



“Proverbs / Wisdom for Life”
Wk. 5 God’s Design for Work
By Pastor Jody May 03/0/2022

Proverbs 3:5-8, 13 ESV

- ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
- ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
- ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
- ⁸ It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

Blessed Is the One Who Finds Wisdom

- ¹³ Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,

Proverbs 10:4-5 ESV

- ⁴ A **slack hand** causes poverty,
but the hand of the **diligent** makes rich.
- ⁵ He who gathers in summer is a prudent son,
but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.

Proverbs 12:27 ESV

- ²⁷ Whoever is **slothful** will not roast his game,
but the **diligent** man will get precious wealth.

Proverbs 6:9-11 ESV

- ⁹ How long will you lie there, O **sluggard**?
When will you arise from your sleep?
- ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest,
- ¹¹ and poverty will come upon you like a robber,
and want like an armed man.

Proverbs 13:4 ESV

- The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing,
while the soul of the **diligent** is richly supplied.

Proverbs 21:5 ESV

- The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance,
but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

Proverbs 12:24 ESV

- The hand of the diligent will rule,
while the slothful will be put to forced labor.



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[INTRO] *Opening Illustration about the day I discovered that I did not want to follow in my dad’s footsteps.*

We were created to glorify the Lord and the way in which we do it is by our work. All God’s people work, it IS a command from God as old as man himself so it is essential that we develop a proper doctrine of godly work. Today the good news of Proverbs will help us navigate how we should view our work because **1st** work is the plan, **2nd** we should be diligent in it, and **3rd** even when our work falls short Jesus redeems the work we do.

1. Work is THE plan for ALL of life.

Genesis 1:28 “...Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and **subdue** it, and have **dominion**...”

Genesis 2:15 “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to **work** it and **keep** it.”

How we view the work of our hands is important, it is necessary, and God still holds us accountable for it. **Subdue/kabash** to bring under bondage to subjugate and **Dominion/radah** to rule, dominate, and tread down. Then once that happens (dominating and subjugating) you are to work at keeping it that way. Well, last time I looked guys there is quite a bit we have not put under our control yet. (Weather & climate, food needs, the oceans, renewable energy, space travel, etc. and all the technology that is required to access these areas let alone control them).

At the fall this command was **not taken away** either, but it was intensified because of the fallen nature of creation. Everything was going to be harder now, but it does **not negate the fact** that you are called to have dominion over the Earth. Mankind couldn’t do it the first time, so it ended with Noah, who through his work ended up saving the human race we have now. Through Abraham God set up the Israel Nation to subdue it and have dominion but after Solomon, they failed and lost power and were subdued themselves.



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Here’s the point in all of this, we need to understand, **just because it is hard it does not negate your responsibility to do it! God has never taken away the command of own your work!** It won’t matter what life throws at us we are still called to subdue and have dominion over those things around us.

- You may have had cruddy parents, of that I’m sorry, but you are still called to be a parent that parents well! You are called to parent (work) based on being an image bearer God, and represent Him well. Have dominion over learned traits and habits.
- You could be disabled and can’t physically work but you are still called to subdue your surroundings. God’s influence must be spread and what could you be doing about that? You can still break a sweat.
- You could have failed multiple times in the business world, but it doesn’t mean it’s time to quit. You are still called to have dominion over a world that needs the services and influence of Christian men and women.
- You may be suffering from mental illness to the point where you don’t like being around people and it’s hard to function. You are still called to live a life where your disease does not own you, but you are to own it. All to God’s glory!
- You may be struggling with your weight and have all kind of internal issues that make it hard to get in shape. In the name of God, you are still mandated to keep your weight from getting out of control showing that your sweat is your on-going diligence never letting control of your will power.
- You may be struggling with addictive personalities. By the way that’s all of us, we all have things we like to do too much. But your work is not to let your addictions destroy you, but you are called to have dominion over them and subdue your cravings. Just because it’s hard doesn’t take away that responsibility!
- We are all called to master our desire for the fleshly cravings especially in the realm of sex. Yes guys, our work is to make sure that sex in the teaching of the church is continually taught as something that happens in marriage between a man and a woman. Through our modeling of this to the world we represent God well and raise the next generation of Christians believing the same.



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We are all called to work and here is the kicker. Work is not just your daily job, it is **everything we do every moment** we are awake we are called to subdue and have dominion in those areas of our life! “By the sweat of our brow...”

Proverbs favorite word to use for our disposition towards Work is **DILIGENCE**. – In the Hebrew it is the word *Khaw-roots*. **2742a** חָרוּץ **charuts** (358d); pass. part. of 2782; *sharp, diligent*:—diligence(1), diligent(4), sharp(2), threshing sledge(2).¹ Diligence is **careful and persistent work**, it defines the **‘work’** we are to **‘keep’** from Gen. 2:15.

Today, just as with many topics for a Gospel-centered life, or a lifestyle befit for a Christian, to explain what our attitude towards work should be, Proverbs compares Diligence to that of Laziness.

2. Diligence is BENEFICIAL for your work AND life.

Proverbs 10:4-5 ESV

- ⁴ A **slack hand** causes poverty,
but the hand of the **diligent** makes rich.
- ⁵ He who gathers in summer is a **prudent son**,
but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.

Diligence is connected to prudence, another word for Wisdom and as we said last week what brings us wisdom is the righteousness of God = **God’s people, are prudent people**. We are the type to work hard while we can, to increase our riches or extra. As a matter of fact, wealth is a direct byproduct of the diligent (careful and persistent).

Proverbs 12:27 ESV

Whoever is slothful will not roast his game,
but the **diligent** man will get **precious wealth**.

Proverbs 21:5 ESV

The plans of the **diligent** lead surely to **abundance**,

¹ Thomas, R. L. (1998). [New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition](#). Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.



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but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

There is nothing wrong btw with being rich/abundance. What happens though for most people is that when hearts don’t love God FIRST, the pursuit of wealth ‘over all’ becomes the god. You can’t serve God and money (Lk. 16:13; Mat. 6:24) but you CAN and SHOULD serve God with your money! As a matter of fact, scripture teaches that a diligent person, Trusting God/living in fear of Him, is actually in a good place.

Proverbs 13:4 ESV

The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing,
while the soul of the **diligent is richly supplied.**

**Diligence for God shown in your work will also show a
soul that is deeply satisfied in God.**

I want to be sure my family hears this side of the argument as well. Some Christians do not think too highly on being diligent (hard and smart work) because they believe that is the path to an ungodly lifestyle filled with coveting, overindulgence, and gluttony. People are too worried about the sin they could commit without worrying about the sin they ARE committing:

Proverbs 12:27 ESV

Whoever is **slothful will not roast his game,**
but the diligent man will get precious wealth.

Lazy people will work, but the work they will do will most likely not be for themselves. In the end energy is spent working for others that benefit more from your toil than you do accomplishing the goals they want done. *(Slothful people can be attracted to socialist/Marxist ideas because it means work less for an equity of outcome)*

Proverbs 13:4 ESV

The soul of the **sluggard craves and gets nothing,**
while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied.



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Lazy people in the end have nothing to accumulate and leave nothing behind for the next generation and it perpetuates an ongoing cycle of poverty and destitution.

Proverbs 10:4-5 ESV

- ⁴ A **slack hand** causes **poverty**,
but the hand of the diligent makes rich.
- ⁵ He who gathers in summer is a prudent son,
but he who **sleeps** in harvest is a son who **brings shame**.

Proverbs 6:9-11 ESV

- ⁹ How long will you lie there, O **sluggard**?
When will you arise from your sleep?
- ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest,
- ¹¹ and **poverty** will come upon you like a **robber**,
and **want** like an armed man.

A sluggard, a sloth, a slack handed person (Lazy people) is someone who cares NOT about glorifying God with what they have but instead glorifies the world by what they can get without trying.

The bottom line is the heart is fulfilled when we work for God and the heart is always left wanting when we only live for ourselves... What does our attitude about work reflect right now in our lives? Are we working hard but is it only to get more things? Are we working less because we are not thinking about the next generation?

WARNING on being a Workaholic - HOWEVER, before moving on, I do want to point out that Bible **does not** condone becoming a “workaholic,” which happens when our work becomes an idol in our lives.

Psalm 127 Tells us:

“Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it **labor in vain**.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,



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the watchman **stays awake in vain.**

It is in vain that you rise up early
and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for **he gives to his beloved sleep.”**

God does not intend for us to work ourselves into the ground, to the extent that our health is damaged, or our families suffer, **that’s in VAIN.** As the Psalm says, **our God gives his beloved sleep.**

If we have not experienced the love of Christ and understood His work for us, then WORKING will always be **warped.** We will either avoid it for we think what’s the use, or we will work too hard at it trying to show our worth. But if we have discovered Jesus and His love for us then work just fits, it has found a place in our lives. Our work shows our love for our God because by Jesus’ efforts our work has been redeemed!

3. Because Jesus was Diligent our Work IS Redeemed!

As we have found in Proverbs up to this point our work in the Pursuit of Happiness/living out Wisdom for Life never brings us joy unless it is work done for Jesus. And because of Him this work, all things we do in life, is not the same type of work it was 2000 years ago, it’s a different work now.

Daniel 7:13 & 14 ESV

“I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a **son of man,**
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
14 And to him was given **dominion**
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should **serve him;**
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,



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which shall not pass away,
and **his kingdom** one
that **shall not be destroyed.**

Jesus has been handed the Dominion from the Father it was Jesus’ job to subdue all the world. Where Adam dropped the ball Jesus picked it up and scored. Where David had moral failures, He had moral superiority. He kept the first commandment of subduing creation by His work as the second Adam (1 Cor. 15:45) as well as by living and dying as the one true King of Israel for the same people that were too lazy to love God with all their heart. Jesus completed His work on the cross and told us so, **“It is finished”**. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel 7 and completed what we cannot do. He kept the command of Genesis with ALL diligence – Gen. 2:15 He worked over creation and now He is keeping it! **What we are thankful for:**

“Jesus owned His and Our Work so our work would stop owning us!”

Now by what He has done when you face your trials, your work, you look at it squarely, size it up and pray in Jesus’ name you can say to yourself confidently *“you will not own me because my master owns you!”* Whether I fail or succeed in my endeavors it will not destroy me. Even when I fail, by how I handle it, shows my faith in Jesus to be real.

2 Corinthians 12:10 ESV

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am **weak**, then I am **strong**.

When I am weak, He is strong EVEN and MORE importantly in our failures. He will give us strength to endure, to be DILIGENT, and He has victory again **through us** over this creation! Jesus redeems our work; for the Gospel says that when I pursue my work out of love shown by my diligence God’s accepts it as Jesus’ work which is already fulfilled. **My work based in grace IS accepted!**



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So here is the main Wisdom we will gain from Proverbs today in our quest for happiness as we seek to discern God’s Design for work:

Proverbs 16:3 ESV
*“**Commit** your **work** to the Lord,
and your plans will be **established**.”*

When you commit your work to the Lord it will become His work and your plans are now His plans. We have gained in the strength of our resolve because our feeble attempts at planning out our life have now been overcome, shall I say taken over, by God. And because they are His plans, He will ensure the success of them.

[APPLICATION]

Now in light of how Jesus has redeemed our work, let us see from scripture some correct views of work and apply our lives to it.

1. Work is for God’s Glory (not ours).

“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.” John 15:8 ESV

- So in all your work in the home and out are you bearing fruit?
- Are people seeing Jesus in your life and your work?
- Our work is our evangelism, spreading of Jesus’ name, living on mission. We spread the gospel by succeeding and failing in front of people. By this we prove to be His disciples. **“Commit your work to the Lord”.**

2. Work gives Purpose.

“...nor shall you gather gleanings, after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner. I am the Lord your God.” Leviticus 23:22
ESV

- poor and rich are to work alike, no free rides in God’s Kingdom
- work gives dignity and continues with God’s design for man
- all ability to work and the resources of business are from God and are given to subdue the earth not line our pockets... Says the Lord.

3. Work doesn’t define social standing.



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“A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold. The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.” Proverbs 22:1-2

4. Work leads to more work, not retirement.

“My food, said Jesus, is to do the will of Him who sent me and to **finish** His work.” John 4:34 ESV

- What sustained Jesus in His work is meant to sustain us.
- We are under His dominion so we are to work until it is finished.
- Work is defined by divine purpose not years until retirement and how much pension you have saved, or financial security in our Mutual Funds.

[WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE]

When we commit our work to the Lord, we won’t want it for our glory, no longer concerned with our recognition.

When we commit our work to the Lord, we will always find purpose in our work -our work will not define us, but divine calling defines our work.

When we commit our work to the Lord, we are then defined by our heritage in Jesus, not by what we do for a living.

When we commit our work to the Lord we will stop worrying about retirement and we will figure out how to keep working until we die, **that’s not a sad thing but a glorious thing!**

Let us all make a commitment to God today to commit our work to Him so we may see the establishment of His plans. Wisdom for Life learned today: Commit your work to God and be blessed...

All work is Redeemed attributes to the goals of God!!!



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[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that purposed from the beginning that our lives would be filled with God Honoring work.

Go in the name of the Son, that subdued and dominated this creation so that our attempts will not have worth.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that empowers us to keep fulfilling our calling to be diligent, and promotes our sharing of having found our answer of worth.