

Jiro Dreams of Sushi

Christian Faith & Work Discussion Questions

Please use these questions to discuss the 2001 documentary [*Jiro Dreams of Sushi*](#) from a Christian perspective. They are meant to help us all better integrate our faith and work.

Questions

1. At the beginning of the movie, Jiro Ono says, “Once you decide on your occupation... you must immerse yourself in your work. You have to fall in love with your work. Never complain about your job. You must dedicate your life to mastering your skill. That's the secret of success... and is the key to being regarded honorably.” How does this make you feel about what you do? Do you feel inspired, discouraged, or something else?
2. Jiro Ono says of his son, “My son must do this for the rest of his life.” Is Jiro Ono’s view of work realistic for modern life between job changes and job losses in an ever-changing workplace? How committed should we be to our jobs?
3. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (NIV) What does this verse teach us about the way to work? What’s our purpose in work?
4. Jiro Ono is a master of masters in the sushi world. But he says at one point in the documentary, “Even at my age, in my work... I haven't reached perfection.” What does this teach us about excellence and humility? Matthew 5:48 says, “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (NIV) As believers, how should we think about perfection?
5. Jiro Ono seems to only take time off for national holidays, funerals, and emergencies. When his sons were younger, he was admittedly never home. However, now he is working closely with his sons as adults. What do you think of Jiro’s work-life balance?
6. At what point does a love of work become idolatrous? Proverbs 4:23 says, “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” (NIV) How can we tell when something as good as work is taking over our hearts?

7. It takes ten years for the apprentices to graduate from Jiro Ono's training program. Some only last a very brief time. How important is it to build skills? How important are hard work and dedication?
8. Jiro Ono is not soft on his employees. He offers lots of criticism. How important is it to take criticism to improve at your job? Why can receiving criticism be so hard?
9. "In order to make delicious food, you must eat delicious food. If your sense of taste is lower than your customers, how will you impress them?" This part of the job sounds fun. Do you enjoy your job? How important is it (or not) to enjoy what you do?
10. Jiro Ono developed a friendship with the man who cooks rice. Do your work friendships typically extend outside of work or only stay in the office or on the job? Why is that? How important is friendship to work?
11. The son spoke of overfishing impacting the sushi market. What type of ethical decisions impact your place of work? How might you be a "mouthpiece for truth and justice?" wherever God has called you to work? (See [Fruitfulness on the Frontline](#) study).
12. The son gave a talk at a school encouraging the "bad kids." He said, "Always doing what you're told doesn't mean you'll succeed in life." In this, we find a redemptive theme for those who travel their own pathway in life. What might this teach us about grace?
13. One of the film's lines is, "If I stop working, then I will be worthless." Do you find your identity in your job? John 1:12 says, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—" (NIV) How might we identify more as children of God and less with our work?
14. In this documentary, everything is about working hard to please the father, Jiro Ono. How is that different from the Bible's story of our Heavenly Father's love for us? Recall the story of the Prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. What did it take for the Father to be pleased with his son? What does it take for our Heavenly Father to be pleased with us?