

What Matters-Week Three

- Romans 8:13-17, Galatians 5:22
- Begin with illustration of two girls who work in the donut shop (Week 3, Day 7).
 - Both work hard. But when one has done her shift, she checks out and is gone.
 - The Owners's daughter, however, goes above and beyond. Goes the extra mile. To her the work is not just a neat job, it has become a part of her life. The work is both her past and her future, and she wants to do an incredible job helping her father accomplish the family's task.
- Far too many people treat their faith like a summer job. Clock in, clock out. Smile while you work, but leave it behind when the shift is over.
 - You check in for an hour or two on Sunday morning
 - Maybe a bit more for prayer or a bible study or a little service during the week.
 - But it isn't your life. It isn't who you are. You have put it into one compartment of your life, like you have placed recreation, or work, or paying the bills, or whatever
- But you see, we are not hired workers in God's kingdom. God's word tells us that we are not just employees, but heirs-children of God. This is not a check in, check out thing, but a true change in our identity.
 - Read Romans 8:13-17
 - We are heirs of God. His children. What is God's is, in a sense, ours.
 - An heir, after all, is one who inherits the value of the estate. The work of the estate.
- What is the business of God's kingdom? What is the business of God's children?
 - Restoration: Since the fall into sin recorded in Genesis 3, God has been in the work of restoring His people and His creation. He has been at the work of reconciling humanity to Himself and bringing healing and salvation to those who find themselves apart from Him because of their sin and rebellion-your sin and rebellion.
 - (said a little tongue-in-cheek) Does restoring humanity and creation and reconciling broken and hurting people to a loving Father sound tedious? Does that sound like a drag of a job, where you just clock in, clock out, get the paycheck, and then do what you actually like?
 - I fear too many people see our faith, the Christian faith, as a big To-Do list, a list of rules and regulations that spoil our good time, that ruin our fun. Nothing could be further from the truth. Being a part of the Christian community gives us the most exciting work in the world: the work of coming alongside with God and sharing the restoration and healing that we have received from Him through Jesus Christ.
- Does that sound like a drag. Consider Galatians 5. (read fruits). Against such things there is no law! No law or rules or regulations against these incredible things.
 - When God makes us His child, His heir, in Jesus Christ, we become a part of His kingdom and His work. The gift is primarily the gift of eternal life, but includes the joy and purpose of living in His kingdom, here and now, and working with Him.

- How sad it is when people make the Christian faith a “have to” business. I have to worship, serve, study, pray, give, etc. We don’t “have to” do anything—we get to do all these things as heirs of God’s kingdom. If this is your attitude my friend, you are on dangerous ground. You may have made the Christian faith a man-made self-regulated religion of law and works. For those who are filled with faith in Jesus think of faith as a “get to” thing. We “get to” know we are truly and unconditionally loved, and share that love and mercy we have received with others. We ‘get to’ receive the joy of being forgiven freely through Jesus Christ, and sharing that Good News that gives us that gift to others. We get to finally be free of the burdens, guilt, and self-loathing sin and regret bring into our lives, and experience peace because we have been restored by the blood of Christ. . .
- Our work as heirs can be lived out in any vocation and place we find ourselves in. We are living heirs, parts of His new creation and new Kingdom, as pastors, teachers, doctors, homemakers, traffic controllers, sales clerks, CPAs, office workers, etc.
- Ultimately, God reveals to us that we just aren’t saved *from* something (our sin, our rebellion, our selfishness, pride, etc-), but saved *for* something. For the work He is already doing in us, among us, and around us. God doesn’t just give us new life, but gives us a purpose greater than anything we could ever accomplish apart from Him, no matter how hard we work or who we work for.
- May God’s peace fill your life as you recognize what He has saved you from, and what He has saved you for. May the joy of being an heir of our Heavenly Father give you hope, healing, and strength throughout your days.
- Amen.