

Work - Cont.

eats his own flesh. Better is a handful, with quietness, than two handfuls with labor and striving after wind" (Ecclesiastes 4:4-6; see also 5:12; 6:7). Work is important to take care of the necessities of life, but serving God each day is the greater goal. Always keep that in mind. Don't work just to make money and to have more things.

5. Work while keeping your eyes on God. Solomon wrote: *"This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."*¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; see also 9:1). You can work and pray (Nehemiah 1:4; 2:4), you can work with honesty (Luke 3:12-14; Rom. 12:17), and you can work for the Lord (Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25; Titus 2:9-10). Working while serving God is the best kind of work. - *Chris Reeves*

Sentence Sermons

- Life is like a grindstone; it can either rough you up or polish you down depending upon what you are made of.
- Keep your temper; no one else wants it.
- Many people have plenty to live with, but little to live for.
- Never forget that you are forgiven.
- Be loving as brethren.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

How is the Christian to go about his or her work? How is a Christian to act at work? Let's see what wisdom the Bible has to offer concerning the Christian and work.

God condemns idleness and laziness. Proverbs 19:15 reads: *"Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep; and the idle soul shall suffer hunger."* Work, not laziness, is also encouraged in the New Testament (Matthew 20:6; Romans 12:11). Those who do not work are to be refused (2 Thessalonians 3:10-14; 1 Timothy 5:11-13).

The Christian and Work

What kind of work can a Christian do. First, there is the work of employment (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:6). Second, there is the work of the home (Titus 2:5). Third, there is the work of the local church (1 Corinthians 15:58; 1 Timothy 6:18; Titus 3:14).

Let us consider five principles of wisdom that we can gain from Solomon that will help us throughout the workday (Ecclesiastes 2:11).

Work Wisdom

1. Work is a gift from God, not a curse from Satan. Solomon wrote: *"And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy good in all his labor, is the gift of God"* (Ecclesiastes 3:13). The need for work goes back to the beginning of time (Genesis 2:15). It is true that the intensity of work increased with the curse (Genesis 3:17-19), but work itself is good and from God. OT Israel was to work (Exodus 20:8-11) and NT Christians are to work (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). Since work is a gift of God, we should seek it, enjoy it, and do our best at it.

2. Work hard, rest hard. Solomon wrote: *"Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, where you go"*

(Ecclesiastes 9:10). God rested after his work (Genesis 2:1-3) and OT Israel was to rest after work (Exodus 20:8-11; 31:12-17). We can learn from this and do the same. When we do not take time to rest and worship God, we allow work to become a master which can enslave us with many troubles.

3. Work with joy, not with sorrow. Solomon wrote: *"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it is from the hand of God"* (Ecclesiastes 2:24; see also 3:13,22; 5:18-19; 8:15; 9:7-9). Find a work that you enjoy doing and you will excel in it.

4. Work without letting work itself be the goal. Solomon wrote: *"Then I saw all labor and every skillful work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind. The fool folds his hands together, and*