

Game Plan: (Life Lessons from the Coach)

“On Productivity”

Introduction:

The Land of Productivity / Our Culture & Our Way... But where did this idea of production come from? What is it that drives us, each and every day, to produce? like, “mad-men” and women **we produce...**



Images Below come up one at a time, as they are mentioned.

- Products on an assembly line
- Computers
- Art
- TV's
- Corn, lot's of corn
- Films & Music
- Paper products
- Girl Scout Cookies
- Home-work (If you are a student)
- A “to-do” each and every day & we check it off..
- The list could go on and on...

We like production so much... It's so much a part of our God-Given DNA, that we even. **Re-Produce** (Photo of Katie & Caleb **when I say “Reproduce”**) then a photo of **my boys**.

And here's the thing, when we lay our heads down on our pillows each evening, most often, **the one question we find ourselves asking** and answering is this: “How productive was I today?” And even as we're falling asleep, we're planning within our minds how we can be even more productive tomorrow.

I. “**The Blessing**”

So where did this idea of production come from? Why are we like this? Listen to this...

So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; **fill the earth and subdue it**. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

Genesis 1:27-30

And so that was chapter one. I love this! Productivity is Godly! It's beautiful. God is endorsing this, embracing this, and we can even say that this is God's “**First blessing**” to mankind. He created us... to create.

So I'm gonna call this 1st Chapter in our whole narrative of production, “**The Blessing**” So that's chapter 1. It's beautiful, creative, and, it's “stress free”. I love it. That's chapter 1.

II. “**The Curse**”

But listen in here as the whole thing changes a bit. Listen in.

To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of 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."

Genesis 3:17-19

Well there you have it, in the beginning of time you see an answer to the question that may have been bouncing around in your head for years. "Why do I have to work so much?" or "Why does this have to be so hard?" Put simply this is a curse that has been placed on us because of man's sin in the garden. And so Chapter 2 is called "**The Curse**"

But I'm not so sure that we haven't taken it upon ourselves to make this curse worse than it already is... If only we could take the time to realize that work is a fantastic place for us to exhibit the flavor and brilliance of God as His "salt" and "light". **Who are you when your at work and how does it differ from who God wants you to be?** Or maybe you need to ask yourself: "How much of your work are you carrying into your front door when you come home at night?"

So now that we have this responsibility of working to survive placed on us by God, what should we do with it?

I want to offer you a few things to consider that will completely change your life when it comes to your work and the first one is this:

a.) **Do What You Love.**

Now you hear this and it's possible that your 1st thought is: "Sure Dean, that sounds easy". And the truth is that there are many people out here working, who have a negative slant on any kind of work and no matter what they do for a living, whether they are good at it or not; they really aren't living at all. **They are parasites that suck the life right out of any workplace.** But many of us have never searched deep enough to find that intersection of giftedness and joy. As Dr. David Reece puts it: "**That place where your greatest love and God's greatest need meet.**"

God has blessed all of us with a skill of some kind, so "Do what you love!"

b.) **Be Great at what you do.**

For thousands of years the church was known as the “Center of the arts”. If there was a great musical composition, it was done to glorify God. Fantastic painters were hired alongside sculptors and architects so that the church would be a center of excellence. But something happened along the way, and an institution that was once looked to as an epicenter of artistic excellence turned into this boring life-less hub of people who offered sub-standard talents to God and the world began looking for excellence outside of the church. **No matter what you do for a living, there is no excuse for constantly doing a poor or even normal job.** God wants you to be great **and you are more like God when you bring excellence to your workplace.**

c.) **Work as if you are working for God!**

You may not be a preacher but believe it or not you are working for God. My final challenge for you is this. Work everyday as though you are working for God himself. I’m not saying that you should look at your boss and try to imagine that it’s God, because your boss may be the furthest thing from God, but what I am saying is this. Whether you know this or not, you have the ability to bring God with you to work & school. Bring him by way of your attitude, your grace, your smile, and your servant’s heart. Treat your time at work as though you are his ambassador of the day. You will be amazed at how your work culture can change.

Listen to this... Remember “Work as if you are working for God”...

Our place is not the auditorium but the stage--or, as the case may be, the field, workshop, study, laboratory-- because we ourselves form part of the creative apparatus of God. He made us in order to use us, and use us in the most profitable way; for his purpose, not ours. To live a spiritual life means subordinating all other interests to that single fact. Sometimes our position seems to be that of tools, taken up when wanted, used in ways we had not expected for an object on which our opinion is not asked, and then laid down. Sometimes we are the currency used in some great operation, of which purpose is not

revealed to us. Sometimes we are servants, left year in, year out to the same monotonous job. Sometimes we are conscious fellow workers with the Perfect, striving to bring the Kingdom in.

But whatever our particular place or job may be, it means the austere conditions of the workshop, clocking in at the right time and tending the machine in the right way. Sometimes, perhaps, carrying on for years with a machine we do not very well understand and do not enjoy; because it needs doing, and no one else is available. Or accepting the situation quite quietly, when a job we felt that we were managing excellently is taken away. Taking responsibility if we are called to it, or just bringing the workers their dinner, cleaning and sharpening the tools. All self-willed choices and obstinacy drained out of what we thought to be our work; so that it becomes more and more God's work in us.

“The Spiritual Life”
Evenlyn Underhill

the blessing
the curse

III. “**The Redemption**”

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

“Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.’ But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’”

Luke 10:38-42

Bottom line: When Jesus has been given permission to be your “Life Coach”, He will challenge you to **be more** not just **do more**.

Look at this as it's played out in the early church. This is a beautiful scene...

“A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people.”

Acts 2:37-47

This group knew, as well as we all know, that when you spend your days in the presence of God, his people and the Holy Spirit that you become Godly people. And what did this group of Godly people do? I'm only gonna list two that jump out at me.

They shared with those in need. (vs. 45)

& They enjoyed the goodwill of all people. (vs. 47)

(Prayer)

Dear Savior at whose feet I now sit,

When you knock on the door to my heart, what is it you are looking for? What is it you want? Is it not to come in to dine with me and I with you? Is it not fellowship?

And yet, so often, where do you find me? At your feet? No. In the kitchen. How many times have I become distracted and left you there... sitting... waiting... longing?

What is so important about my kitchen full of preparations that draws me away from you? How can they seem so trivial now and yet so urgent when I'm caught up in them?

Forgive me for being so distracted by my preparations and so little attracted by your presence. For being so diligent in my service and so negligent in my devotions. For being so quick to my feet and so slow to yours.

Help me to understand that it is an intimate moment you seek from me, not an elaborate meal.

Guard my heart this day from the many distractions that vie for my attention. And help me to fix my eyes on you.

Ken Gire

“Seeing What is Sacred”