

Genesis 2:4-17 Work

By Rev. Paul Hudson

Sermon Summary & 5-Day Devotional Oct. 19th, 2025

Sermon Summary

In this sermon, we explored the biblical foundation of work as presented in Genesis 2:4-17. We saw that work is not a result of the fall, but a fundamental aspect of being human, given by God before sin entered the world. However, our identity is not found in our work, but in being made in the image of God—created to represent Him and enjoy a relationship with Him. Work is the “what” of our existence, not the “why.” The sermon then unpacked five key themes of work in God’s design: dominion, provision, fruitfulness, boundaries, and relationships. Each theme reveals how God intends for us to approach our work in partnership with Him, reflecting His glory, and living within the healthy limits and relationships He has established.

Key Takeaways

- Work Flows from Identity, Not the Other Way Around

Our culture often tempts us to define ourselves by what we do, but Scripture teaches that our true identity is rooted in being God’s image-bearers. When we let our work flow from this identity, we are freed from the anxiety of performance and the fear of change. Our value is not tied to our productivity or job title, but to our relationship with God, which remains constant even as our work changes. This perspective allows us to approach every task with dignity and purpose, knowing we are first and foremost children of God.

- Dominion Means Responsible Stewardship, Not Exploitation

God’s command to “subdue” the earth is not a license for abuse, but a call to wise mastery and stewardship. We are invited to discover, learn from, and develop the world’s potential in partnership with God, not apart from Him. Nature itself is a teacher, pointing us to creative possibilities and reminding us that our authority is always exercised under God’s greater authority. True dominion is marked by humility, gratitude, and a desire to reflect God’s character in how we work with creation.

- God’s Provision is the Foundation and Sustainer of Our Work

Every resource, opportunity, and ability we have comes from God’s hand. Our work is not self-sustaining; it depends on God’s ongoing provision and blessing. When we commit our work to the Lord, we invite Him to guide, provide, and bring fruitfulness in ways we could never manufacture on our own. This posture of dependence keeps us humble and grateful, and it opens our eyes to see God’s faithfulness in both seasons of abundance and scarcity.

- Boundaries are a Gift that Protects Our Relationship with God

God established boundaries for work—like the Sabbath and the command not to eat from a certain tree—to remind us that our lives are not defined by endless labor or unchecked ambition. Healthy boundaries keep our work in its proper place and protect our dependence on Christ as the true center of our lives. When we honor these limits, we resist the lie that our worth is measured by our output, and we make space to rest, worship, and be renewed in God’s presence.

- Work is Inherently Relational and Flourishes in Community

God designed work to be done in relationship—with Him and with others. Fruitfulness and blessing come when we prioritize unity, collaboration, and mutual support over individual achievement. Our work is not just about results but about building up others and reflecting God’s love in our interactions. When we tend to our relationships, we create an environment where God’s blessing and life can flow, both in our workplaces and in our communities.

5 Day Devotional Based on the Sermon

Day 1: Your Worth Is Rooted in God's Image, Not Your Work

Our culture often tells us that our value is measured by what we accomplish, the titles we hold, or the recognition we receive. But Scripture paints a different picture: before humanity ever worked, God declared us His image-bearers. This means our identity is secure, not because of what we do, but because of who God made us to be. When we let our work flow from this unchanging identity, we are freed from the anxiety of performance and the fear of losing our place if our work changes or ends.

You are first and foremost a beloved child of God. Your job, your productivity, and your achievements do not define you. Instead, your relationship with God is the foundation of your worth. This truth allows you to approach every task with dignity and purpose, knowing that your value is anchored in something eternal and unshakeable.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” (Genesis 1:27-28, ESV)

Reflection: In what ways have you allowed your job or achievements to define your sense of worth? What would it look like today to rest in your identity as God's image-bearer, regardless of your performance?

Day 2: Stewardship Means Cultivating, Not Controlling, God's Creation

God's call to “have dominion” over the earth is often misunderstood as a license to exploit or dominate. But true dominion is about responsible stewardship—caring for creation with wisdom, humility, and gratitude. God invites us to partner with Him, discovering the world's potential and developing it in ways that reflect His character.

Nature itself is a teacher, reminding us that our authority is always exercised under God's greater authority. We are called to nurture, not abuse; to serve, not exploit. When we approach our work as stewards, we honor God by seeking the flourishing of all that He has made, including people, resources, and the environment.

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Genesis 2:15-17, ESV)

Reflection: Where in your work or daily life do you sense the temptation to control or exploit rather than steward? How can you practice humble, grateful stewardship in that area today?

Day 3: God's Provision Is the Source and Sustainer of Our Labor

Every resource, opportunity, and ability we have is a gift from God. Our work is not self-sustaining; it depends on God's ongoing provision and blessing. When we recognize this, we are moved to humility and gratitude, acknowledging that we are not the ultimate providers for ourselves or others.

Committing our work to the Lord means inviting Him to guide, provide, and bring fruitfulness in ways we could never manufacture on our own. This posture of dependence keeps us open to God's faithfulness, whether we are in a season of abundance or scarcity. It reminds us that our

5 Day Devotional Based on the Sermon

efforts are meaningful, but it is God who brings the increase.

“You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.” (Deuteronomy 8:18, ESV)

Reflection: What is one area of your work or life where you have been relying on your own strength? How can you invite God’s provision and guidance into that area today?

Day 4: Boundaries Are God’s Gift to Protect and Renew Us

God established boundaries for work—not as a restriction, but as a loving gift. The Sabbath and the command not to eat from a certain tree remind us that our lives are not defined by endless labor or unchecked ambition. Healthy boundaries keep our work in its proper place and protect our dependence on Christ as the true center of our lives.

When we honor these limits, we resist the lie that our worth is measured by our output. We make space to rest, worship, and be renewed in God’s presence. Boundaries are not burdens; they are invitations to trust God, to enjoy His gifts, and to remember that He is the one who sustains us.

“Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.” (Exodus 23:12, ESV)

Reflection: Is there a boundary—like rest, Sabbath, or saying “no”—that you have been neglecting? What is one practical step you can take today to honor that boundary and trust God with the results?

Day 5: Work Flourishes When Rooted in Community and Relationship

God designed work to be inherently relational. We are meant to work in partnership with Him and with others, not in isolation. Fruitfulness and blessing come when we prioritize unity, collaboration, and mutual support over individual achievement.

Our work is not just about results; it is about building up others and reflecting God’s love in our interactions. When we tend to our relationships, we create an environment where God’s blessing and life can flow, both in our workplaces and in our communities. True success is measured not just by what we accomplish, but by how we love and serve those around us.

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, ESV)

Reflection: Who is someone in your work or community you can encourage or support today? How can you intentionally build up your relationships as part of your work?

**** This experimental document was generated by Pastors.ai, based on Pastor Paul’s sermon of the week. Edited and approved by Pastor Paul for accuracy.**