



The Theology of Craft and the Craft of Work: From Tabernacle to Eucharist

Jeremy Kidwell

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An important reconceptualisation is taking place in the way people express creativity, work together, and engage in labour; particularly, suggests Kidwell, a surprising resurgence in recent years of manual and craft work. Noting the wide array of outlets that now market hand-made goods and the array of popular books which advocate 'making' as a basis for activism or personal improvement, this book seeks to understand how the micro-politics of craft work might offer insights for a broader theology of work. Why does it matter that we do work which is meaningful, excellent, and beautiful? Through a close reading of Christian scripture, *The Theology of Craft and the Craft of Work* examines the theology and ethics of work in light of original biblical exegesis. Kidwell presents a detailed exegetical study of temple construction accounts in the Hebrew bible and the New Testament. Illuminating a theological account of craft, and employing the ancient vision of 'good work' which is preserved in these biblical texts, Kidwell critically interrogates modern forms of industrial manufacture. This includes a variety of contemporary work problems particularly the instrumentalisation and exploitation of the non-human material world and the dehumanisation of workers. Primary themes taken up in the book include agency, aesthetics, sociality, skill, and the material culture of work, culminating with the conclusion that the church (or 'new temple') is both the product and the site of moral work. Arguing that Christian worship provides a moral context for work, this book also examines early Christian practices to suggest a theological reconceptualisation of work.

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