

Lesson 3: A Goal of Work – Provision

Review

Our topic is work as *vocation*—something God has called you to be, i.e. *who you are*.
internal vs. external vocations
vocation vs. occupation

We also used the *Garden of Eden* as a paradigm of our work:

Where is that potential in creation that is waiting my hand to cultivate and develop?
Dominion Mandate (Gen. 1:28) – a *blessing* from God to *rule* and *subdue* the earth

Why should you and I work?

All of life should be for God’s glory (1 Cor. 10:31), so that should always be in view over smaller goals for work.

Illus. As the poor Jewish believers glorified God for the obedient generosity of the Greek believers, so also, may others thank God for your obedience to His call on your life (2 Cor. 9:13).

Reason #1: Provision

God usually provides our needs through our work.

Misunderstanding #1

God usually provides our needs through a *job*.

Ans. Work is more than “having a job.”

So many assume they are “out of work” when they lose a job. Not so!

As vocation is greater than an occupation, so work is greater than a job.

For example, after your job, you go home to do *housework* or *yardwork* or *schoolwork*.

For many, their hobbies and after-hours work become a job through self-employment.

Even after retiring from a job, still work—the Christian should always be fruitful (productive).

Therefore, start now in thinking and taking in terms of *work*, not *job*.

Misunderstanding #2

God *always* provides through work.

Is it absolutely necessary to work in order to “make a living”?

Ans. No. God can keep you alive without you working.

Examples:

Manna (Deuteronomy 8:3) and the feeding of the 5000

Elijah – fed by ravens

Birds do not sow and reap, and they have no barns (Matthew 6:25-26)

But if God *promises* to feed us (Mt. 6:33), why should we work at all?

Ans. God commanded us to work and ordained that His normal way of feeding us is through using our hands.

Illus. Two Ditches – having an **idol** (workaholic) or being **idle** (presuming on God’s promises)

Ans. Not working is not loving our brother.

We do not provide the goods and services from our “Garden of Eden.”

We also presume upon our brother’s kindness, which is not loving (1 Thess. 4:9-12; Acts 20:33-35).

Therefore, we are commanded to...

lead a quiet life

mind our own business

work with our hands

so that we may “behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need” (1 Thess. 4:11-12).

Summary

God does not need our work—His eye is upon us to keep us alive even in “famine” (Psalm 33:19).

God often uses our work to meet our needs, but it is still *God* who provides, not our hands.