

STUDY GUIDE F O R SERVING CHRIST IN THE WORKPLACE

Chapter Two: Assignment: Babylon

Groundwork

Read Chapter Two.

Which point in this chapter did you find to be the most helpful?

Read John 17:15-19.

Jot down any ideas from Chapter Two you want to recall and discuss with your group:

1. _____ (p. _____)
2. _____ (p. _____)
3. _____ (p. _____)

Groupwork

Rom 1:1, 7. "Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God. . . . To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:"

Chapter Two opens (p. 21) by describing two wrong ideas that typically make it difficult for many Christians to believe that God has placed them in "secular" jobs. Those two ideas are:

1. _____

2. _____



Summarize how either or both of these wrong ideas may have affected you concerning your own everyday work.

When you read of someone in the Bible being "called," how have you interpreted what that means?

Read Daniel 1:1-6.

Summarize how Daniel found himself in a decades-long career as a bureaucrat in Babylon.

Jeremiah 1:5. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Daniel and Jeremiah were contemporaries. Suppose Daniel had compared his own position in a "secular" job in Babylon with the way God had placed Jeremiah in his lifework (see Jeremiah 1:5). Had Daniel looked only at outward appearances, what might he have mistakenly concluded?

"Summarizing the entire New Testament witness, 'call' is used for the invitation to salvation through discipleship to Christ, the summons to a holy corporate and personal living, and the call to serve. All are called. All are called together. All are called for the totality of everyday life."

R. Paul Stevens: The Other Six Days (p. 88)

Read the quotation from *The Other Six Days* (to the left). In light of that summary, have you been "called"? If so, how does your "call" affect you in your everyday work?

A former soldier said: "I soon found that the military was no place for a Christian. Daily my ears were assaulted with profane and obscene language."

In the column to the left, read the quotations from the former soldier and the pastor. What comments have you read or heard that expressed similar warnings to avoid the "dirty" world of "secular" work?

A Christian pastor said this in a message: "The work-place is no place for a Christian woman. It is too hard to be spiritual there.... Stay out of the world!"

Have you yourself wrestled with thoughts like these? If so, describe them.

John 17:14-19. " I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world."

How can you reconcile the pastor’s advice to “Stay out of the world,” with what Jesus says in his prayer to the Father in John 17:14-19?

On p. 25, the book describes some of the unholy influences Daniel encountered in his “secular” job there in Babylon. How do these compare with the corruption surrounding you where you work?

Daniel 1:8. "But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine. . ."

Read Daniel 1:8 in light of I John 5:4. How does I John 5:4 help you understand Daniel’s secret in resisting the “rot” in his workplace?

1 John 5:4. ". . .everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."

Heartwork

- *Your geographic location*
- *Your gifts and abilities*
- *Your need for income*
- *Your interests*
- *Your desire to help others*
- *Your family history*
- *Your _____*

Through what circumstances did you come to work where you do? (Use the list to the left to stimulate your thinking.)

Where do you discern the hand of God in those circumstances?

In prayer, thank God for your work and for the ways in which he made it possible for you to serve him in that area.