



**Series Title:** Stewardship – Making our Whole Lives Count for Jesus!

**Weekly Title:** Stewardship of Work

**Date:** Sunday October 30

**Bible Passage:** Genesis 2:1-3

**Purpose of Preach:** To challenge and inspire us to see the joy, purpose and potential of work in our lives.

**Introduction:**

This week we are looking at what the Bible teaches us about work. What should our attitude be to it? Why should we work? It is really important to begin by seeing that God is the God who works. We see in Genesis 1 the creative power of God. In this wonderful creation song we see God inventing, creating, innovating and activating. It is glorious, it is energetic, it is wonderful. God’s creative effort brings this incredible universe into being. Then we see in Genesis 2 this creative effort is called “work”. We read “thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them, And on the seventh day God finished his work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all his work that He had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all His work that He had done in creation.” As we look at the God who works I want us to see three biblical truths about how we should steward work in our lives.

**#1: WORK HAS DIGNITY**

The first truth I want us to see is the dignity of work in our lives.

- a) *God looks at the work of His hands and says it is “good”.* As Tim Keller puts it “God worked for the sheer joy of it”. He loved work, He enjoyed work. As His creative effort and work resulted in the creation of the incredible universe we live in, He saw that it was good. He loved it.
- b) *Work has an inherent and intrinsic dignity and worth.* Work is not part of the curse but we see in Genesis 1:28 and 2:15 is something that preceded the Fall. Work is impacted by the Fall and will at times involve struggle and cost but we need to grasp the dignity of work. God looked at the work of His hands and said “good”, and then He commissions humans to carry on what He began. As Sam Storms puts it “God has infused the natural creation with resources and materials that when properly used can yield things like electricity, refrigeration, communication, etc.” We work because we are created in the image of God and as we have seen He is the God who works.
- c) *All work is sacred and carries this inherent and intrinsic dignity.* There is no secular or sacred divide. There is no difference between being a stay at home carer, full time parent, worker in a factory, or a bank or an office or wherever. Being a pastor is not more sacred than what you do. All work is sacred and carries dignity.

**#2: WORK IS WORSHIP**

The second truth I want us to see is that work is worship.

- a) *We magnify and glorify God through our attitude and approach in work.*

Paul tells the Corinthians “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31). This refers to the whole of life which includes work. We are to work to the glory of God. Work is worship! Then in Ephesians 6:6 Paul describes the person who works as “doing the will of God from the heart,” and in Colossians 3:23 he says, “Whatever you do [in terms of your job or your work], work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” So we steward work in our lives by seeing it as worship and a way of magnifying the worth and beauty of God.

*b) So how can we glorify and worship God through our work?* Here are some thoughts on how. *Dependence* – wake up every day totally dependent upon Jesus. In your work place depend upon Him for the grace to get through the day, your work is important to Him. *Integrity* – worship God by being honest and trustworthy and showing people what He is like. Be on time for stuff. Give a full days work and don’t slack. Don’t steal office stationary. Point people to the trustworthiness of God through being trustworthy. *Excellence* – work hard at being as good as you can be at your job. God has given you gifts, be a good steward of them and glorify Him. *Love* – serve people. Demonstrate to people how God loves them by loving them. Be the one who gets the coffees in, be the person who goes the extra mile. Take an interest in your work colleagues that is more than superficial hellos each day. Be known as someone who care for people. When things get tough be the person people know they can turn to. *Money* – worship God by pointing people to the truth that you are living for Him and not the wage packet. Don’t work to earn to have, work to earn to give. Make your pay check speak of Jesus as your supreme treasure not money. *Thankfulness* – always give thanks to God for life, health and work and Jesus. Be a thankful person at work. Don’t be among the gossipers, cynics and complainers. Be known as someone who speaks life and hope. Be thankful at work. So work is worship. Work to make God look as great as He really is!

### **#3: WORK IS MINISTRY**

A third truth is that work is our ministry and mission field.

*a) What you do in your work place is just as important to Jesus as what you do in church.* We need to see our work as our ministry and mission field. God wants to use you in your work. He wants to anoint you to shine for Him, magnify Him and see His Kingdom break in more and more. As someone once put it: “I’m a full-time missionary – the company I work for just happens to pay my pay-check.”

*b) As we worship God in work we will be a witness for God at work.* In addition to what we have already looked at here ways we can step more into seeing our work as our ministry.

i) Pray for your work colleagues and for opportunities to share Jesus. ii) Prepare to share your testimony. On a Monday morning when people ask how your weekend was simply say “It was brilliant, I went to church on Sunday which was so good”. Just begin to share how living for Jesus is a rhythm in your life. Don’t force it or Bible bash. But be prepared to share your testimony in one minute – what has God in your life. Also, be prepared to share the gospel – are you ready to share in one minute what the gospel is? iii) Start a weekly lunch prayer gathering with any other Christians there? Work with other Christ followers to see God break in. iv) Don’t lose heart, take baby steps and keep going. Leave it with Jesus to bear the fruit, you just focus on living for Him. v) Intentionally shape the culture by living in authenticity, faith, humility and grace. vi) Be excited about Jesus. Pray at the start of each day for God to thrill you with Him and live that day full of His joy and grace.