



Work After the Curse

Lesson Two • Genesis 3:16-19

Working for the King Changes EVERYTHING!

In the beginning, God worked, we worked together under Him over creation, and it was ALL VERY GOOD!

Work was delightful, meaningful, and purposeful as long as the King was the CENTER of everything! Genesis 2:15-17

- Our **responsibility** in work: *The LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it & keep it.* (v. 15)
- Our **liberty** in work: *The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;"* (v. 16)
- Our **priority** in work and all life: *"but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [in the CENTER of the garden] you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."* (v. 17)

Then one day... "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made." Genesis 3:1

1. God CURSED the Environment and Effectiveness of Work Due to Adam's Sin! **Genesis 3**

Creation Order Revealed in the Beginning – Genesis 2:4-25	Creation Order Reversed in the Fall – Genesis 3:1-7	Creation Order Remains After Fall but Distorted by Sin to Be Redeemed in the Future – Genesis 3:8-17
GOD Is Creator Over All and the Center	CREATURE: Satan as Serpent Tempts	GOD Remains Creator and Redeemer Over All (Gen 3:14-17)
ADAM Formed First as Head Then EVE From Him and For Him as Helper	EVE as Helper Is Fully Deceived Then ADAM as Head Fully Disobeys	ADAM Called to Account First as Head Then EVE as Helper Then CREATURE as Serpent/Satan
CREATION: Living and Non-Living Under All	GOD Is Still Creator but No Longer Their Center as They Try to Be Like Him and Live Without Him	CREATURE: Serpent/Satan Is Directly Cursed: Crushed by Woman's Future Seed, Then EVE More Pain in Labor, Then ADAM More Pain in Laboring While CREATION Groans

Work After the Curse – **Genesis 3:16-19**

- Work becomes **POINTLESS**: *Painfully difficult!* (3:16-17)

"In other words, work, even when it bears fruit, is always painful, often miscarries, and sometimes kills us."
– Tim Keller

- Work becomes **FRUITLESS**: *Profoundly disappointing!* (3:18)

- Work becomes **CEASELESS**: *Personally draining!* (3:19a)

- Work becomes **GODLESS**: *Perversely distorted by our depravity!* (3:19)

Ecclesiastes 2:17-22; Psalms 90:10

"Work exists now a world sustained by God but disordered by sin. Only if we have some understanding of how sin distorts work can we hope to counteract its effects and salvage some of the satisfaction God planned for our work."
–Tim Keller

EXPLANATION of the Curse in Relation to Work	EXTENT of the Curse	EFFECTIVENESS of Work	EXPERIENCE of Work
"Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life." (3:17)	Environment	Pointless	Painfully Difficult
"Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;" (3:18)	Effectiveness	Fruitless	Profoundly Disappointing.
"By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground," (3:19a)	Effort	Ceaseless	Personally Draining
"Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (3:19b)	Existence	Godless	Perversely Distorted by Depravity

How Our Depravity Distorts Our View of Work

1. **IDOLATRY:** Work becomes *everything!*

2. **IDLENESS:** Work becomes *nothing!*

3. **IDEALISM:** Some work becomes *everything*, while *other* work is *nothing!*

Idealism: *The practice of forming or pursuing ideals, especially unrealistically.*

- **Greener Grass Idealism:** Thinking **ANOTHER** job will be ***much more fulfilling*** and ***far more significant*** than my present job.

Problem: Being **DISCONTENT** with what God has provided.

Solution: Learn to be **CONTENT** by *learning* to work for the King *wherever He has put you*.

- **Vocational Ministry Idealism:** Thinking **VOCATIONAL** ministry will be ***much more fulfilling*** and ***far more significant*** than my present job.

Problem: Buying into **DUALISM**. (Two-Story Worldview)

"The world is one, secular and sacred, and...the chief way to serve the Lord is in our daily work." – Elton Trueblood

We "need to guard against seeing lay ministry 'merely as a means to increase lay participation in the interior life of the gathered church, as opposed to equipping laity for the challenges of life in the scattered church." –David Miller

"The idea that the service to God should have only to do with a church altar, singing, reading, sacrifice, and the like is without doubt but the worst trick of the devil. How could the devil have led us more effectively astray than by the narrow conception that service to God takes place only in a church and by the works done therein...The whole world could abound with the services to the Lord...not only in churches but also in the home, kitchen, workshop, field"
– Martin Luther

Solution: Learn not to **CONFUSE** your *primary call* as a Christ follower with your *secondary call* to a vocation, even vocational ministry.

The Primary Call in the Bible **which never changes**, is the sovereign call of God to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ and then walk worthy of that calling in all areas of life: *church, personal, marital, parental, work, community!* Ephesians 4:1-3; 1Thessalonians 2:12; Colossians 1:10

The Secondary Call in the Bible, **which can change**, is the sovereign call of God that providentially assigns you to particular roles and vocation, including vocational ministry. 1 Corinthians 7:17-24; Acts 13:2-3

2. God **REDEEMS** Everything About Work in Christ by His Gospel!

There is Good News for You in the Workplace

➤ Working for The King **CHANGES** everything! Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-4:1

In Christ work done under His lordship can once again become delightful, meaningful, & purposeful, even though it remains painfully difficult, profoundly disappointing at times, and is often perversely distorted by others.

The King not only commands His servants to work; He also commends work itself!

- Working for the King at work **TRANSFORMS** our work into worship and witness. *Titus 2:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12*

Working for the King at work will make us more like Christ (discipleship) and make Christ more attractive to others (evangelism).

- Working for the King looks forward to God's **FUTURE REST** where work will be free of the curse...and cursing, too!
Hebrews 4:9–11, 4:1

The reign of King Jesus as the Son of David will mean that we are literally working for the King and with the King in His glorious presence in both the Millennial Kingdom and the New Creation!

1. Working in the **MILLENNIAL** Kingdom: Working for the *perfect Boss* for 1,000 years!

The presence of King Jesus as the Son of David sitting on His throne on this old earth will greatly overcome the curse!

Isaiah 35:1-2; see also Isaiah 30:23-24; 35:7; Jeremiah 31:12; Ezekiel 34:25-27; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14; Matthew 19:27; Revelation 3:21; Matthew 20:26; 25:21; Luke 19:17

2. Working in the **NEW** Creation: Working *joyfully, meaningfully, and purposefully* with God the Father and His Son by His Spirit for all eternity in the redeemed, curse-free, better-than-the-Garden, New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:22–27; 22:1-7

**Work in light of the Good News of Jesus Christ,
because working for the King really does change everything!**

Seven Ways the Gospel Shapes Our View of Work

1. Work was **given** by the creatively working God **before** the Fall to His people made in His image.
2. The nature of work is **good**, not evil.
3. After the Fall God cursed the **environment** and **effectiveness** of work but not work itself.
4. In Christ **delight, meaning, and purpose** are being restored to our work in spite of the curse on its environment and effectiveness.
5. Under the Lordship of Christ work is not only **commanded** but also **commended** for His followers.
6. Work—even work done vocationally for King Jesus—will never be **completely satisfying** or **totally fulfilling** this side of our final rest in the New Creation.
7. Believers will **joyfully, meaningfully, and purposefully** work with God the Father and His Son by His Spirit for all eternity even in the final rest of the New Creation.