

FAITH &
FINANCE

MICAH
COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Purpose of Work

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Overview: The Purpose of Our Work

- The origins of work
- The fall of Mankind and how it affected our work
- The Biblical Principles of work
- The dilemma's we might face with our careers



Work: **Micah Declaration**

‘Living what we believe and demonstrating kingdom principles on our personal, professional and public lives’



Work: The Origins of Work

God instituted work



Work: God in Creation

Genesis 2:1-4

'Thus, the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

- *² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so, on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.'*



The Origins of Work

- 'Made' – Light (Day) / Moon & Stars (Night)
- 'Formed', - Man from the dust
- 'Fashioned' – Woman from Man
- 'Planted' – Garden of Eden
- 'Creation reflects God's Glory' (Psalm 8)



God created Mankind to work (Genesis 1:26-28)

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make human beings^[a] in our image, to be like us. *They will reign over* the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth,^[b] and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created human beings^[c] in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ Then God blessed them and said, “*Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it.* Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”



Work: God created humans to work

Genesis 2:15

15 'The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.'



Work: Purpose of Work for Mankind

- **Dominion:** To manage, take responsibility and make decisions
- **Fruitful:** To increase in number and expand
- **Cultivate:** To nurture, improve and foster growth
- **Maintain:** To preserve from decline or failure
- **Subdue:** To exercise control and discipline



Work: Perfect Paradise

*Man was created in a perfect setting to
work in the Garden of Eden and be
stewards of God's creation.*



Work: The Fall of Mankind

So... what Happened?



The Fall of Mankind: (Genesis 3:17-18)

¹⁶ Then he said to the woman, “I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. *And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.*^[a]”

¹⁷ And to the man he said, “Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, *the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.*

¹⁸ *It will grow thorns and thistles for you,* though you will eat of its grains.



Work: Paradise Lost

*19 By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”*



Work: The Consequences of the Fall

- ‘Painful Toil’ – Exhausting Physical Labour
- ‘Thornes & Thistles’ - Difficulty & Hardship
- Sin gave rise to *tension*, anger, *abuse* & *mistrust*
- What was once a **joy**, has now become a **struggle**



Biblical Principles for Work

- Sin has affected our attitude and perception towards work
- We plan our own 'exit-strategy' from work
- Would we still work at all if we were financially secure?



The Benefits of Hardwork

- Work reflects God's nature
- Our work is also worship that brings God glory
- Our work gives us a sense of purpose for our lives
- Work gives us the opportunity to serve others in love



Work: Biblical Principles for Work

Proverbs 14:23

‘All *hard work* brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.’



The benefits of Hardwork

- We were not created to just 'break-even' but to be profitable
- Mere talk without action = Procrastination



Work: Biblical Principles for Work

1Thessalonians 4:11-12

*‘Mind your own business and work with your hand.. So that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders **and** so that you will not be dependent on anybody’*



The Benefits of Hardwork

- Ruth demonstrated a good work ethic despite losing her husband and was not dependent on anybody
- Her diligence and dedication caught the eye and respect of Boaz
- God honoured her sacrifice when she put Him first



Work: Ruth 2: 2-7

²One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it.”

Naomi replied, “All right, my daughter, go ahead.” ³So Ruth went out to gather grain behind the harvesters. And as it happened, she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech.

⁴While she was there, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters. “The LORD be with you!” he said.

“The LORD bless you!” the harvesters replied.

⁵Then Boaz asked his foreman, “Who is that young woman over there? Who does she belong to?”

⁶And the foreman replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi. ⁷She asked me this morning if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She has been hard at work ever since, except for a few minutes’ rest in the shelter.”



Work: Biblical Principles for Work

2Thessalonians 3:10

*‘For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule:
“The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”’*



The Pitfalls of Laziness

- Work fosters a healthy and productive community; Laziness compromises this ideal
- Lazy people want much but get little; those who work hard prosper (**Proverbs 13:4**)
- Poverty and scarcity will bounce like an armed robber (**Proverbs 6:11**)
- Those who can work should absolutely do so



Work: Biblical Principles for Work

1 Timothy 5:8

‘Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.’



Welfare System

- The welfare system was designed to help the poor and vulnerable in society
- Whereby the wealthier members of society gave to the poor
- The system was also designed to create opportunities for the poor and vulnerable to work their way out of poverty
- Open to abuse, and gave rise laziness and the reluctance to work



Welfare System: **The Poverty Trap**

- Factors put in place preventing individuals or households to escape poverty
- Receiving unfavourable tax rates
- Reduced entitlement if you do decide to start working



Welfare System: **The Unemployment Trap**

- Financially discouraged from working
- They calculate the difference in effort of work versus what they would get free in benefits being too small
- Not that there is a lack of employment, but it's the lack of financial incentive to work



The Work Dilemma: **Live to work**

Ecclesiastes 2: 10-11

10 'I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labour, and this was the reward for all my toil.

11 Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.'



How do we manage the tension?

‘What does it profit to
gain the whole world
and lose your soul’
(Matt 16:26)



‘You wicked and lazy
servant’ **(Matt 25:26)**



The Work Dilemma: **Live to work**

*‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all it’s righteousness’
(Matt 6:33)*

- Prioritise seeking God and living by Godly principles first
- As opposed to doing your own thing, then sprinkle God on top as the icing on the cake



The Work Dilemma: **Live to work**

‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding’ (Prov 3:5-6)

- Every decision is spiritual decision
- Trust in God’s order and His timing
- Don’t ignore the warning signs, God’s word will not contradict itself



The Work Dilemma:

‘What if I don’t like my job or the career I am in right now?’



Work: **Divine Providence**

Nothing in life happens by chance

‘God actively orchestrates circumstances and events to achieve His sovereign plan and purpose for our lives’



Story of Joseph – (Genesis 37-50)

- Daddy's favourite
- Sold into slavery by his own brothers to Potiphar's house
- God's favour was on Joseph, and he prospered in all he did
- He flees from Temptation, falsely accused and ends up in Jail
- Uses his gift to interpret dreams and it makes room for him
- Promoted to a Ruler of Egypt, Pharaoh's right-hand man
- **Recognises God's Providence in the middle of the madness**



Work: **Divine Providence** – (Genesis 50:19-20)

¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.’



Work: **Divine Providence** – (Romans 8:28)

‘And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them...’



The Work Dilemma:

As a Christian, should I pursue a career in this industry?



Ambassador's for Christ: (2Corinthians 5: 18-20)

¹⁸ And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ ***So we are Christ's ambassadors***; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"



The Work Dilemma:

*‘We need Christian Ambassador’s
to be salt & light in every sector of
society!’*



Story of Daniel – (Daniel 1 & 2)


- From Judah but held captive in Babylon
- Healthy, good looking and given an unusual aptitude for learning and wisdom by God
- Determined not to defile himself (Food & Drink)
- God granted Daniel favour in the eyes of his supervisor
- Uses his gift to and it makes room for him
- Promoted to a Ruler of Babylon, but doesn't forget his friends
- Stood firm on Godly principles even if it was going to cost him his life



Paradise restored – Revelation 21:1-4

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ^[a] ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”



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