

Lesson Eleven – “Labor: Created to Create”

Introduction

Do you like to work, or do you dread it? Perhaps both? In this tour, we discover why our daily labors can produce both pleasure and pain.

Work is not a “curse,” as many people might say, but an essential element of our humanity, rooted in the very nature of God. It is not just something we have to do for money. Yet in our fallen world, work does sometimes present challenges.

Let’s look closer at God’s perspective on the role of labor and finances in our lives.

Quote Unquote

What does Scripture say? Fill in the blanks as you watch this presentation.

1. “Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a _____ of the LORD your God.” –Exodus 20:9-10 (NAS)
2. “Cursed is the ground because of you; through _____ toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.” –Genesis 3:17
3. “Every animal of the forest is mine, and the _____ on a thousand hills... If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.” –Psalm 50:7-12
4. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and _____ it.” –Genesis 1:28
5. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the _____, not men, because you know that the _____ will reward everyone for whatever good he does. –Ephesians 6:5-8
6. All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to _____. –Proverbs 14:23
7. “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and _____.” –Matthew 6:24
8. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the _____ _____ _____ be in him? –1 John 3:17

Notes or Questions

While watching the video, use this space to record your thoughts, any facts you want to remember, questions that arise, etc.

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it.”

Genesis 2:15

TRUTH 1 – One Creator, Many Sub-Creators

God made us in His image, so we too like to work and create things.

1. Clearly, the Lord enjoyed creating the world. So what kind of work do *you* enjoy? Would you rather do that work than simply pursue recreation every day? For you, when does work become play?
2. How would your life be different if other people did not build roads or construct buildings, write books, invent cars or computers, grow food, provide health care, create music (or paintings or photographs), etc? What is it that *you* were created to create? Are you regularly engaged in that work? Why or why not? What will it take to devote yourself more to God’s particular calling?
3. Do you “observe the Sabbath” (or “the Lord’s Day”)? Why or why not? If you do, *how* do you observe it? Are you glad to do so, seeing rest as a gift from God? Or is your Sunday filled with work, much like other days?

TRUTH 2 – Work Takes Work

After man rebelled against God, work became harder, but it is still a good thing, and we should enjoy being stewards for God.

1. Do we really believe that everything ultimately belongs to God, including all that we own? Do we *act* as faithful stewards of God’s things? Does that include our talents and abilities? Our bodies? Our time?
2. How do you feel about work? Do you dread Monday morning? If so, why? Do you think that you *have* to work, or rather that you *get* to work? Has your attitude toward work been distorted by the world’s perspective?
3. How should you respond when your job is mundane, demeaning, overly stressful, or a burden in some other way?

TRUTH 3 – Minding the Master’s Store

The Bible contains many principles that should govern how we go about being stewards for God.

1. Do we freely give to others in need, as God would have us do? How can we help the poor find fulfilling work, not just “welfare” (a handout)? Why is that an important distinction?

2. Does all your work, no matter what field you're in, glorify God? What is the difference between "sacred" and "secular" work?
3. Which sources of information and entertainment are most important to us? Do they offer the truth or lies? Do the lies bother us, or do they sometimes amuse us?
4. How do you view retirement? What is your dream for your senior years? Is that just your goal, or is it God's wish for you as well?

Wrap-Up

Having an unbiblical understanding of labor is a sure way to make your work week miserable. If you don't want merely to live for the weekends, as so many do, it's important that you recognize what a gift God has given us in the field of labor.

Few things in this life are more satisfying than productive, creative work, and even in the New Earth (2 Peter 3:13) we can look forward to the enjoyable task of managing God's creation (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15). So if you have a "TGIF" attitude toward work, it's time to see it God's way.

Check It Out

For your reference and further review, here are some of the key Scripture passages that were mentioned in the video you just watched.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:2, 15; 3:17-19
Exodus 20:8-11, 15, 17; 23:11
Leviticus 19:9-10; 25:23
Deuteronomy 8:17-18; 24:15
Psalm 19:1; 50:7-12; 101:3; 102:25
Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4; 14:23; 22:29; 28:27; 29:7
Matthew 6:20-24; 25:14-30
Mark 2:27
Luke 12:48
2 Corinthians 8:13-15
Ephesians 4:28; 6:5-9
Colossians 3:22-25; 4:1
2 Thessalonians 3:10
1 Timothy 6:1-2
Titus 2:9-10
James 5:4
1 Peter 2:18-22
1 John 3:17