Young Business Leaders

First Conversations

FACILITATOR'S DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Work: What is Work & Why Does it Matter?

Read in Preparation: Genesis 1-3, Matthew 28:18-20

Read Together & Discuss: Genesis 1:1 & 1:26-31, 2:15, 2:19-20

1. What do these verses teach you about God?

God is the creator, He made everything. He made people. He gives people purpose and work to do.

1a. According to these verses, how does God feel about work?

God values work. He does it Himself. He says the product of His work is very good. Very different from typical pagan gods who are either idle or who get others to do their work for them. He also rests from work, not because He was tired, but as an example for us and all creation.

2. What do these verses teach you about people?

God has made people in His own image, male and female with value and dignity. People have been given work to do by God (1:26-28). He placed Adam in the garden to work it (2:15) and gave him the privilege and responsibility of naming the animals (2:19-20). Naming carries the significance of stewardship and responsibility over those named creatures.

2a. What are the purposes (work) God has given to man?

God has called man to: 1) Bear His Image 2) Fill the earth with many people (many image bearers = greater glory & honor) 3) To cultivate and subdue the earth (To cultivate—tend and increase its fruitfulness / To subdue – to bring into subjection forces beyond the garden until all is fruitful and submitted to God. All of this is stewardship. Stewardship means we care for things, people and places for someone else – for God, to whom all these things belong.

Read Together & Discuss: Genesis 3:17-19

1. What do these verses teach you about God?

God gave man freedom to obey or disobey. God holds Adam to account for disobedience. God curses the ground.

2. What do these verses teach you about people?

The mission (the work) God gave people became more difficult because of their sin. Adam's primary area of work was cultivating the ground. (Just as he cursed Eve's womb in 3:16 – her primary area of work was childbearing and rearing).

2a. What do these verses teach you about work?

Work is not evil. Work is good. Work is now often hard or frustrating because of the curse on the ground. We may do great work and see little results.

For Reflection: How Does the Mission Jesus gave the Church connect to work?

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

Matthew 28:19-20 is often called the "great commission". We have a mission to make disciples. We are to baptize, to teach people to obey all God has commanded through Jesus. This is connected to Genesis 1-3 because the earth is now full of image bearers, but they do not consciously follow God or intentionally reflect His image. This is the work of evangelism -- we are reconnecting people to their created purposes!

What is one way you can apply these lessons to your life this week?

Take time to focus on how to apply these lessons. Encourage them to make a clear "I will" statement, like, "This week, I will not grumble at work, knowing that my work is from God and for God" or, "This week I will look for an opportunity to help a co-worker discover their created purpose." Encourage them to write it down and you should as well, to ask them next week how it went.

Relationships: Why are Relationships so Important?

Read in Preparation

Luke 10:25-37

Proverbs 13:20

Read and Discuss Together: Luke 10:25-37, The Greatest Commandment

1. What does this story teach you about God?

God does believe there is a greatest commandment!

The first and second commands are connected – To love God with all we are and to love people as ourselves.

God wants us to love all people – not just the ones who are like us. Our love of others expresses our love for God.

2. What does this story teach you about People?

People try to rationalize their disobedience (“who is my neighbor?”)

We can categorize and exclude people in our minds.

People are really important to God! (Second command & tied to the first!)

He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.

– Proverbs 13:20

1. What does this mean?

The people you spend most of your time with will significantly shape you.

Wise people will push you to wisdom and blessing.

Foolish people will push you into folly and harm.

2. Are you practically applying this today? If not, how can you start?

One way you can practically apply this is through groups like this one, where you surround yourself with people who are intentionally seeking to grow in their understanding and obedience to God. Having a peer group and mentors who can speak to the pressures you face at work and give you wise counsel in the situations that arise can make an enormous impact in the trajectory of your life.

For Reflection: The Most Important Relationship

We are made for relationships with God and with people! However, In lesson 1, we learned that all men have chosen to rebel against God. That rebellion has broken our relationship with God and is the cause of all our problems with people. We cannot love God or have a relationship with Him unless He makes a way for that damage and rebellion to be repaired. The good news of Christianity is that God has made a way. That is why Jesus has come, to fulfill the requirements of obedience that we could not (Matthew 5:17). Jesus then offered His perfect life as a sacrifice to cover the sins of all who trust in Him (John 3:16).

We want to have purpose in our work and life in our relationships. That begins when we trust God to forgive our sins through the sacrifice of Jesus. Every other good thing flows from a life of trust and obedience to Jesus. If you have made that commitment, press into it! If you have questions about it, or want to know how to begin to follow Jesus, let's discuss that one-on-one. (Leaders: Make an effort to ask each person individually about this question, even make a separate time to meet if needed.)

Habits: Why are Healthy Habits Worth the Effort?

Read in Preparation

Galatians 6:7-10

Matthew 7:24-27

Read Aloud Together and Discuss:

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Galatians 6:7-10

1. What does this teach you about God?

God has created a law of sowing and reaping, of cause and effect.

God wants us to develop consistent good habits which will produce good results.

God cares about people!

2. What does this teach you about people?

People will experience the outcomes of their choices and habits and lifestyles.

People can get tired of doing what is right, they can grow weary.

We do not reap right away – it takes time and perseverance!

One of our habits should be doing good—to everyone we have opportunity to bless, especially believers in need.

3. What are some of the healthy habits which you can sow to reap a good harvest in the future?

Note: Many possible answers here.

Healthy eating, exercise & sleep – all are important and have some value.

Regular relationships and accountability – like last lesson, we should make it a focus to invest our lives in a number of relationships where we can build trust and the right to speak into each other's lives.

Obedience to God's Word – We need to develop a practice of hearing God's Word and obeying it (This is where the reading of Matthew 7:24-27 is important – building our house on the rock).

Obedience to the great commission – developing habits and accountability around what we discussed in lesson 1. We are not likely to do this unless we help each other through accountability!

4. What are the next steps YBL can help you to take in that direction?

For Reflection: Possible Next Steps with YBL

- Help you to join a small group
- Help you find a local church for you and your family
- Teach you how to read the Bible
- Help coach you to lead a small group in your home or office.
- Spend time exploring questions about God one on one (4-week Investigative Study)
- Meet with a mentor to discuss a pressing or specific issue