**Wednesday Morning Devotion on May 29, 2024**

**Passages—Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:2, 15; Gen 3:17**

*Many Christians misunderstand the role of their daily work or job. How should we, as Christians, view our work? Let's explore what the Bible teaches about our jobs.*

### **God as a Working God**

The first book of the Bible, Genesis, shows us that God is a working God. In Genesis 2:2, we learn that God rested after finishing His work of creation. The word "work" here means something done with great care and effort, similar to how an artist creates a masterpiece.

Moses, who wrote Genesis, wanted us to understand that God didn't just make things appear magically. When God created the universe, He did it with great care and effort. He enjoyed His work and found it very good. After each part of creation, God looked at His work and said, "It's good!"

This teaches us that work is not just about getting things done; it's about doing things well and taking pride in what we accomplish.

### **Correcting Misconceptions about Work**

**Work is Not a Result of Sin**: Some people think that work is a result of sin because of Genesis 3:17, where God tells Adam that he will have to work hard to eat because of his disobedience. But work existed before sin.

**Sin just made work harder. Originally, work was a blessing given by God.**

**Work in Other Cultures**: Many creation stories from other cultures see work as a curse. For example, the Babylonian creation story says that humans were created from the blood of a defeated god to be slaves to the victor god. In these stories, work is seen as a punishment. But the Bible tells a different story, where work is a blessing from God.

### **Finding Fulfillment in Work**

**Meaningful Work Prevents Emptiness**: If we don't find meaningful work, we feel empty. On the other hand, when we contribute positively to society and find meaning in our work, we feel happy. **God designed us this way.**

When we do good work for others or make a positive impact, we feel fulfilled. This is why I, as a pastor, find joy in my work because it is meaningful to me.

### **Work as a Path to Happiness and Freedom**

**Work Brings Happiness**: Work is not just a path to happiness but also a way to experience freedom.

Some people think freedom means not being tied to a job or a schedule. But just like a fish is free in water, we are truly free when we are within the limits God set for us. Freedom is not about being unbound but finding joy in our work and within our boundaries.

**Embracing Work**: Work should not be seen as a burden. Even self-employment comes with its own set of constraints. True freedom and joy come from embracing our work and doing it well.

### **Avoiding Extremes in Work**

**Work Should Not Be a Burden**: **We should avoid the extremes of either viewing work as a burden or becoming a workaholic.**

Work is not our only source of happiness, and overworking can be harmful. It's important to balance work and rest.

**Work Diligently and with Integrity**: As Christians, we should work diligently and with integrity, recognizing the sacredness of our work. **This applies to church work as well. We as God’ servants should be committed and responsible,** treating our duties seriously.

I have met some christians who have double standards for their work at the working palace and their service at church. They never arrive late at their working places, but they often come late for the Sunday worship. I think because some Christians feel that their service to the church is like they are doing God a favor. We don’t God a favor. God did us a favor by sacrificing His one and only Son. We didn’t deserve His love and so out of love and appreciation we serve the Lord and His church.

When we work, we should do it wholeheartedly, as if working for the Lord (Colossians 3:23).

**Personal Experience with Balance**: I remember struggling with this balance when I was in seminary. I had a Greek exam and a youth retreat on the same weekend. I hoped my professor would let me take the exam later, but he insisted I take it with the rest of the class. This taught me about responsibility and fairness. It was a valuable lesson in understanding that commitments and responsibilities are part of our work ethic.

### **Resting After Work**

**Importance of Rest**: We also need to rest after working. Resting is not just for recharging but for enjoying the fruits of our labor and giving thanks to God. Finding joy in both work and rest is the Biblical way. Rest is a gift from God, and we should take it seriously. After working hard, taking time to rest helps us appreciate our efforts and renew our strength.

**Balancing Work and Rest**: Balancing work and rest is crucial for a fulfilling life. Just as God rested after His work of creation, we too should find time to rest and reflect on our accomplishments. This balance helps us stay productive and joyful.

**Enjoying Both Work and Rest**: **In conclusion, seeing work through a Biblical lens helps us understand that work is not a burden or a result of sin, but a blessing from God. When we embrace our work, do it diligently, and find joy in it, we can lead fulfilling and meaningful lives. This balanced approach allows us to enjoy both our work and our rest, leading to a more harmonious and happy life.**

**A Prayer To Start A New Day:**

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we begin this new day, we come before You with hearts full of gratitude. Thank You for the gift of work and the opportunities it provides for us to serve You and others. Help us to see our daily tasks, whether at home, school, or our jobs, as acts of worship to You.

Lord, grant us the strength and wisdom to do our work with diligence and integrity. Remind us that every task, no matter how small, is significant in Your eyes when done with a heart full of love and dedication. Help us to approach our responsibilities with joy and enthusiasm, just as You took joy in Your work of creation.

Guide our hands and minds to work efficiently and effectively today. May we be a light in our workplaces and communities, reflecting Your love and grace in all that we do. Help us to support and encourage our colleagues and classmates, fostering an environment of kindness and cooperation.

Lord, we also ask for balance in our lives. Teach us to find the time for rest and renewal, just as You rested on the seventh day. Let our rest be a time to recharge and reconnect with You, so we can continue our work with renewed energy and purpose.

As we step into this day, fill us with Your peace that surpasses all understanding. May Your Holy Spirit guide our actions, words, and thoughts, leading us in paths of righteousness. Let everything we do today bring glory to Your name and further Your kingdom here on earth.

We entrust this day into Your hands, knowing that You are with us every step of the way. Thank You for Your constant presence and unfailing love. We praise You and commit our work to You.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.