

MASTER OF ONE: an interview with Jordan Raynor

All quotes are from Jordan Raynor unless otherwise noted.

What do you see as the purpose of mastery? In other words, why should Christians have exceptionally high standards for their work?

God creates and works with perfection. Excellence doesn't even cover the work God does - He's beyond excellence.

The purpose of work is the same purpose of life.

Glorify: to reflect God's greatness (John Piper)

The opposite of mastery is mediocrity - the failure of loving our neighbors.

In the book, you challenge the conventional career wisdom to “follow your passions” and “do whatever makes you happy.” Why do you feel called to challenge this advice?

3 lies:

- you can be anything you want to be
- you can do everything you want to do
- our happiness is the primary purpose of work

Millennials - more opportunities to “do what makes us happy” but the LEAST happy generation

Work as a calling - is NOT whether or not they were passionate when they started, but the number of years they were in their vocation.

Passion follows mastery.

We are to model our lives after the One who came to serve.

Follow your gifts. Love OTHERS well.

In the book, you point to C.S. Lewis as an example of someone whose one vocational thing was broad. Can you tell us about that and the difference between someone’s “one thing” being broad or specific?

C.S. Lewis was a master of teaching - he applied that mastery into books, etc.

Some people’s one thing is very specific.

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Most people's one thing is going to be broad, but it's still helpful to be able to articulate what that is so you can eliminate everything else on your plate that doesn't align with that.

How does the life of Jesus exemplify our need to say no to the nonessentials in order to focus on the work we feel called to master?

If we are unwilling to say no to the nonessential things, we're being selfish.

Mark 1:38

Jesus' essential mission was preaching the gospel.

There are constraints on time and your ability to do the work.

Get in the habit of saying no!

Is there one person you profile in Master of One who had a particularly strong influence on you as you were researching for your book?

Antoni Gaudi - architect in Barcelona

You interviewed dozens of world-class professionals for this book. In those interviews, what themes came up over and over again that show how we might achieve mastery in our own careers?

3 keys of mastery:

- apprenticeships
- purposeful practice
- discipline over time

Stick with a discipline.

Until you have found the one thing that you feel called to - experiment with a few different things.

Find one thing to master in this season of life.

Your one thing may be being a mother in this season of life.

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We gravitate things that we're good at.

If you have no joy in the thing that you're good at, you may be deceiving yourself.

Passion and love will follow.

Passion grows with mastery.

Ultimately, we're not working for the praise of people. We are working for the praise of our Savior.

You want to look back on your life and think - "this is who God made me to be."

Focus on His pleasure. Focus on His glory and serving His people.

4 steps to mastery:

- Explore
- Choose
- Eliminate
- Master