

Making good work *Genesis 1, Colossians 3, Ephesians 2* 6Ms 3/8 *Fruitfulness on the Frontline*

What comes to mind when we think of work?

Is it good or bad? Exciting or boring? Full of interest or a hard grind?

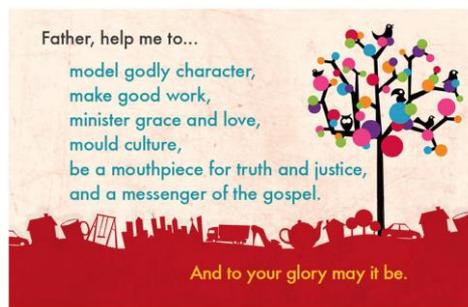
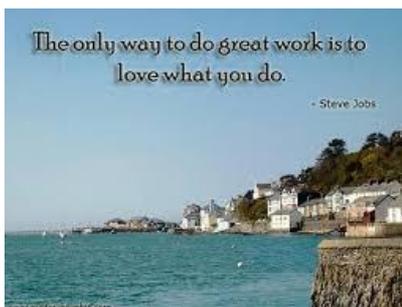
Fulfilling or stressful? What are the biggest positives and negatives?

Do we have enough free time for family & friends, leisure and holidays?

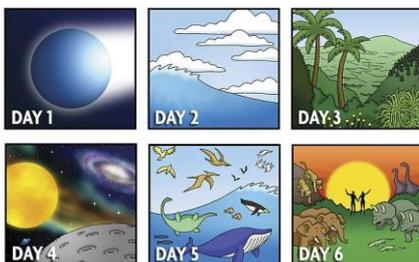
What does God say about it, and what counts as work for each of us?

'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.' *Genesis 1: 31*

'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.' *Colossians 3: 23*



Bringing order out of chaos *Genesis 1: 1-13*



How do the wonders of creation speak to us of God?

'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.' *Genesis 1: 31*

Our role is to continue the good work that God started and to look after the earth with all its potential to meet our needs.

Psalm 8

- ³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?
- ⁶ You have given him dominion over the works of your
hands; you have put all things under his feet,
⁷ all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
⁸ the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
⁹ O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Roles to create order

- gardening
- home-making
- providing food
- house-building
- decorating
- clearing up
- teaching
- flower-arranging

Making provision for our needs Genesis 1: 26 - 2: 2

Ephesians 2: 10

27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10



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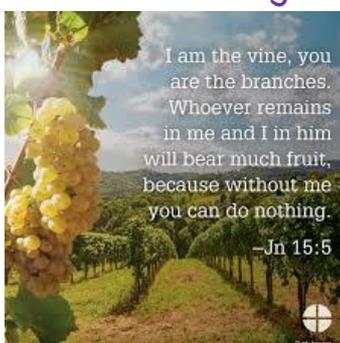
Why does work matter to God?

Work is God's instrument to get things done that He wants done, for other people's benefit and to His glory. Work is service, and we are fulfilling God's plan for us.

Brother Laurence was well-known for remembering God in all his works of service, e.g. doing the washing-up. So it is not just doing the work that is important, but doing it willingly, whole-heartedly, giving thanks to God.



Creating an ideal environment for growth



I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.

—Jn 15:5



As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

EPHESIANS 4:16, NLT

Adam and Eve disobeyed God's instructions and had to leave the Garden of Eden. Work was to become hard labour for them after that, but it remained necessary for survival and an essential part of life on earth.

What difference does knowing Jesus make to our attitude to work?

Series title is Fruitfulness on the Frontline. How do pictures of growth, the vine and the body help us to encourage one another?

How can we change the environment to enable people to flourish and good work to flow out?

- in church gatherings
- at home
- at work
- in our wider family
- in our local neighbourhood
- in our leisure activities
- in working teams we belong to
- when we meet and welcome new people

Bringing joy, delight and the aroma of Christ

2 Corinthians 2: 15

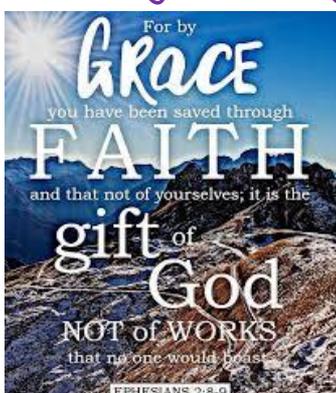


God's promise is to comfort all who mourn:
 'To bestow on them a crown of beauty
 instead of ashes,
 the oil of joy
 instead of mourning,
 and a garment of praise
 instead of a spirit of despair.
 They will be called oaks of righteousness,
 a planting of the LORD
 for the display of his splendour.'
Isaiah 61: 3

'And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.' *Colossians 3: 17*

The purpose of all our work is be of service to other people and to bring them joy and comfort, safety and protection. Through us, God's will can be done. We are God's agents and Christ's ambassadors in places where we live and work. We need to be wholehearted and reflect the love of God in all we do. Then our work will transform our lives and open up opportunities for witness.

Fulfilling our God-given potential *Ephesians 2: 8-9*



God wants us to put our God-given talents to use. He will give the guidance and strength we need.

We cannot earn God's favour through good works. Our good works are in response to His grace.

How do we view the work God gives us each day? We work with love in our hearts for God and for the people we serve.

We may not love all the tasks we do, but we are called to do them with love for others and out of gratitude for God's overwhelming love for us.

God is our loving heavenly Father and knows our needs. That is why He provided a Sabbath rest for us on the seventh day.

Jesus shows us the way by doing everything well. He tells us to be salt and light in the world: 'Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.' *Matthew 5: 16*

