

Work, ambition and worship— can they go together?

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Work is part of God's good purposes

- God the first worker Genesis 1
 - 'it was (very good)'—satisfaction in work vv 4, 10, 12, 18, 25, 31

“ God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

Genesis 1:28

Work is part of God's good purposes

- God the first worker Genesis 1
 - 'it was (very good)'—satisfaction in work vv 4, 10, 12, 18, 25, 31
- Humans given delegated responsibility Genesis 1:28; 2:19 (naming animals)

“

Work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do.

Dorothy L. Sayers

Work is part of God's good purposes

- 'image of God' features of work
 - all people are in God's image—so all are called to work satisfyingly
 - working to achieve common good in society
 - a question of priorities
- work is to honour God

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And **whatever** you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17

“...cursed is the ground because of you; in toil 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 until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Genesis 3:17b-19

Work is damaged by sin

- ‘thorns and thistles’ in work
- pay attention to (ab)use of power

“ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God’s mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship.

Romans 12:1

Work as worship

- ...not worshipping work!
- worship is much more than what we do together on Sundays

What about ambition?

- no criticism of ambition itself in the Bible
- the question is: what are we ambitious for?
- ‘But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.’ Matthew 5:33

Father, help me to...

model godly character,
make good work,
minister grace and love,
mould culture,
be a mouthpiece for truth and justice,
and a messenger of the gospel.



And to your glory may it be.

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Questions for discussion

- what features of your daily occupation reflect God's image in humanity and produce for the common good?
- what features of your daily occupation reflect the 'thorns and thistles' which are part of the world because of human sin?
- what does 'making good work' look like for you in your daily occupation?

You can get these slides from
Acts and More

<http://steve walton.info>