God's Plan
GOD'S PROMISES & GOD'S PEOPLE
SMALL GROUP STUDY

Session 5: Work Comes with a Promise

Which feels like the bigger blessing: work or recreation? It may sometimes feel like work is a curse, not a blessing, but from the very beginning God designed us to work—and when we do our work for His Glory, we gain access to many of His promises. That's a wonderful gift! Scripture repeatedly emphasizes the value of working—not only for ourselves, but for those around us and for God. It's an activity that brings us satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment we can't find anywhere else. We join God in His labor for the Kingdom when we work, and He responds to our effort, motives, integrity, and usefulness. This shouldn't be a point of tension but an encouragement—even in the mundane, God sees us and values what we do.

Scriptures

Colossians 3:23–24 (NIV®)
Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Genesis 2:15 (NIV®)
The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Ecclesiastes 3:13 (NIV®)
That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.

John 5:16–17 (NIV®)
So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working."

Ephesians 4:28 (NIV®)
Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

Proverbs 21:2 (NIV®)
A person may think their own ways are right, but the LORD weighs the heart.

Discussion Questions

1. The value of work has to be handed from generation to generation. How did your parents or grandparents talk about work or approach work? How do you? What part of that aligns with God's Word and what doesn't?

2. It's easy to forget Who we work for when the daily pressures of work bubble up. What can you do to remind yourself that you work for God's glory, not your own? Are there thought patterns, attitudes, or behaviors that need to change?

3. The desire to work hard is not necessarily one we're born with. Is there someone in your life whose work ethic you admire? What have they taught you about work?

4. Since God weighs the heart and considers our effort and usefulness, what does this teach you about the importance of integrity in our work?

5. What are some practical ways you can demonstrate integrity, faithfulness, and excellence in your work—even when no one else is watching?

Going Deeper

1. For generations, people learned job skills and work ethics from parents, grandparents, and others older and more experienced than them. What can you do to help a younger person in your life develop a biblical approach to work?

2. Ephesians 4:28 implies four criteria by which God will judge our work performance: He will judge our integrity, our motives, our efforts at usefulness, and our willingness to share the results of our work. In what ways is this the same or different from how your employer assesses your work performance? How are these the same or different from how you have evaluated your own work efforts?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your work in providing all of Creation for us. Thank You for the insights Your Word provides on the importance You give to our labors. Help us to see work as a gift and a blessing, and to do the work before us with all our heart, as unto You. In Jesus' name, amen.

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