

A Brief Theology of Work

Eight Biblical Principles of Work:

1. *God is a creative and laboring God.* He worked and continues to work for the good of His creation. Jesus mirrored this labor on earth and so did Adam and Eve in the garden. (Genesis 2:1-2, Psalm 92:4-5, 66:5-7, 104:24-26, 145:1-7)

2. *In the garden of Eden, before the fall, God designed work as a positive element of Adam and Eve's daily life.* They were to subdue the earth, rule over it, manage and take care of it. (Genesis 1:28, 2:15, Psalm 8:6-8)

3. *It was God's intention that man's work be an extension and continuation of God's work to provide for others as an act of unconditional love.* To provide for others as God has provided for us is an expression of the image of God within us. (Genesis 1:27, Proverbs 12:11, 14:23, 18:9, 21:25, 31:13, 17, 31, Ecc. 10:15, 18, Ephesians 4:28, 1 Thes. 4:11, 1 Timothy 5:8)

4. *As a consequence of the fall, work became painful because "the ground" was cursed.* (Work was not cursed). The curse was a physical consequence to the spiritual sin of disobedience. We still live under the curse, because we still commit the same sins of disobedience as Adam. (Genesis 3:17-19)

* "The ground" is manifested now in many ways: Difficult people, conflict, organizational challenges, unfair work practices, oppressive employers, sub-standard pay, etc.

5. *The curse upon the ground is one of Satan's on-going opportunities to put his "traps" and "schemes" into our labor so that we will stumble, curse God, hate our fellow man and yield to temptation.* (Acts 26:15-18, Luke 22:24-31, Romans 16:20, 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 4:27, 6:11, 1 Timothy 3:7, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 3:7-8)

6. *God has called Christians to represent His character in the workplace.* We are to work wholeheartedly, as unto the Lord, so as to give a good impression of the nature of God. (Colossians 3:17, 22-24, Ephesians 6:6-7)

7. *Satisfaction in labor and the joy of accomplishment is modeled by God in creation* (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31, Psalm 104:31). Experiencing that same kind of satisfaction and joy was intended by God to be a wonderful by-product of purposeful labor. Because of the curse, man's joyful satisfaction in work is challenged.

8. *As we understand the true purposes of work better, even now after the fall, we will experience a greater degree of satisfaction in our labor.* Further, experiencing joy in work is an expression of Christ in us, redeeming not just our souls in eternity, but also our lives in this present age.

God's great purposes for our labor:

- a. To reveal His creative nature through the creative efforts of man.
- b. To reveal His concern for creation through man being good stewards over the earth.
- c. To reveal His unconditional love through our willingness to provide for our families and church.
- d. To allow God to prosper our families as we work diligently at the tasks assigned to us.
- e. To represent God in the workplace as Christians who work wholeheartedly as unto Him.