



THEOLOGY OF MANHOOD

SESSION 6

WORK

A Crisis of Work in Our Culture

The crisis of work in our culture is a spiritual problem. As God is rejected and removed from a society, work becomes a meaningless pursuit. God is the creator of work. Work is to be done for HIS glory. Disconnected from God and His glory, work devolves into self-centered pursuits of money, prestige, and power. Or, toward self-protecting laziness and drudgery.

God is The Worker (Genesis 1)

The Bible begins with a work week in which God models for us six days of work and one day of rest. We see progress each day as God works to develop, build, and cultivate creation.

God Created Man to Work (Genesis 2)

“The LORD God took the man & put him in the garden of Eden to **work** it and **keep** it.”

- Genesis 2:15

God created man for work before the fall. Work was, and is, good. The curse makes work hard, but work is not a curse. Created in the image of God, we reflect God as a worker. Taking dominion includes work.

Genesis 3:17-19

¹⁷ And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Laziness is Condemned by God

“The desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labor.”

- Proverbs 21:25

“How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.”

- Proverbs 6:9-11

“The sluggard says, ‘There is a lion in the road! There is a lion in the streets!’ As a door turns on its hinges, so does a sluggard on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly.”

- Proverbs 26:13-16

If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10

Work Must be Redeemed, Not Just Endured

Colossians 3:23-25

²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

“Whatever you do...”

“...reward...”

“...work heartily...”

“...Lord Christ...” - Master, King; integrity, weighed & judged by the Lord

“...as for the Lord not men...”

“...wrongdoer...” - Master who abuses authority; slave who steals from master

Plan to Redeem Your Work

Embrace Work as Worship

“There is not one square inch of the entire creation about which Jesus Christ does not cry out, ‘This is mine. It belongs to me.’” – Abraham Kuyper

Seeing the Glory of Christ in My Work

Where do I see the glory of Christ in my work...

...in others created in the image of God?

...in the beauty and detail of Christ’s creation?

...in the logic and order of Christ’s universe?

Displaying in the Glory of Christ in My Work

How can I take part in the glory of Christ...

...by bringing order to chaos in Christ’s world?

...by magnifying the beauty in Christ’s creation through my work?

...by pointing to Jesus as the Creator and sustainer of all things?

...by being a witness through excellence and integrity in my work?

...by being a witness for Jesus through sharing the gospel at my work?

...by reflecting Jesus’ love through sacrificially serving others at my work?

... by joining Jesus in the Great Commission – disciple making and giving to missions?

Principles to Teach Kids to Work

- Dad’s attitude about work becomes your kid’s attitude about work.
- Give your kids work responsibility in and around the home early and often.
- Expect your kids to contribute to the family’s agenda and mission. Do not allow them to be distinct bystanders or passive recipients.
- Expect them to provide for many of their personal privileges that go above and beyond necessities.
- Give them things they can accomplish easily. But also give them things they cannot do without struggle, grit, and perseverance.
- Teach them that the goal at the heart of sports, music, art, and even education is to develop a solid work ethic that honors God.

QUESTIONS:

What type of work or component of your job or career do you enjoy the most?

What would it look like to work as a witness?

How is my work connected to God's mission to make disciples of all nations?

Homework

READ Genesis 1-2 and reflect on the way God works each day of creation.

What is your attitude toward work in general? Do you consider work good or bad? Do you associate work with judgment or joy?

How does your work reflect God as a worker during the first 7 days of creation? How are you adding order to chaos? How do you develop, build, and add beauty to the world?

Do you struggle working for the approval of men? What does this look like in the context of your job or career?

What would it mean for you to work first and foremost for the Lord? How would this improve not only your attitude about work but the quality of your work?

What is your attitude about your job or career at this time in life? What type of work or component to your job or career are you struggling to embrace? How does the Bible's view of work address this struggle?

What type of work or component of your job or career do you enjoy the most? How could you maximize what you enjoy about your job?

What best characterizes your response to work at this time in your life?

☐ Laziness

☐ Workaholic

☐ Boredom

☐ Idolatry

☐ Work, no rest

How can you fight against this response?

What does laziness look like in your life? How does laziness affect you mentally, spiritually, and emotionally? How is your temptation toward laziness affecting your marriage and family?

What does work without rest look like in your life? How is work without rest affecting you mentally, spiritually, and emotionally? How is work without rest affecting your marriage and family?

Remember Work is God's Provision

How have you failed to see your job or career as God's gracious provision in your life?

List reasons why you should be thankful for your job or career as God's provision in your life.

List specific ways in which your work provides for others.

For my family...

For my community...

For my coworkers...

For my employees...

For my employer...

Work is Essential for Mission

How is my work connected to God's mission to make disciples of all nations?

How am I working...

...so my family can be on mission as witnesses?

...to provide resources for the mission and missionaries?

...to provide resources to send others on mission?

Additional Notes

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