

Work – blessed are they who labor in the Lord

I. The Work Certificate

- A.** (holding up a dollar) This is a certificate of work. It has no inherent value. It is paper and ink backed up by nothing more than a promise made to us by people who like to make promises.
- B.** We, as a society, have agreed to treat this as a trade of work for services and goods. I can go to work, get these certificates, and then go into a store and trade my work – my sweat and time – for something in the store.
- C.** Think about what that means: if you make \$10 an hour and get a car for a payment of \$200 a month, that means you are giving twenty hours of your life every month for the right to have that car in your driveway.
 - 1. Is your part of the rent \$500? Guess what, you have to be out of that apartment for fifty hours a month just to have the right to get back into it.
 - 2. Go see a movie? Get popcorn?
- D.** What does God say about life and work?

II. Life is Work

- A.** Genesis 1:27-30. When we meet God, He is working. When He creates man and woman in His image, He assigns them to work.
 - 1. Our job was to raise our families and bring the world into useful order through work.
 - 2. Day one – put to work.
- B.** Paul lays down the law in the New Testament. (2 Thess. 3:6-15) He even goes so far as to say “in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ...”
 - 1. We are to stay away from those who won’t work.
 - 2. We work. One of our concerns is not to be a burden to anyone (as opposed to the constant whine of demands from every age group – demands that someone else pay for their stuff).
 - 3. Working and paying our way is the model we are to follow.
 - 4. If a man will not work, neither let him eat.

- 5. Those who aren't working tend to fill their lives with things that are unhealthy, unproductive, and unspiritual. Paul warns us away from idleness, busybodies. (Celebrity magazines, 24/7 news, American Idol, the internet)
- C. Ecclesiastes tells us that we were created to create. Work is honorable. It is what we are to be about. (11:1,2,6)
- D. Refusing to work is tantamount to stealing according to God. (Ephesians 4:28) Work so that you can give to others, because working and giving is what we were created to be.
- E. Jesus admonished his disciples to work because the night is coming. (John 9:1-4) Work wasn't something for tomorrow – it had a sense of urgency about it.
- F. As a sign that God was blessing us, Micah 4:4 tells us that we will all sit under our own tree – property ownership.

III. In Contrast With the World

- A. Jesus' teachings are the antidote to the entitlement mentality of our world. In a world where our children think they have the right to be famous and comfortable, God's instructions seem like something from another planet.
- B. The world looks down on the military, on McDonalds jobs. God doesn't. God blesses the janitor.
- C. God doesn't allow the making of money without morality. God has rules about treating your employees fairly.
- D. Again – we were created for work, and when we work, we give.

IV. And in our Christian life...

- A. We work. Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, etc. all tell us that we have gifts and we are expected to use them for the glory of God.
- B. Jesus tells us the parables of the talents and the pounds so that we would get the point: take what you have and put it into play. Risk what you have for the kingdom.
- C. Jesus tells us to lay not up treasures for ourselves on earth. The purpose of our work must be for the joy of

giving, the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.