

Why Do You Bother

READING

1 Peter 2:9

Colossians 1:6

Proverbs 16:4

Psalms 139:13

I imagine Irene is desperate for a way to escape her dull life. But there isn't one. She has no choice but to endure it until it's over.

If you have no god in your life and you're just living for yourself. Then why bother going to work? What do you get out of it?

Sure, you get money, and you can buy food and rent somewhere to live. But is that it? When you get to the end of your life will that be satisfaction enough? "I didn't starve and I still have somewhere to sleep".

Consider totally non-religious Irene, (apologies to all Irenees out there), who works in retail. She was never very good at school work, and her mother says she was lucky to get this job at all. It's really low pay, and she has to deal with some pretty rude and obnoxious customers from time to time. The hours are long, and she has quite a commute to and from work every day, but she can't afford a place nearer work. And she can't afford to quit. Can you imagine doing that every day for 40 years?

How would you feel towards the end of that. Accomplished? Satisfied? A life well spent? I imagine Irene is desperate for a way to escape her dull life. But there isn't one. She has no choice but to endure it until it's over.

Consider another woman, a fully committed Christian, Isabel. She also works in retail. But for her, it's a mission from God. She has a human boss, but she sees herself as working directly for God. She works every day as if God was going to call by at lunchtime and see how well she was doing.

She understands what Yeshua was talking about when he said how he had been poor, and sad, and lonely, and sick... but nobody had helped him. Because when anybody is poor, or sad, or lonely, or sick... and nobody helps them, he takes it personally, as if it was him who was suffering there.

She sees every customer as if they were Yeshua, visiting her store. She treats them the way she would treat him, with respect. And particularly when they're rude, or they do seem lonely or sick, she reaches out to them with love and caring. When they leave the store, whether they bought anything or not, they go home changed. They go home feeling better about themselves, and knowing that someone cares. She sees Yeshua in them, but they see Yeshua in her too. Reaching out to them, not in judgement and condemnation, but in love and acceptance.

After 40 years, Isabel will feel satisfied. She will know that she has faithfully carried out her mission. She has a purpose that keeps her going day after day, even when it's tough. Especially when it's tough.

When she gets to the end of her life, she will know that she did well.

So two women, both doing the same job, but one has a purpose and one doesn't. One has satisfaction and one doesn't. One has a reason to jump out of bed every day, and one doesn't. One sees her job as a mission, the other one sees her job as something she has to endure. One has pride in her job, one doesn't.

One knows that this job is part of the reason she exists. To do this job as Yeshua would do it. Yahweh God has made her uniquely gifted to do this very job for him. To represent him to the people who come to her store. People who might not otherwise have any encounter with Yeshua.

One knows that she makes a difference.
One doesn't. (But she could).

One knows that God loves and values her.
One doesn't. (But she should, because he does).

One knows that she has a purpose.
And that purpose changes everything.