

## THE DISCIPLINE OF WORK: BE PRODUCTIVE!

(Genesis 1-3, Exodus 20, Ecclesiastes 5, Colossians 3, Ephesians 6)

Series: The Disciplines of a Godly Life (Part 10)

...Today many regard their work as a burden that one must bear, a living indignity. A recent survey revealed only 1 in 10 Americans are satisfied with their jobs, that most of the work was dull and meaningless.

...With this being Labor Day weekend, it is only fitting that we consider the discipline of work.

...God made humanity to do far more than the animals, which spend their time forging for food and eating, reproducing and sleeping. God made us in His image and has given something worthwhile to do, and when we do it we reflect His glory. Jesus told that God our Father is always working...always.

### THREE INSIGHTS ABOUT WORK REMINDING US THAT GOD MADE US TO BE PRODUCTIVE...TO SUBDUE THE EARTH.

...We are not merely to take up space and time, but are designed to help improve life in big ways and small.

...Furthermore, work, rightly considered, is a wonderful gift from God. Boredom is just another definition of death!

#### I. God Works: Since He Is Altogether Good, Work Must Be Good. (Gen 1-2)

...Work is not some evil thing forced upon us. Such thinking is completely unbiblical.

A. God worked from the very beginning of time. (Genesis 1:1, 31; 2:1-3)

1. Genesis one sounds like a work report, a job report of His work in creating all.

...In six literal consecutive days, God made the heavens and the earth. (Exodus 20:11)

2. The Hebrew word used here for "work" is the word designating a skilled labor, a work performed by a skilled craftsman. (Look at it...far more skilled than a Rembrandt)

3. God created the universe as an orderly cosmos and then enlisted human beings, made in His likeness, to continue His work of "subduing" and "ruling over the earth."

B. God continues His work today. (Psalm 104) "The Creation Psalm." (John 5:7) "Daily"

...God not only worked to create everything, He also works to care for His creation. Providence!

1. God cares for His creation. He forms Adam (Gen 2:7), plants a garden (2:6,8), fashions a woman for him (Gen 2:21-22), the rest of the Bible tells of His work as Provider...caring for the world and cultivating the ground. (Psalm 104)

2. Colossians 1 tells us that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is actively holding all the universe together, or else it would fly apart. (1:17)

#### II. God Has Designed You To Work, To Be Productive. (Gen 1:28, 2:15, Ex. 20)

...Work was created for our good and through it we display God's glory.

A. Adam (mankind) was the only creature given a job description by God. (Gen 1:28)

...The earth was "Good," yet it stood undeveloped. God's plan was for humans to do that.

B. Work was part of Paradise. God's plan for us was to live in the constant cycle of work/rest.

...This did not change after the Fall...nature merely became "uncooperative."

C. One rightly wrote, "Work is as much a basic human need as food, beauty, rest, friendship, sex, and prayer."

1. Without meaningful work, we sense significant inner loss and emptiness.

2. Work is so foundational to our makeup; it is one of the few things we can take in large doses without harm. Leisure and pleasure are gifts, but only if taken in small doses.

D. According to the Bible, we don't merely need the money from work to survive, we need the work itself to survive and live fully human lives. Note the reasons for this:

1. Work is one way we become useful to others, rather than just living for self.
2. Work is one of the ways we discover who we are. Through our work we come to understand our distinct gifts and abilities.

### III. God's Desire For Your Work...Do Everything To The Glory Of God. (1Cor 10:31)

...Kent Hughes wrote telling us of four things that ought to describe our work.

- A. Energy. Give yourself to your work, shunning laziness. Godliness is associated with hard work.
- B. Enthusiasm. "Whatever you do, do it with all your heart..." (Col. 3:23) "Play the 2<sup>nd</sup> violin well!!!"
- C. Wholeheartedness. "Work wholeheartedly, as if you were working for the Lord." (Eph. 6:5-8)
- D. Excellence. What God did was "Very Good," this should be the goal of our work. Glory to God!

### SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

1. Work is one of God's gifts to you. Thank the Lord for your job and strive to do your very best for His glory. Be a blessing at work, and not a burden. Add value to your company by working hard as if Jesus were your boss, because as a Christian, He is.
2. If you are in a "dead end" job, pray and ask the Lord for another job. Be the very best worker in your current job as you wait for the Lord to open another door for you. Have a Christ-like attitude everyday even if the job is the "pits." God sees and hears and will honor you.
3. Learn to love your work and bring to it daily your energy, enthusiasm, wholeheartedness and excellence. Such laboring will reflect the glory of the Gospel in you.
4. The only area where you do not work, is in receiving the forgiveness of all your sins. Jesus did everything that needed to be done by dying on the cross in your place. He did the work. So that today salvation is only received from God as a gift...through faith. You cannot earn it; it is God's great gift for us. Have you received Christ as your Savior and Lord? Don't delay, come to the Cross and be saved.