

Doug Smith: 0:36

Hey, leader, and welcome to another episode of the L3 Leadership Podcast, where we are obsessed with helping you grow to your maximum potential and to maximize the impact of your leadership. My name is Doug Smith and I am your host, and today's episode is brought to you by my friends at Beratung Advisors. We also recorded this episode live from the new Birgo Realty Studio. If you're new to the podcast, welcome. I'm so glad that you're here and I hope that you enjoy our content and become a subscriber. Note that you can also watch all of our episodes over on our YouTube channel, so make sure you're subscribed there as well. And, as always, if the podcast has impacted your life and you've been listening to us for a while, it would mean the world to me if you would leave us a rating and review on Apple Podcasts or Spotify or whatever app you listen to podcast through. That really does help us to grow our audience, and we made this really easy for you. There is a link in the show notes that says rate this podcast. You can just click that and it'll take you right to where you need to go and show you how to do it. So thank you in advance for that. Well, leader. In today's episode, you're going to hear a returning guest, my friend Jordan Raynor, and we're going to be talking all about his new book, which is called the Sacredness of Secular Work Four Ways. Your Job Matters for Eternity and if you enjoy this episode again, you can go back and listen to our first conversation in episode number 351. Jordan is brilliant and has so much value to add. If you're unfamiliar with him, let me just tell you a little bit about him. Jordan Raynor is the leading voice of the faith and work movement. Through his bestselling books the Creator in You, Redeeming Your Time, Master of One and Call to Create, the Mir Christians podcast and his weekly devotionals, Jordan has helped millions of Christians in every country on earth connect their work to the gospel. In addition to his writing, Jordan serves as the executive chairman of Threshold 360 venture-backed a tech startup which Jordan previously ran a CEO. Following a string of successful ventures of his own, Jordan has been twice selected as a Google Fellow and served in the White House under President George W Bush. A sixth generation Floridian, Jordan lives in Tampa with his wife and their three young daughters. The Rainers are proud members of the Church of Odessa and in our conversation today, you're going to hear Jordan talk all about his new book, the Sacredness of Secular Work Four Ways. Your Job Matters for Eternity and I think you're going to love this conversation. But before we dive in, just a few announcements. This episode of the L3 Leadership Podcast is sponsored by Beratung Advisors. The financial advisors at Beratung Advisors help educate and empower clients to make informed financial decisions. You can find out how Beratung Advisors can help you develop a customized financial plan for your financial future by visiting their website at beratungadvisors.com that's B-E-R-A-T-U-N-G-Advisors. com. Securities and investment products and services offered through LPL Financial, member of FINRA and SIPC. Beratung Advisors, LPL Financial and L3 Leadership are separate entities. I also want to thank our sponsor, Henne Jewelers. They're a jeweler owned by my friend and mentor, John Henne, and my wife Laura and I got our engagement and wedding rings through Henne Jewelers and had an incredible experience. And not only do they have great jewelry, but they also invest in people. In fact, for every couple that comes in engaged, they give them a book to help them prepare for marriage, and we just love that. So if you're in need of a good jeweler, check out HenneJewelers.com. And with all that being said, here's my conversation with Jordan Raynor. Well, Jordan Raynor, it is great to have you back on the podcast, it's great to see you again, and you've been such a friend and such an encouragement in my life. And you have a new book coming out, book number seven. I don't know, I've lost track. You are a beast, my friend, I'm super. You're just an inspiration to me. But the title of this book is called the Sacredness of Secular Work, and we'll just start broadly. Why did you write this book and what do you want listeners and readers to get out of it?

Jordan Raynor: 4:05

Yeah, it's a great question. And, Doug man, it's so fun to hang with you. I always love getting to converse with you. Yeah, I wrote this book because you know I spend most of my time these days creating content

that helps Christians see how the work matters for eternity. And when you tell an entrepreneur or a marketer or a barista that their work quote unquote matters for eternity, the most typical response you hear is oh amen, my job is my mission field and I'm like yeah, yes, that's, of course, true, but if the only way our work matters to God is because we can leverage our jobs to quote unquote share the gospel, then, frankly, most of us are wasting most of our time, right? Like, think about it. Like, how much time does somebody actually spend walking a co-worker through the Romans road, right? Like like, let's be like crazy generous, that's a good. You spend three hours a month sharing the gospel. That means that 1% of your life matters for eternity. I don't know about you, I find that deeply depressing. But more importantly, it's really deeply unbiblical. And so I wrote this book to help readers see how 100% of their time can matter for eternity. Every zoom meeting you lead, every Uber you drive, every story you write, every diaper you change is, as the apostle Paul says in 1st Corinthians 15:58, not in vain. So that's the why behind this book to help a believer see how their work matters for eternity even when they're not quote unquote sharing the gospel.

Doug Smith: 5:38

Yeah, it's so good, and I'm on mission with you. You know, I work at a homeless rescue mission in our city and so literally I talk to leaders all the time they're like, wow, it must be so amazing to get to do God's work every day. I wish I could. And I'm just like you're totally missing it. And so to that person that has that common response to me you know, how can they start to see more beyond just witnessing their jobs as mattering for eternity?

Jordan Raynor: 6:02

Oh, man, how much time do we have? Uh, we can take a long time Now, in fact, let me give you, let me give you the quick answer yeah, language matters, words matter. So let's get really clear what we're talking about, because that person that comes to you is like oh Doug, you're doing God's work. What they're saying is, your work is sacred, doug, and my job as an investment banker is secular.

Doug Smith: 6:24

That's the term I hear thrown around all the time.

Jordan Raynor: 6:26

That word secular literally means without God. But if you are a Christian who believes that you have the Holy Spirit living inside of you, the only thing you need to do to instantly make your quote unquote secular workplace sacred is walk through the front door or log on to Zoom. Right now, some work is clearly off limits for those who follow Jesus, right, but I'm gonna go ahead and assume that our listeners aren't, like you know, peddling pornography or exploiting the poor, doing something that overtly contradicts God's word. And if that's true and you're doing your best to live unto God, then, in the words of Charles Spurgeon, nothing is secular, everything is sacred, right? I think the more interesting question, the more life changing question, is okay. How does that sacred work you do as a barista or working with the homeless, or running a for profit venture? How does it matter beyond the present? How does it matter for eternity? And that's the question I'm really sinking my teeth into with this project.

Doug Smith: 7:29

Yeah, and in the book I just thought this was fascinating to speak more on that you said the Great Commission, which we all know is indeed great. It's just not only Can you expand on that, man, I just the light bulb went off when I read that statement.

Jordan Raynor: 7:42

I was like, wow, talk more about that I think this might be the most deeply entrenched lie in the church today and oh, by the way, it's a brand new lie in church history. Prior to 400 years ago, nobody interpreted Jesus' command, to quote unquote go and make disciples, what we call the Great Commission, as the exclusive mission of the church, and I would argue there are some really big problems with treating it as the only commission right. Let me just share three of those problems with you real quickly. Number one Jesus never told us it was the only thing he called us to do in that text. In Matthew 28, Jesus said go and make disciples of all the nations and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you. The Gospels record Jesus issuing about 50 unique commands. If Jesus meant for us to interpret the Great Commission as the totality of our mission in life, he could have said so, but he didn't. In fact, he went out of his way to reiterate the importance of obeying all of his teachings. So that's the first problem with treating the Great Commission as the only commission Jesus never did. Number two it ironically makes us less effective at the Great Commission. Tim Keller did some great research that found that 80% or more of evangelism in the early centuries of Christianity was not done by ministers or missionaries, but by mere Christians working as farmers and tent makers and mothers. And that was true in the early church and it's likely to be true for the foreseeable future, as non-Christians are more reticent than ever to darken the door of a church. Entire nations are closing their doors to missionaries when the Great Commission is the only one that we hear preaching our churches and when the only people we see on our stages at our churches are pastors and full-time missionaries. It leads those of us saying in the pews feeling guilty about going to work in the very places most likely to make disciples in our post-Christian context. So let me give you one more reason why it's so promatic that we treat the Great Commission as the only commission. It blocks us from seeing the full extent to how our work matters for eternity. Right, and that's really the heart of this book. If the Great Commission is the only commission, then our work only has value when leveraged to the instrumental end of evangelism. And if our work only has instrumental value, again most of us are wasting most of our time. And so what we see throughout scripture, from Genesis one to Revelation 22, is that God has given humankind a dual vocation, not one commission, but two the Great Commission to make disciples that we see in Matthew 28,. And the first commission that we see in Genesis one and throughline all the way to Revelation 22, simply to make culture and make this world more useful for other human beings' benefit and enjoyment. And once you grasp that, that, this dual vocation, the Great and First Commissions now I can start to understand how 100% of my time matters to God, not just those explicitly spiritual tasks of evangelism and prayer.

Doug Smith: 10:48

Yeah. So if we're to create the world the way it ought to be, to create culture that's our second commission. I love that. Now bring that down to the people that are listening. Maybe they're a barista, maybe they're an investment banker. How does what they do every day actually create the world the way it ought to be and actually matter for eternity?

Jordan Raynor: 11:06

Yeah, it's really good, really good. So to understand this, you really gotta go back to Genesis one. Genesis one, this first commission God gave us, is the blueprint for what it means to be human. This is the blueprint for human mission. In Genesis one, 26 or 28, God takes humanity and says hey, here's your job fill the earth, subdue it and rule over it. Right? Lots of interpretations as to what this means, but by and large, most people agree that this means to create culture and to make the world more useful for other human beings' benefit and enjoyment in a way that honors God and his commands, right? So what does this look like for the barista, right? Or the entrepreneur? It's taking the raw materials of this world. An entrepreneur is taking the aluminum that makes up her MacBook, right, and the software that's been created with the raw materials of this world and is using it in a way to try to make the world better for other human beings. And when you do that with excellence and a heart of love and in accordance with God's

commands, you're bringing God pleasure, and his pleasure is eternal. There's a great one of my favorite verses, Psalm 37, 23, says that the Lord directs the steps of the godly and he delights in every detail of their lives. Every detail, not just when you're writing a check to a ministry, not just when you're sharing the gospel with a coworker. Everything you do at work today with excellence and love, in a godly way and accordance with God's commands, brings God pleasure. So how does that work matter for eternity? Well, his pleasure is eternal. He will remember these things. I think they'll fuel our conversations with the risen Christ in heaven. Right, that's how this matters for eternity.

Doug Smith: 13:00

Yeah, I wanted to ask more of your eternal perspective on this, about our last, our work outlasting our lives. You know the famous quote in Gladiator what we do in life will echo in eternity. Talk more about that. What do you think about? Do you think we'll work in heaven, and how our work and the things we do at the time we have here matter, then.

Jordan Raynor: 13:20

Yeah. So, man, we could do a whole episode on a theology of heaven. I think most people spend more time thinking about a one week vacation than they do thinking about eternity, and that's a problem for a lot of reasons. But when we do that, when we fail to think deeply about our eternal state, it leads us to accept wishy-washy half truths about heaven peddled by culture, rather than the whole truths that we find in scripture, and I actually dedicated an entire chapter of the sacredness of secular work to dispelling these half truths about heaven. One of them is that earth is our temporary home. Right, that's kind of true, in the sense that earth as we know it today is our temporary home. The whole truth is that this earth is our temporary home until God makes it perfect again, and it is our perfect and permanent home. You allude to another one. There's this half truth running around the church today that we will worship for eternity. It leads people to have this caricature of heaven as a glorified retirement home in the clouds where all we do is strung a harp and lyre for ever and ever. That's not biblical at all. Let me read you an excerpt from one passage in Isaiah, chapter 65. It's one of the most hopeful things in scripture, especially if you love your job, but even if you hate it. Isaiah says see, I will create a new heavens and a new earth. This is God talking through Isaiah I will create new heavens and new earth. My people will build houses and dwell in them. They'll plant vineyards and eat their fruits. My chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands and they will not labor in vain. God's word does not say that we will sing, lord, I lift your name on high forever and ever, or recline in a hammock forever and ever. It says that we will work with Christ and for him forever and ever. Only this is work as it was always meant to be in the Garden of Eden, right. It is work redeemed, restored. It's all of your best days at work and none of the bad ones. It is work that is challenging but satisfying, difficult but fruitful all honey and no bees. And if you love your job, man, that should fire you up for eternity. And even if you hate your job, it should get you excited because your final destination is the work that, deep down in your soul, you know you were made to do but, for whatever reason, couldn't do in this life. That's more than likely what you're gonna be spending your time doing forever and ever, in a perfect state.

Doug Smith: 16:10

Yeah, I'm curious. You know I'm really big on faithfulness. I define faithfulness as doing the best you can with what God puts in your hand at the moment. There's several times where Jesus said man, my good and faithful servant, you've been faithful over litter. Now I'm gonna make you ruler over much. Do you feel like the way that we are faithful or the way that we do the work here is gonna determine our position? Not that it's gonna be about position I don't wanna sound like it's all about title but do you feel like the level of responsibility we'll get then is somewhat relying on how we use what's given to us now?

Jordan Raynor: 16:41

I think scripture is abundantly clear that, yes, that is 100% true. Listen, if you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins, your entrance into the kingdom of heaven is perfectly secure, and all of our entrance, all of our admission tickets look exactly the same. That said, the rewards that we experience for eternity are not created equal at all, and one of those rewards you just alluded to one of them in the parable of the minas that Jesus tells is increased job responsibility. On the new earth. Some will lead, others will follow. Some will, I believe, be launching rocket ships to explore the new heavens, while others are on the ground, you know, creating the rocket ships, whatever that is. We have varying rewards and responsibilities on the newer, based on how we steward this life right, which would motivate us to steward it really, really well. I think this is what part of what Paul was getting at in Colossians, chapter three, verses 23 through 24. He says whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. That inheritance is salvation. But there are eternal rewards attached to how we work in this life, and one of those are varying levels of leadership and responsibility on the new earth. I talked to Johnny Erickson Todd up when I was writing this book. She said something I'll never forget. She's like I wanna live every day of this life so that I can be most useful to King Jesus in the next one. Like, yes, that's the idea here.

Doug Smith: 18:26

So I wanna bring that back to today, when I first started getting exposed to some of these concepts. It changed everything and to wake up excited every day and to realize that my work could be sacred. I mean, they say if you enjoy your work, you'll never work a day in your life. In some ways. Can you talk about the impact that starting to get revelation and actually starting to see all work as sacred what impact does that actually have on people that you've seen you work with people all the time, mentor people. What have you seen in people's lives that has transformed as a result of getting some of this in their hearts?

Jordan Raynor: 18:56

Yeah, these people and I know because I was one of them become fully alive Monday through Friday. So many Christians are walking around today believing that, if they're honest, less than 1% of their life really matters in the grand scheme of eternity. But when you can go to that person, look at him in the eye bag. No, no, no, no, no. Look to scripture. Look at God's plan for work. Look at what he made you to do. You're doing the very thing he made you to do. See Genesis one, and I think he redeemed you to do. See Ephesians, chapter two. It makes them become fully alive and oh, by the way, fully alive. People attract the lost like craft coffee attracts hipsters right. Like this is what the world is craving for human beings fully alive and fully engaged in the work that God created them to do. So that's number one. It makes them fully alive, it encourages them to just keep doing the work that they've been doing right and view it as a sacred space. But number two, I think, when you understand this, I think the natural implication of understanding that your work matters for eternity is a challenge to make it matter more. Right. Like all work, all good work matters for eternity. Not all work matters equally for eternity. In other words, you can have two marketing managers at the same company. We're both Christians, both of their work is making some contribution to eternity, but one is intentionally trying to make it matter more. How? By working in accordance with God's commands, to earn more eternal rewards, by communing with God as she does the work right that brings him eternal pleasure. So the net of this book, the net of this message is hey, be wildly encouraged that your work today matters deeply to God, but also be challenged to make it matter more to spend this rounding error of a life rather than to save it right, because all of us should be optimizing for the eternal. That's just good investment advice.

Doug Smith: 21:00

Yeah, so in optimizing for the eternal, I am curious when you consulted and encouraged people on job choice whether it's someone you know, a young person right out of college considering what they want their path to be, or maybe someone who just starts hearing about this, maybe they are the investment banker they always thought, hey, once I get enough money, then I'm gonna go into full-time ministry. How does one make career decisions with this, with eternity in mind and sacred work?

Jordan Raynor: 21:26

That's a good question. I'll say this I don't think God cares nearly as much about what we do vocationally, which jobs we choose, which jobs we take as he does, who we are as we do the job, how we do the job and why we do it right. And I think this is part of why the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7,. The apostle Paul is writing to a group of new believers and he's anticipating their question of okay, man, I'm a Christian, I understand my life matters for each other. What now? Right, what does this mean for my family? What does this mean vocationally? And he says in 1 Corinthians 7, 20, hey, let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. In other words, Paul saying don't change jobs, stay exactly where you at, don't change the work, but change your relationship to the work. Now work is no longer about making me famous, making me rich, glorifying myself. But I'm gonna go back to the work and figure out how in the world can I do this in a way that contributes to the flourishing of other people? Now, that'll lead some people on some jobs to quit those jobs, right. If you come to Jesus and you're currently working in a company that's marketing tobacco products to underage kids, doing something illegal, right, yeah, you're probably called to lead that job, but those instances are few and far between. I think, about Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a tax collector, one of the most hated professions of that day.

Doug Smith: 23:15

And when.

Jordan Raynor: 23:15

Zacchaeus started to follow Jesus. Jesus did not say okay, Zacchaeus, you know what this means go to the office, turn in your letter of resignation and come follow me. In quote unquote full-time ministry. Now Zacchaeus says hey, I'm gonna repent of the way I've been doing this work, I'm no longer gonna exploit the poor, and Jesus blesses him and sends him back into that vocation. So some of us are gonna make those calls to change jobs, and that's fine. I just think God cares a lot more about how we're doing the work than what work we're doing, Because, again, for the Christian who's living as unto God, nothing is secular, everything is sacred. Yeah, and I'm curious.

Doug Smith: 23:55

I would love to hear you talk about how you view your work and the work that you've chosen to do. How do you view that as sacred and really maximizing the work eternally?

Jordan Raynor: 24:07

Yeah, that's a good question. So, in addition to my writing, I still serve as chairman of the board of a large tech startup, and so I think a lot about that and the context of that. How does that matter? This company, we're building software, right, like we're not saving souls, we're not feeding the homeless. How is that work sacred? It's sacred because, again, this is what God made us to do. We are in this tech startup making the earth more useful for other human beings benefiting enjoyment. How am I making it more sacred? How am I making it matter for eternity? I'll tell you a couple of ways. Number one I'm always looking for ways of okay, where are we out of step with God's commands in this venture? Where are we

not explicitly exploiting the poor, but where can we proactively bless the poor through this venture? That's number one. Number two I'm always looking for opportunities, as I'm doing that work, to do it with God. Right, we talk so much about doing our work for God, we forget to do it with Him. So what does that mean? Practically, before I log on to a Zoom meeting for a board call, right, I'm inviting the Lord's presence into that meeting. I'm ensuring that I'm doing that work with Him and not just for Him, and that brings Him eternal pleasure. I'll give you one more, a third one. I'm always looking for opportunities to move conversations with the non-Christians that I work with from the surface to the serious, to the spiritual, because I believe that it is the work of me. It is mere Christians, not religious professionals, who are going to be most effective at the Great Commission in this cultural moment, and so I'm aware of that. I'm working alongside non-Christians, and so I'm always looking for chances to steer those conversations towards spiritual things as a means of sharing the hope that's within me, that is found in Christ, the Lord.

Doug Smith: 25:58

Wow. Well, thank you for sharing that. Yeah, I thought you brought it all home. I want to take a little bit of a sidestep in the book, which is hilarious, because I encourage everyone to have a bucket list. I'm a huge bucket list fan. I have a long bucket list. You encourage readers to make an anti-bucket list, so I'll give you a few moments to state your case.

Jordan Raynor: 26:17

Listen, I've got no problem with bucket lists.

Doug Smith: 26:19

I'll say it on the front.

Jordan Raynor: 26:22

But the whole concept of a bucket list assumes that the only chance we have to enjoy the best places and food and experiences that this world has to offer is before we die and kick the bucket. That's a lie. That is a lie. The scriptures vision of heaven is not us floating on clouds. Heaven is ultimately here on earth. Heaven contains the glory of the nations. Quote, end quote. See Revelation 21, which means every theologian agrees the best of human culture. It also includes the best food. See the book of Isaiah that talks about the feast that we're going to experience on the New Earth Right. So once we replace some of these half truths about heaven peddled by culture with whole truths that we see in scripture, we see that we're going to have all eternity to enjoy the best food and experiences and places that this world has to offer. And to go back to what we talked about a few minutes ago, scripture also makes clear that you and I are going to have different levels of rewards for eternity. And so, for that reason, and because those rewards are almost always attached to sacrifices that we make in the present, yeah, I think more Christians need to be building these anti bucket lists, these catalogs of things that I'm going to strive not to do on this side of eternity so that I can accumulate as many eternal rewards as possible. Let me make this real, concrete. Let me give a personal example.

Doug Smith: 27:44

Yeah.

Jordan Raynor: 27:46

Um, I love great cities. I love my hometown of Tampa, Florida, but it's not a world class city. I love Washington DC. I love London, right, and nothing fuels my soul more than great cities, and I would love nothing more than to live in an urban flat in London with my family, right? So why don't I do that? Why do I choose to remain here in Tampa? Well, for a lot of reasons, but one of them is that my wife and I have

parents who are not getting any younger they're reaching their seventies and we're within a 10 mile radius of all of them. We want to be here in Tampa to care for them as they get older. Now, listen, I'm a selfish prick sometimes, right, that's a massive sacrifice for me personally Right. Yeah, and if I'm living my life for this life alone, man, move our family to London would be at the top of my bucket list. But knowing that heaven is ultimately here on earth and that I'm going to have all eternity to explore a perfect London and the greatest city of all time, the new Jerusalem, I put moved to London on my anti bucket list because the apostle Paul tells me in Ephesians six that the Lord will reward me for whatever good I do in this life. Well, will that include an urban flat in London, in the new Jerusalem? I don't know. And listen, I'm not saying if. If you've got moved to London on your bucket list, that's wrong. I'm just convicted that for me it is wrong and so it's on my anti bucket list and I'm trusting. Based on the promises I see about eternal rewards, based on what scripture says about the unbelievable reality of the new earth and how epic it's going to be, I'm okay putting on the anti bucket list and sacrificing that right now.

Doug Smith: 29:32

No, that's so good. And, to be honest, that really challenged me because I am the guy of like we got to do it all and and again. You do sometimes have the viewpoint of heaven like, hey, you know what's that? And Jesus said it's paradise. So who even knows? You can't even imagine what that would be like. But that really challenges me because it is like, hey, this isn't all there is and we can't even imagine what kind of bucket list things will be able to do. The other thing I want you to talk about we talked about this a little bit in our conversation last time. But you know, you said, when someone starts getting ahold of seeing work as sacred, they become fully alive. And unfortunately well, fortunately, because of your work, people are getting that revelation. But oftentimes it's not till later in life that we hear stuff like you're writing. I know for me, I was probably 26, 27 when I started getting exposed to that. But now, once we are, we have an opportunity to share that with our children, if we have young kids. I have four kids under seven and you wrote a kids book which I would love for you to pitch again, because I probably read as my kids at least twice a month. It's one of our favorites in our household. But talk to parents again about getting the subject of sacredness of work into their kids because, by the way, it's so important because our kids hear so many negative messages about work, sometimes from their parents.

Jordan Raynor: 30:43

If we're honest, right. Take stock of what you've said about your work and your boss, our underkids in the last week and put that in the positive negative column and check that out. But also because we just don't have this biblical story of work and so I wrote this kids book, called the creator and you, to help my kids see in less than three minutes what God's plan for work was in the beginning. You know it centers around the Genesis one account, which I've read a dozen children's books to my kids on Genesis one. They're all the exact same right. God created this on day one, that on day two, day three, four, five, six, the end. And they drive me bonkers because the sixth day was not the end of creation. The sixth day, according to Genesis one, versus 26 through 28, is when God passed the baton of creation to humanity and told us to go fill the earth, subdue it and create like he did in those first six days. However, you decide to interpret days right and as a game changer this is the first commission that we talked about a few minutes ago and so I wrote this kids book to help my girls and all the kids out there to see it, but honestly, I wrote it as much for parents, as I did for kids, because parents don't get this. Parents don't understand that, long before the great commission, there's the first commission to just make more of this world. That never, ever, ever, ever ends. We just read Isaiah 65. What are we gonna be doing for eternity? The first commission of creating culture and building houses and planting vineyards, right, and when you get that, oh my gosh, that's a game changer. Now I can see the work of a doctor, the work of an entrepreneur, the work of an artist, the work of a spaceship engineer, the work of a pastor, the work for COVID, full-time missionary. All of it is sacred, right. And so, man, that book just keeps selling and selling and selling to

create it with you. And it's been such a blessing to me to hear from parents like I am so grateful that my kids get to get this H5 instead of H35 or 55.

Doug Smith: 32:52

Yeah, and I didn't even think about it from that context. But I think one reason I love it so much is it fires me up every time I read it.

Jordan Raynor: 32:57

So you're talking about the impact on parents, I mean man I went when we were just talking about book publishing before we press record. When I pitched this book to Random House, I was like, hey, listen, yeah, technically this is a kid's book, but this project has to feel like a Pixar movie that makes five year olds laugh and smile and 55 year olds weep. And if we haven't done that, we've lost. And thank God they found a great illustrator who knocked out the park. The art in this book is not at all cute. It is not cartoony, it is epic and will make you cry like a five year old girl.

Doug Smith: 33:37

It's incredible Well mission accomplished on that. I have one or two more questions, but I do want people listening to this. I know obviously they can get the book. We'll include links to that everywhere, but you do a lot around this work. You have email. What are the best ways that people want to learn more and connect with you? What are some ways they can do that?

Jordan Raynor: 33:53

Yeah, we get tons of free content to help you connect your faith with your work at JordanRaynor.com J-O-R-D-A-N-R-A-Y-N-O-R. com, including a weekly podcast called the Mere Christians podcast that explores how the gospel shaping the work of Mere Christians out in the world those of us who aren't religious professionals but work as entrepreneurs, baristas and accountants. We also have a weekly devotional that goes out every Monday morning called the Word Before Work, that you can get for free. And then, yeah, this book that's releasing January 30th of 2024, the Sacredness of Secular Work Four Ways your Job Matters for Eternity, even when you're not sharing the gospel, so long as titled All Time. You will not remember it. So if you don't remember it, just search Jordan Raynor on Amazon or just go to JordanRaynor.com.

Doug Smith: 34:39

Yeah, you also mentioned a subject in the book. You argue that Christians don't grow the kingdom of God, but we can scratch off glimpses of it. Talk more about that. It's fascinating.

Jordan Raynor: 34:51

Yeah, I'm referring to the scratch off paper that our kids love that makes my house covered in black residue. I'm not talking about gambling scratch off, so please don't send me your angry emails. You know, on the surface these scratch offs look like dull pieces of black paper, but when our kids rub the surface with a stylus or with a quarter or whatever, the thin dark veil fades away and it reveals this beautiful picture on the other side. That's the best picture I've ever seen of what our work has the power to do. Today. Through our jobs, we can serve as a stylus of sorts, scratching off the darkness of this world, anything that doesn't belong in the eternal kingdom of God, and revealing glimpses of what does belong on the other side. Let me give you a few examples. Make this a little more practical. When you, as an attorney, fight for justice in the courts, you're scratching off a glimpse of the day when the God of justice will reign supreme here on earth CISA, chapter 30. When let's take a different vocation that the world deems as useless but God does not. Let's say you're a hairstylist and you're working every day just to

create beauty with your clients, you're scratching off a day, a glimpse of the day when God's beauty abundant, senseless beauty, will abound CIR 21. When you, as an executive, work without fear in the face of insane challenges, when the rest of your team is anxious and worried about everything, you're scratching off a glimpse of the day when anxiety will be no more. You're rubbing off more of that scratch off and giving people a glimpse of something eternal and true.

Doug Smith: 36:43

Come on, keep preaching, Go all day man. Yeah well, I will just leave this open-ended as we start to wrap. But anything else you want to leave leaders with or anything else you want to say around the subject that would add value, yeah, I'll say this.

Jordan Raynor: 36:56

We've been talking a lot about how much our work matters to God, and it does. The story of scripture is that work is a good, god-ordained thing, but nothing but Jesus. Jesus is an ultimately good thing. Our work matters deeply to God, but at the end of the day, until Christ comes and makes all things new, including the world of work, even if you have a dream job, work's gonna disappoint you. The ultimate good is found in Christ alone. So embrace the goodness of work, embrace the eternal significance of work, but let's not make work an idol. That is the supremely important thing in our life. I think that's the danger in this. Your work matters. Conversation is that we treat this good, created thing of work as an ultimate thing. The creator is the ultimate thing, not the created thing of work, as good and as wonderful as it is.

Doug Smith: 37:58

Yeah well, Jordan, thank you for your sacred work. It matters. It's making a difference in all of our lives. It's impacted my life and if you're listening to this and have enjoyed this conversation, we'll include a link. But we had a previous conversation with Jordan around his last book. He has seven books out there. He mentioned all the other ways you can connect. He's incredibly generous with his time and who he is, and I can't encourage you enough to connect with him. Thanks again, Jordan. I look forward to doing this again sometime. Thanks, Doug. Well, hey, leader, thank you so much for listening to my conversation with Jordan Raynor. I hope that you enjoyed it as much as I did. You can find ways to connect with him and links to everything that we discussed in the show notes at l3leadership.org/407. And, as always, I like to end every episode with a quote, and today I'll quote Patrick Bet David, who said this. He said you are one right formula away from changing your life. I've been thinking about that all the time and thinking about what formulas I can use in each area of my life to maximize the impact of them. So I hope you enjoyed this episode. Know that, my wife Laura and I love you, we believe in you and I say it every episode. But don't quit. Keep leading. The world desperately needs your leadership. We'll talk to you next episode.