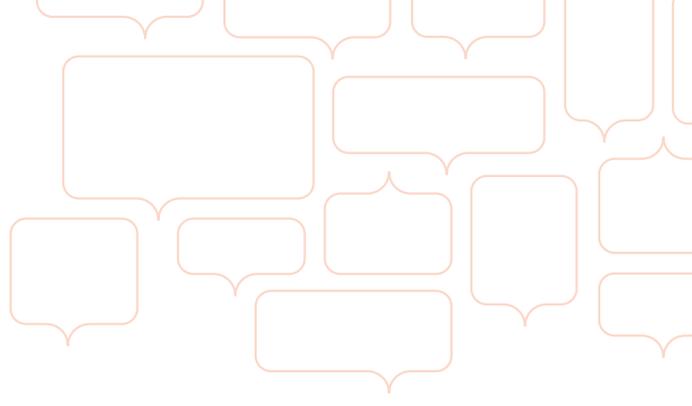
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DAY 3

The Old Testament prophet, Micah, calls out the unfaithfulness and unjust living of God's people and warns them of the consequences. They refuse to listen, but God continues to promise that through his followers, he will show love to all nations and draw all people close to himself. Chapter 6 begins with God's case against his people, who have been shaped by their self-serving loves. Then in our text for this study, Micah shares his own appeal: God has been disrespected and dishonored. What should we do?

Micah 6:6–8

⁶ With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? ⁸ He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.



Feedback

Would you take two minutes to tell us which resources were most and least helpful?

Thanks for your participation. May God take all you learned at your job this summer and translate it to wherever you are headed next.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7HKKWDP>



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