

Lesson 8 A Biblical View of Work

“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.” (Col 1:28-29).

I. What does the word “work” mean?

A. The verb means to work, operate or function.

B. The noun speaks of something done, deed, action, proceeding, _____ or military fortification

C. Some New Testament definitions of work.

1. Two nouns are used in the New Testament

- One of them [Eron] means “work, _____, or task”
- The other [Ergasia] means “a work or business, a working, performance, craft, diligence

2. A few verbs are used in the New Testament.

They are each translated:

- [Ergazomai]: to produce, trade
- [Katergazomai]: to work out, achieve, effect by toil
- [Poieo]: to make, wrought
- [Energeo]: effectual, fervent, be might in
- [Synergeo]: to work together

Networking is a form of working because you are working things together

D. Some Old Testament definitions of work.

The Old Testament nouns ascribed to work show us that work comes in many different forms.

- [Chaqah] – carved work, set a print
- [Yetser] – imagination
- [Melakah] – business, goods
- [Machashabah] – invented
- [Asah] – deal, prepare, dress
- [Abiydah] – work, affairs, service
- [Ma’aseh] – needlework, art
- [Pa’al] – commit

- [Pe'ullah] – labour

II. What is the nature of work?

- A. One can be a paid or _____ worker.
- B. Work was instituted by God before the fall of Man. (Gen. 2:2).
- C. Work is not a curse. (Gen 2:15; Gen 3:17).
- D. Working is natural. (Ps 104:14, 23).
- E. We can be anointed for work. (Ex. 31: 1-6; 1 Cor. 15:10).

Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński in his book *WORK* highlights the impact of Christianity on the understanding of work:

“the pagans despised every kind of work, even artistic work. They regarded physical work as unworthy of man. It was the duty of slaves. It could not be reconciled with the sublimity of the free mind, for it limited it too much...Christianity did away with this error as well. It brought about the real liberation and elevation of human work. The first Christians, even the rich ones, sometimes showed their membership of the church by doing physical work...what is more, the Christian world emphasized the importance of uniting spiritual and physical work. We see this especially in monastic life...”

Blessed Josemaria Escoria “Add a supernatural motive to your ordinary work and you will have sanctified it”

- F. There are few workers in the Kingdom. (Mt. 9:37).
- G. Each of us is called to some work. (Eph. 4:16).
- H. We will have to give account of the _____ of our work. (1 Cor. 3: 13; Eph 4:28)
 - Our work should be useful
- I. Our Calling is not limited to our job or profession.
Don't confuse job and calling. If you think your calling is limited to your job then it's the only thing you can do to fulfill your calling.

III. How much and how hard should we work?

- A. God worked for six days then rested on the seventh. (Exodus 23:12).
- B. We should do all I work to as “unto” the Lord. (1 Cor. 4:12; Col 3: 23-24; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 5:41-44).

C. There are consequences to laziness and not working if one is able. (Jer. 48: 10; 2 Thess. 3:10-12; 2 Thess. 3: 6, 15).

D. God has called us to be significant by being fruitful. (John 15:16).

E. We should be diligent (2 Thessalonians 3: 6-15).

IV. How should we treat those who work around us?

A. We should respect those who work hard in God's work. (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

B. We should know that workers deserve a fair wage. (1 Tim. 5:18; Luke 10:7).

V. What is God's relationship to work?

A. It is God's assignment in the first place. (Jn. 9:4).

B. We have to be set apart for the work the Holy Spirit calls us to do. (Acts 13:2).

C. God has set aside _____ works for us to do. (Eph. 4:12).

D. God establishes our works. (Ps. 90:17).

E. God notices our works and does not forget them. (Heb. 6:10).

F. Jesus has works. (Jn. 9:4; Jn. 4:34).

G. God also works. (Ps 19: 1; Jn. 5:17).

H. We work together with God. (1 Cor. 3: 9).

VI. What are the benefits of working?

A. Working makes you financially independent and not a burden. (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:8).

B. Working well can result in a good name and recognition in the city. (Prov. 31:31).

C. Working well gives you the _____ to be an example (2 Thess. 3: 7-9).

D. Working well often results in more opportunity to give. (Acts 20:33-35).

E. Working well helps you to mind your own business and keep out of mischief. (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:11).

F. Working well helps you to influence unbelievers – (1 Thess. 4:11).

VII. What should our attitude be towards work?

A. Working should be a healthy priority in our lives (Prov. 24:27).

VIII. What are some common excuses for not working?

Often we have guardian lies which stop us from working:

- Someone else will work or bail me out.
- I am a foreigner and the locals are jealous of me so there are no opportunities.
- I won't earn much to make a difference anyway.
- I am tired.
- I hate interviews.
- I am waiting for my big breakthrough.
- I am too old.
- I am not the right colour in this country.
- I am afraid of doing the wrong thing.
- I can't find anything better than my previous job.

IX. What are some wrong _____ towards work?

1. Working just for money.
"We goes to work to earn money that we can use to buy the bread that we can eat to give us strength to go to work"
2. Working just for fulfillment. (Do you feel happy?)
3. Producing goods or offering a service that violate your conscience.
4. Idolising work: e.g. Nazi motto: "Work will redeem Germany"
5. Arrogantly seeing your type of job as superior to others.
 - The views of the world create classes of workers. "Blue collar and white collar; intellectual and manual. Many people look down on diesel mechanics and others who work with their hands, but I would rather be a successful diesel mechanic than an idle person sitting in front of a computer all day.
6. Seeing work as punishment or a curse.
7. Living just for the weekend.
8. Being unwilling to use your potential in your work.
 - It's been said for years that the average employee uses 10-20% of their potential at work.

X. Assessing your work

- Are you as God's instrument easy for Him to use?
- What baggage are you carrying that is hindering God's use of you? A spade weighing 100 pounds takes energy to carry.
- Is your work producing _____ goods and services?
- Have you integrated your faith into your work?
- Is your work creating work for others?
- Is your work creating a good social bond?
- What's your source of joy? Is it promotion, little material things or the Big Picture

Comment on the different types of work you are involved in (low, average, high)

Your Work	Fulfillment to you	Benefit to others	Glory to God
Paid			
Voluntary			
Domestic			
Church			

XI. What can I _____ for when it comes to Christians and work?

- Pray for job creation and against unemployment.
- Pray for wisdom for those in transition.
- Pray for those starting businesses.
- Pray for those experiencing any form of workplace abuse.
- Pray for creativity and innovation.
- Pray for God to establish the works of our hands.
- Pray for wisdom in recruitment, selection and positioning of workers.