

TO EVERY THING THERE IS A SEASON, AND A
TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE UNDER THE HEAVEN:
A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE;
A TIME TO PLANT, AND
A TIME TO PLUCK UP THAT WHICH IS PLANTED;
A TIME TO KILL, AND A TIME TO HEAL;
A TIME TO BREAK DOWN, AND

Life Under the Sun

The Story of Work

A TIME TO BUILD UP;
A TIME TO WEEP, AND A TIME TO LAUGH;
A TIME TO MOURN, AND
A TIME TO DANCE; A TIME TO CAST AWAY STONES,
AND A TIME TO GATHER STONES TOGETHER;
A TIME TO EMBRACE, AND A TIME TO REFRAIN FROM
EMBRACING;
A TIME TO GET, AND A TIME TO LOSE;



CORE SEMINARS

Studies on the Basics of the Christian Faith & Life

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*“Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason,
because bad philosophy needs to be answered.”*

C.S. Lewis in the Weight of Glory

THE STORY OF WORK

Everything finds its meaning in the context of a narrative.

Work is not a result of humankind's fall into sin. Work is central in Genesis 1 and 2. There it is—right in the midst of paradise, right in the picture of God's intentions for how things ought to be. Work is a gift from God. Work is something we were built for, something our loving Creator intends for our good.

Work is not evil, nor is it a side effect of sin. This truth can be hard for us to trust when we are frustrated in our jobs or unfulfilled in our careers.



CREATION, FALL, REDEMPTION, AND RESTORATION

"Creation, fall, redemption, and restoration" refers to a foundational narrative within the Christian faith, describing the overarching story of God's relationship with humanity, where God initially creates a perfect world, then humanity falls into sin, God redeems them through Jesus Christ, and ultimately works towards restoring creation to its original state of goodness.



The Bible provides the grand story of work we need. Consider the stories that are told in our world about work. Now consider the story you have told yourself. The Bible provides the grand story of work we need!



ACT I: CREATION

Genesis 1:1–3 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

I. Consider What the Grand Story Tells Us About Our Story

- A. The first worker in the Bible is not a human. It's God. Gen. 1:1
- B. The starting point of creation. Gen. 1:2
- C. God's work in and preparation through creation. Gen. 1:3-5

II. Humanity's Role in Work

- A. Work should reflect God's creative order. Gen. 1:26-28
- B. Work as an expression of God's image
- C. Bible describes a proper attitude toward the work

III. God's Work and Rest

- A. The rhythm of work and rest. Gen. 2:2-3
- B. Rest as trust in God

IV. Finding Meaning in Our Work

- A. Recognizing work as part of God's grand narrative
- B. Challenge the commonly held narratives about work & identity
- C. Understand the context of your life



The gospel redeems by reconciling us with the Creator which realigns our work with His original design for this world.

ACT II: THE FALL

Genesis 3:17-19 *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

I. The Temptation on the Job Site

- A. The presence of the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Gen. 2:16-17
- B. The deception of the serpent. Gen. 3:1-6

II. The Fall and Its Influence on Our Work

- A. Consequences of sin; thorns and thistles. Genesis 3:17-19
- B. Fragmentation of relationships due to sin

III. Driven from the Garden but were Not Relieved of Responsibility.

- A. Work remains a matter stewardship. Genesis 2:15
- B. Work as an imitation of God's creativity and goodness
- C. Navigating work with godly wisdom



Nothing works now as it should. Sin leads to the disintegration of every area of life: spiritual, physical, social, cultural, psychological, temporal, eternal.

ACT III: REDEMPTION

Genesis 3:14-16 *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

I. The Redemption of Work

- A. God's promise of redemption points to Christ as the ultimate Victor over sin and brokenness. Genesis 3:15
- B. Redemption applied to work. Revelation 21-22

II. Living Out Redemption in Our Workplaces

- A. Practical steps for engaging work redemptively
- B. Applying the gospel at work. Col. 3:23

III. Encouragement and Call to Action

- A. The cross reshapes our view of work:
- B. Weekly practices:



One of the reasons work is both fruitless and pointless is the powerful inclination of the human heart to make work, and its attendant benefits, the main basis of one's meaning and identity.

ACT IV: RESTORATION

Revelation 22:1-3 *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:*

I. The Original Design of Work and the Redemption of Work

- A. Work as part of God's good creation. Genesis 2:15
- B. The influence of the Fall on Work. Genesis 3:17-19
- C. Christ's redemptive work. Col 1:19-20
- D. The New Creation: A Glimpse into the Future Isaiah 65:21-22

II. Characteristics of Work in the New Creation

- A. Joyful and fulfilling labor. Revelation 22:3
- B. Transformation and the continuance of work

III. Implications for Our Work Today

- A. Viewing work through the lens of eternity
- B. Engaging in work with hope and purpose



Work (in the New Heaven) itself will be so profoundly satisfying and sweet and enjoyable that nobody will say, 'I need a weekend.'



SUGGESTED RESOURCES

1. Ryken, Leland. Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure. Baker Books, 1995.
2. Guinness, Os. The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life. Thomas Nelson, 2003.
3. Keller, Timothy, and Katherine Leary Alsdorf. Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work. Dutton, 2012.
4. Veith, Gene Edward Jr. God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life. Crossway, 2002.
5. GILBERT SOO HOO, Work and Vocation through the Lens of Ecclesiastes. Wipf & Stock Publishers 2021



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