

Work

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working until now, and I am working".
(John 5:17)*



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Work

Working is part of God's eternal purpose

There are many opinions about working. Some dislike it. They even say that work is a curse that came with sin. On the other hand, there are those who believe that work is everything in life. Devote his life to work and make money. For a disciple the job is not one nor the other thing.

A person who seeks first the wealth and material prosperity cannot please God. But when we observe certain customs and practices in the lives of the brothers, we realize that among us, the

problem is the opposite. There is a certain slowness and accommodation in the professional area. Sometimes, there are even negligence and laziness.


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Some are not lazy but have a wrong view, believing that this area is not important. They think that efforts in search of professional and financial improvement are illicit and a sign of materialism. We find the case of a disciple who has advised a young brother to study more, because the priority of his life was to make

disciples. We know that the motivation of this discipler was good, but it is a misapplication of Matthew 6:33. The correct professional development does not disturb the service of God, on the contrary, it is part of this service. If one have his professional and financial area properly established, he might dedicate himself even better to the Lord during his life.

For a disciple to work is a gift from God. It's a blessing. To be a good disciple is necessary to be a good worker. The scriptures give us clear and encouraging teaching on the dignity of working.

Work is a order from the period of the creation

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. (Gen 2:15)

The work did not emerge as a curse due to sin. Before Adam's fall, he had a task: to cultivate and keep the Garden of Eden. The man should work the soil. (Gen 2:5). God has not left man jobless in the Garden of Eden. What happened after sinned, is that the earth was cursed, making man's work laborious, and demanding his effort and sweat to get his daily bread.

And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Gen 3:17-19)

Even if man did not sin, he would always work during his lifetime. This is part of God's purpose for man.

Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening. (Psa 104:23)

God teaches us to work with His own example, for He is the first worker in history. (Gen 2:1-3)

But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." (Joh 5:17)

The ruin of complacency and laziness

Indolence and laziness are sins. God reproves them. Indolence defiles and destroys man. Indolence is often manifested in a form of complacency before life.

There are complacent and lazy brothers, who do not even realize that they are so. Often this behavior is a habit in life. It is a mindset received from the ancestors. Their grandparents and parents were so and so they are. Complacency is a form of laziness. You know that someone is complacent by his own home: clogged sink, broken door, light that does not turn on, objects scattered

around the house and lack of hygiene. These things would be worked out without money. But they are in disarray because of complacency. These things are a portrait of the inner attitude of the person. Sometimes we get distracted and forget to take care of this matter in the lives of the disciples.

Paulo severely rebukes the lazy ones. Refers to indolence as "disorderly life," and determines how they should be treated non-workers:

For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. [...] For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. (2Th 3:7-10)

Some are lazy because they want to. Others are lazy for lack of guidance.

One day, a needy, but strong and healthy person, passed in front of the house of a disciple and asked for "one dollar". The disciple had bought a big bucket of gravel. And it was in front of the house. The disciple said to him, "Look, I will not give you one dollar, I'll give you twenty dollars, if you bring this gravel inside". The needy thanked, and left. He wanted the money without having to work for it. Certainly thought: "I'll ask someone else and get the money without have to work." This is a false needy. He is in need because he is lazy.

A lazy person impoverishes and become a needy. The Bible severely rebuke:

How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. (Pro 6:9-11)

A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. (Pro 10:4)

The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied. (Pro 13:4)

Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger. (Pro 19:15)

There is an idea in the world that if someone can earn money without having to work, its better. Not realizing that gain without work damages man's character. Working, even for "free", it is beneficial. The work is good for man, teaches and makes him diligent, capable and responsible. The work prepares man to serve God. The one who is lazy, is useless to God.

Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it. (Pro 13:11)

A certain farmer was unsatisfied with his reapers. They gathered only 50 sisal bundles per day. He needed a faster harvesting. So he decided to make the following proposal to them: "I will pay you the full daily payment when you have finished harvesting 50 bundles per day. But I will pay you twice as much if you harvest 75 bundles per day". In the next day, the reapers have reaped the 50 bundles until three o'clock in the afternoon, they took their payments and left at once. Rather than seek to prosper, raking their earnings daily to get the most of it. They were defeated by laziness. This is a poor mindset.


These are cases of people who do not work because they do not want. But there are also those who are complacent for lack of guidance. They do not know what to do to get out of such situation. For example: there are unemployed people who stays at home waiting for a friend to call them or give them a job. They rely on promises of jobs that never happen. This is complacency. If someone is unemployed, yet is not without work. His job is to look for work every day, until he finds.

One brother was unemployed and penniless. When his need got worse, he was asking for help to one of the pastors. This pastor, discerning the brother's problem, said: "Dear brother, we will give you the help that you asked, but first, you will go through this entire street, visiting all businesses and offices, offering them your work. At the end of this task, return here that we will help you". That brother was faithful and obedient, and God blessed him. Not even had walked 200 meters on the street and had got himself a job.

If someone is unemployed should go out every day looking for work. While not finding it, should look for a temporary "gig" or

small jobs for the brothers. If you do not know how to do it, you should ask for guidance in the church. He just cannot stay idle at home throughout the day.

God wants to bless his children. But He cannot bless a slack hand.


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For that reason, we should observe a principle when assisting the ones in need: We should not help someone without compel him to work. We saw above Paul saying "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (2Th 3:10). No brother should be eating without working. To Timothy, he directs that widows helped by the church should be truthfully widows, aged over sixty years and diligently lived in the practice of every good work (1Ti 5:3-10). They are women who have always been working, but now, because of their age, they are no longer able to work well for their own maintenance. The one in need to be helped can not be idle. Should get to work.

A boy in need, from another town, was seeking for help from a brother to buy a bus ticket to go back home. The brother, had compassion towards him and took him to his house and told him: "I'll help you and give you the bus ticket. I will give you food and by the time of the departure, I will take you to the bus station. But first, I need you to do me a favor. These shingles that I have here, I need you to put them in another place". The boy swiftly accepted. He worked the whole day and earned his food. At night he was taken to the bus station to catch his bus. However, once they have reached the bus station, they discovered that he had missed the bus that night. The brother then said to the boy: "No problem. I will take you back to my house, I will give you food and accommodation and bring you back to the bus station tomorrow. Promptly the boy, was grateful. The next day his brother told him "Could you please take these shingles, that you have moved yesterday and bring them back to where they were in the first place?". The guy gladly did it. The brother knew that helping him without any effort would be a bad lesson for that guy.

Any work is good

No work should be considered humiliating. The Eternal Word took the form of a servant, and once incarnated, served men in a simple and honorable profession: carpenter. (Mar 6:3). In God's

kingdom there is no room for pride of any kind. (Luk 22:24-27; Joh 13:1-17).

We must learn to be faithful in small things. Many fail because they refuse to perform small tasks. Feeling themselves diminished. We must remember that readiness and dedication with which we perform a small task, recommend us to greater ones.

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' (Mat 25:21)

When someone is unemployed, should not refuse any work, unless they are dishonest. It is not right to refuse to work when we are living at the expense of others. If we already have a job, we could look for a better one. But if we are idle, we should be ready to do any work, as hard as it can be, rather than stay at home unemployed. He who does not accept a job because it seems humiliating, reveals a very prideful heart.

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty. (Pro 14:23)

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might... (Ecc 9:10)

Similarly, we should not leave a job until find another one. To leave a job, because it's hard or because we do not like it, without having another job at hand, its inconsequential and will make us suffer in need.

Work gives us resources to serve

It is licit to work to meet our own needs, but God also wants us to work to be able to help others.

And to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. (1Th 4:11-12)

... but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. (Eph 4:28)

In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the

words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Act 20:35)

The Lord commands to the workers

a) To work as doing it to the Lord. Not serving to the eye

Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. (Eph 6:5-8)

b) Obey to all the bosses, even the bad ones

Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. (1Pe 2:18)

Quando nos tornamos empregados de alguém, assumimos um contrato de prestar um serviço a ele. Enquanto estamos trabalhando, devemos nos comportar corretamente como servos.

c) Honoring the bosses so that the name of God is not blasphemed

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. (1Ti 6:1)

d) Do not exploit bosses who are brothers, on the contrary serve them

Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved. Teach and urge these things. (1Ti 6:2)

e) Excel in performing their work. They should be:

- . Quick and efficient (no "dawdle");
- . Assiduous and punctual (not missing work);
- . Responsible;

- . Respectful and submissive;
- . Endeavors to please.

The Lord commands to the bosses

- a) Do not use threats (Eph 6:9);
- b) To be fair knowing that he also has a Lord who judges him (Col 4:1);
- c) pay decent wages and not delay payments (Deu 24:14-15; Lev 19:13) Withhold the salary of employees and use it to yourself is stealing;
- d) Not to exploit, for God judges it (Jam 5:4 , Job 31:13-15);
- e) Not evade taxes (Rom 13:7; Mat 22:21);
- f) Not set their hearts upon riches (1Ti 6:17-19).

Professional qualification

Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men. (Pro 22:29)

God honors those who look to be expert in their. Many brothers have difficulties in maintaining their homes for lacking professional qualification. The better qualified, the better is the salary. In professional life each one worth what he knows.

The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor. (Pro 12:24)

Therefore, we advise all brothers that diligently seek professional qualification. All youngsters should study. Those who can, should do graduation. Take opportunities to learn some trade. Everyone should plan well their professional development. Learn everything they can about their profession. Should seek to be good at what they do.

Youngsters typically do not like to study. Some say: "I am not cut out for it, I am to work." This is a mistake. It is an excuse for not studying. Studying is a job. It is a work of the most demanding. Requires perseverance. Parents and disciple should not allow young people to stop studying. If they need to work to help support the house, should continue their studies at night, even

with great effort, and even tears. Should know that a few years of suffering will produce many years of abundance.

Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psa 126:5-6)

In our professional life, we must seek to learn everything we can. Our bosses will put at our disposal many opportunities that we must seize. A young man in his early career, should not be worried about the salary figure. Should take every opportunity to learn his profession. Our wages reflect how valuable we are. Therefore, our attention and effort must be directed to exploit every opportunity to learn and eventually, we will have better wages.