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Introduction - Why This Book

Work fills our lives.
We rise for it.
We spend our strength on it.
We measure our days by it.

Yet in the church,
we rarely talk about it.

The Bible does.
From the first pages to the last,
work is everywhere.

God worked in creation.
Adam worked in the garden.
Christ worked as a carpenter.
Paul worked as a tentmaker.
The servants in heaven will work forever.

Work is not a side issue.
It is central.

But somewhere,
we lost sight of it.
We treat work as a curse.
Or a paycheck.
Or a distraction from “spiritual things.”

We forget that work itself
can be worship.
Work itself
can be witness.

This book is about recovering that truth.
Work has dignity.
Work has purpose.
Work has eternal weight.

From the field to the office,
from the home to the church,
every act of honest labor
can glorify God.

Here we will explore:

- Work in creation, before the fall.
- Work under curse and toil.
- Work redeemed in Christ.
- Work in the household and the church.
- Work unseen but eternal.
- Work forever in the new creation.

The goal is simple.
To see work as God sees it.
To find joy in labor.
To find meaning in tasks.
To honor Christ in every effort.

Work is not just about survival.
It is about worship.
It is about witness.
It is about dignity.
It is about God.

Chapter 1 - God the Worker — The Pattern for Humanity

In the beginning, God worked.

He spoke light into darkness.

He divided the waters.

He planted a garden.

And He called it good.

God is not afraid of labor.

He delights in it.

His fingerprints are on every sunrise,

every mountain,

every breath.

God is a worker.

And we are made in His image.

That means we are workers too.

Not slaves.

Not machines.

But children who copy their Father.

Work was never the curse.

“To work it and keep it” was Adam’s first calling. (Genesis 2:15)

Eden was filled with joy and purpose.

Only after sin came sweat, weeds, and thorns.

The curse touched the ground,

but not the dignity of work.

God set a rhythm.

Six days He worked.

One day He rested.

Work and rest together.
Neither complete without the other.

We were never meant to burn out.
We were never meant to be idle.
We were made for holy rhythm.

God saw His work was good.

We long to hear that too.
It is why finishing matters.
It is why empty jobs feel heavy.
We want someone to say,
“Well done.”

Only God can give that verdict.
And He will,
when our labor is offered to Him.

God has never stopped working.

“My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”
(John 5:17)

The Father sustains.
The Son redeems.
The Spirit renews.
Behind every honest task is God Himself.

Every tool we pick up echoes Eden.

Every prayer, every project,
every diaper changed,
every field plowed,
every note sung,
is work done in His pattern.

Nothing wasted.
Nothing forgotten.
Nothing too small to matter.

Reflection

God works.
We work.
This is not a burden.
It is a gift.
Every day we labor, we are living like our Father.
Every day we rest, we declare He is enough.

Prayer

Lord, You are the first Worker.
You shaped the heavens.
You formed the earth.
You gave me hands and heart to labor.

Teach me to work with joy.
Teach me to rest with trust.
Let my days echo Eden
until You say, "Well done."

Amen.

Chapter 2 - Work in Eden — Purpose, Joy, and Boundaries

The Garden was not empty.

It was planted.

It was ordered.

It was filled with life waiting to be tended.

“The Lord God took the man
and put him in the garden of Eden
to work it and keep it.” (Genesis 2:15)

Work came before sin.

Before thorns.

Before sweat.

Work was part of paradise.

Work was purpose.

Adam was not left wandering.

He was given a job.

To keep.

To guard.

To tend.

He had direction.

He had meaning.

He had dignity.

Work was joy.

No weeds yet.

No broken tools.

No aching back.

Every task flowed with delight.

Fruit grew.

Streams watered.
Animals obeyed.

Work was play.
Play was work.
Both were worship.

Work was partnership.

“It is not good that the man should be alone.” (Genesis 2:18)

God gave Eve.
Not as a bystander.
But as a co-laborer.

Side by side.
Naming.
Building.
Multiplying.
Filling the earth.

Together.

Work had boundaries.

“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,
but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
you shall not eat.” (Genesis 2:16–17)

All the garden open.
One tree closed.
Work without boundaries becomes pride.
Work within God’s command becomes life.

Boundaries protect joy.

Without them,
work swallows us whole.
We build towers,

not gardens.
We seek to be gods,
not servants.

But when God says, “Not this tree,”
He is giving us freedom,
not chains.

Eden was balance.

Purpose and limits.
Freedom and boundaries.
Work and rest.

This is dignity.
This is life.

Our hearts still long for Eden.

Why do we ache when work feels empty?
Why do we sigh when jobs become drudgery?
Because deep down,
we remember.

We remember joy in labor.
We remember fruit without sweat.
We remember what we were made for.

The pattern of Eden is still true.

We need purpose.
We need joy.
We need boundaries.

Without purpose, we drift.
Without joy, we despair.
Without boundaries, we destroy ourselves.

Eden whispers,
“Come back.”

Christ restores Eden.

Not the garden itself,
but the dignity it held.

Jesus said,
“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me
and to accomplish His work.” (John 4:34)

Purpose.
Joy.
Boundaries.
All found again in Him.

Reflection

Work is not punishment.
It is paradise remembered.
Every honest task still carries Eden’s echo.
Every limit God places still protects joy.

When we labor with purpose,
delight in the work,
and honor His boundaries,
we taste the garden again.

Prayer

Lord,
You placed man in the garden to work and keep it.
You gave purpose.
You gave joy.
You gave boundaries.

Teach me to labor with delight.
Teach me to stay within Your limits.
Restore Eden in my heart,
until I walk with You in the garden once more.

Amen.

Chapter 3 - The Image of God — The Ground of Human Worth

In the beginning, God created man.

Not by accident.

Not by chance.

Not by random dust.

“So God created man in His own image,
in the image of God He created him;
male and female He created them.” (Genesis 1:27)

This is dignity.

This is worth.

This is the crown of creation.

The image of God is not earned.

It is given.

It is breathed.

It is stamped on every soul.

Rich or poor.

Strong or weak.

Young or old.

Healthy or broken.

Every person bears His likeness.

The world measures worth by ability.

What you can do.

What you can produce.

What you can buy.

Lose strength, lose dignity.

Lose money, lose status.

Lose health, lose value.

But God does not measure like man.

God honors the weak.

“The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.” (1 Corinthians 12:22)

Indispensable.

Not optional.

Not disposable.

Jesus welcomed children.

He touched lepers.

He called fishermen.

He lifted the broken.

The weak are His treasures.

The poor are not forgotten.

“Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?” (James 2:5)

To despise the poor is to despise their Maker. (Proverbs 14:31)

To honor the poor is to honor God.

Every gift to the needy,

every meal shared,

every act of mercy,

is worship.

The disabled are not cursed.

The disciples asked,

“Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2)

Jesus answered,

“Neither.

This happened so that the works of God
might be displayed in him.” (John 9:3)

Disability is not punishment.

It is a stage for God’s glory.

The aged are not discarded.

Gray hair is a crown of splendor. (Proverbs 16:31)

The elderly carry wisdom.

They carry memory.

They carry prayers.

Our culture pushes them aside.

God draws them near.

Even the unseen have dignity.

The unborn in the womb.

The refugee at the border.

The prisoner in chains.

All bear His image.

All are loved.

All have worth.

This changes how we see.

The beggar on the street.

The neighbor with dementia.

The child who cannot walk.

Not burdens.

Not mistakes.

Not accidents.

But image-bearers.
Crowns of glory.
Reflections of God.

This changes how we work.

The CEO and the janitor.
The professor and the farmer.
The doctor and the nurse.
The mother at home.

Different tasks.
Same image.
Same worth.

No one higher.
No one lower.
All God's children.

Sin tries to erase the image.

Pride twists it.
Greed defaces it.
Hatred denies it.

But it cannot be destroyed.
The image remains.
Even in rebels.
Even in sinners.

Christ restores the image.

He is "the image of the invisible God." (Colossians 1:15)
He came poor.
He came weak.
He came despised.

On the cross He bore our shame.
In His resurrection He raised our dignity.

Now in Christ, the image shines again.

“Put on the new self,
which is being renewed in knowledge
after the image of its Creator.” (Colossians 3:10)

Renewed.
Restored.
Reborn.

Reflection

Your worth is not in your paycheck.
Not in your strength.
Not in your talent.
Not in your health.

Your worth is in God's image.
Stamped on your soul.
Restored in Christ.

This truth lifts the poor.
It protects the weak.
It humbles the proud.
It unites the church.

Prayer

Father,
You made me in Your image.
You crowned me with glory and honor.
Forgive me for measuring worth by the world's scales.

Teach me to see Your likeness in every face.
In the poor.
In the weak.
In the forgotten.

Renew Your image in me through Christ,
until the day I see You face to face.

Amen.

Chapter 4 - Dominion & Stewardship — Care for Creation and Culture

From the start, God gave a mandate.

“Be fruitful and multiply.

Fill the earth and subdue it,

and have dominion.” (Genesis 1:28)

Fruitfulness was not just about children.

It was about filling the world with life,

with culture,

with beauty.

Dominion is not domination.

The earth is the Lord’s. (Psalm 24:1)

We are not owners.

We are stewards.

Caretakers.

Servants of creation.

The animals are His.

The land is His.

The harvest is His.

We manage what belongs to Him.

Stewardship is dignity.

The farmer tilling soil.

The fisherman hauling nets.

The artist shaping stone.

The teacher guiding a child.

Each is fulfilling the call to subdue,

to order,

to cultivate.

This is holy ground.

Creation is not to be wasted.

“Whoever is righteous
has regard for the life of his beast.” (Proverbs 12:10)

God’s eye is on the sparrow.
So ours must be too.

When we pollute, we wound His world.
When we waste, we mock His gift.
When we care, we reflect His image.

Stewardship is bigger than jobs.

It is parenting.
It is serving.
It is building communities.
It is handing the next generation something better.

We all shape the world,
whether we plant fields
or plant ideas.

The smallest act is not small.

A seed pressed into soil.
A loaf shared with a neighbor.
A prayer whispered in faith.

Each builds.
Each multiplies.
Each joins the great work of God.

Stewardship requires initiative.

The man with five talents invested.

The one with two doubled his share.
The one who buried his gift lost everything. (Matthew 25:14–30)

God does not ask the same of each.
But He asks each to be faithful.

Do what you can.
With what you have.
For His glory.

The garden was only the beginning.

From one seed, orchards.
From one family, nations.
From one people, the church.

God's design was never small.
He meant His image to spread.
His glory to cover the earth.

And He chose us to tend it.

Reflection

Stewardship is not optional.
It is the calling of every person.
We are not owners.
We are managers.

The field in your hand,
the child at your table,
the neighbor in your path—
all are trusts from God.

Care well.
Work faithfully.
Leave the world better than you found it.

Prayer

Lord of heaven and earth,
You placed the world in our care.
Forgive us where we have wasted,
where we have ruled harshly,
where we have failed to tend Your gifts.

Give me eyes to see Your creation with reverence.
Give me hands eager to serve.
Make me a faithful steward,
until the day You make all things new.

Amen.

Chapter 5 - Thorns and Sweat — Toil After the Fall

Work was joy in Eden.

The ground gave freely.

The streams watered the soil.

The fruit ripened with ease.

But sin changed the story.

“To Adam He said,

‘Cursed is the ground because of you;

through painful toil you will eat...

It will produce thorns and thistles...

by the sweat of your brow you will eat.’” (Genesis 3:17–19)

Work became hard.

The soil resisted.

The sweat poured.

The joy dimmed.

Work became fragile.

A harvest one year.

A famine the next.

Plenty in one home.

Hunger in another.

The curse touched the ground,

and man felt it in his stomach.

Work became frustrating.

We chase but cannot catch.

We build, but it crumbles.

We save, but moth and rust destroy.

“All of it is meaningless,
a chasing after the wind.” (Ecclesiastes 2:11)

Work became twisted.

Pride made it an idol.
Sloth made it a shame.

One man works himself into the grave.
Another refuses to lift a hand.

Both forget God.

Work became unfair.

The strong crushed the weak.
The rich withheld wages.

“The wages you failed to pay
are crying out against you.” (James 5:4)

Injustice entered the workplace.

Work became anxious.

“What shall we eat?
What shall we drink?
What shall we wear?” (Matthew 6:31)

Fear of tomorrow
weighs on today.

Yet God did not abandon work.

He clothed Adam and Eve.
He gave Cain and Abel fields and flocks.
He gave Noah wood to build.
He gave Israel manna in the desert.

Even under curse,
He provided tasks and food.

Work under the curse still holds dignity.

The mother who labors through pain.
The father who sweats to provide.
The servant who works unseen.

All echo Eden.
All look for redemption.

Christ wore the curse.

A carpenter by trade.
He knew splinters and sweat.
He knew hunger.

And at the cross,
a crown of thorns
was pressed on His head. (John 19:2)

The very symbol of curse
He bore for us.

Now our toil has hope.

“In the Lord your labor
is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Sweat remains.
But redemption breaks through.

The curse will not have the last word.

Reflection

The thorns remind us of sin.
The sweat reminds us of loss.
But the cross reminds us of hope.

Every weary task
can be offered to God.
And in Christ,
nothing is wasted.

Prayer

Lord,
I feel the sweat and thorns.
But I also see the cross.

Give me strength in toil.
Give me hope in struggle.
Let my work, though broken,
be lifted to You.

Amen.

Chapter 6 - Justice for Workers — Wages, Scales, Power

God cares about fairness in work.

From the Law to the prophets,
from Jesus to James,
the cry is clear:

Do not cheat.

Do not oppress.

Do not take advantage.

**“Do not oppress a hired worker
who is poor and needy...**

**Give him his wages the same day,
before the sun sets,
for he is poor
and counts on it.”** (Deuteronomy 24:14–15)

God hears the cries of the worker.
He defends the poor.

“Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.” (Leviticus 19:13)

The day’s labor deserves the day’s pay.
Delay is injustice.

**“The wages you failed to pay
are crying out against you.”** (James 5:4)

Unpaid wages shout to heaven.
God listens.

Justice means honest measures.

“A false balance is an abomination to the Lord,
but a just weight is His delight.” (Proverbs 11:1)

No crooked scales.

No rigged contracts.

No hidden fees.

Justice means honest power.

Leaders must not crush their workers.

Employers must not exploit their staff.

Bosses must not use fear as a weapon.

God watches.

He weighs every heart.

Justice means honest labor.

Workers must not steal time.

They must not cut corners.

They must not give half-hearted service.

“Whatever you do,
work heartily,
as for the Lord.” (Colossians 3:23)

God ties justice to dignity.

The worker is not a machine.

The poor are not disposable.

Every person bears His image.

To cheat a worker
is to insult the Maker. (Proverbs 14:31)

Jesus told a parable.

A landowner hired men for his vineyard.
Some worked all day.
Some only one hour.
But at evening,
all received the same wage. (Matthew 20:1–16)

Fairness in the kingdom
does not follow man's math.
It follows God's generosity.

Justice is generosity.

The Law commanded gleaning:
“Do not reap to the edges of your field.
Leave them for the poor and the foreigner.” (Leviticus 19:9–10)

The field is God's.
The harvest is His.
We only share what belongs to Him.

Justice is protection.

“Rescue those who are being taken away to death;
hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter.” (Proverbs 24:11)

Protect the child.
Defend the widow.
Stand with the stranger.

God promises judgment on injustice.

“Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness,
who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing.” (Jeremiah 22:13)

The unjust may prosper for a season.
But God will repay.

God promises blessing on justice.

“Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.” (Psalm 106:3)

The workplace is holy ground.
Justice there is worship.

Reflection

Justice is not optional.
It is obedience.
Every wage, every scale, every contract
is seen by God.

Cheating insults Him.
Fairness delights Him.
Generosity reflects Him.

Work with honesty.
Pay with honor.
Live with justice.

Prayer

Righteous Judge,
You see every scale.
You hear every cry.

Keep me from greed.
Keep me from oppression.
Keep me from cutting corners.

Make me fair.
Make me generous.
Make me just.

For Your name's sake.

Amen.

Chapter 7 - The Sabbath — Resting with God

God worked six days.

On the seventh, He stopped.

He blessed the day.

He made it holy. (Genesis 2:2–3)

Sabbath is not just a pause.

It is a meeting.

A space to walk with God.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (Exodus 20:8)

Holy means set apart.

Different.

Reserved for Him.

Sabbath is not laziness.

It is not idleness.

It is not wasting time.

It is stopping ordinary work
to do eternal work.

To worship.

To listen.

To draw near.

Sabbath is trust.

When Israel gathered manna,

God told them to rest on the seventh day. (Exodus 16:29)

The bread did not spoil.

The jars did not empty.

God provided.
Sabbath declares:
“He is enough.”

Sabbath is identity.

Slaves never rest.
Servants never pause.
But children can stop.

Sabbath says:
“I belong to God,
not to my work.”

Sabbath is relationship.

It is dinner with your Father.
It is quiet in His presence.
It is Scripture read slowly.
It is prayer without hurry.

The Sabbath was made for man. (Mark 2:27)

Not as a burden.
Not as a chain.
But as a gift.

God does not need our rest.
We need His.

Jesus is our Sabbath.

“Come to me,
all who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

Rest for the body.
Rest for the soul.
Rest forever.

Sabbath is not about a day.

It is about a rhythm.
A setting aside.
A turning of the heart.

Time in the Word.
Time in prayer.
Time in worship.
Time with Him.

Reflection

Sabbath is dignity restored.
I am not what I produce.
I am not what I earn.
I am God's child.

To stop working
is to remember.
To stop hurrying
is to worship.

The best use of time
is time with Him.

Prayer

Lord of rest,
You call me to pause.
You call me to draw near.

Teach me Sabbath.

Teach me to trust.

Teach me to set apart time
for You alone.

Be my rest.

Be my joy.

Be my Sabbath.

Amen.

Chapter 8 - Protecting the Vulnerable — Family and Society

God is a protector.

“Father of the fatherless
and protector of widows
is God in His holy habitation.” (Psalm 68:5)

If God protects,
His people must too.

Protect your family.

“If anyone does not provide for his relatives,
and especially for his own household,
he has denied the faith
and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:8)

Love guards.
Love provides.
Love protects.

Parents protect children.

“Teach them diligently...
Talk of them when you sit,
when you walk,
when you lie down,
when you rise.” (Deuteronomy 6:7)

Protection is more than safety.
It is truth.
It is teaching.
It is guiding toward God.

Husbands protect wives.

“Christ loved the church
and gave Himself up for her.” (Ephesians 5:25)

Protection is sacrifice.
It is laying down pride.
It is laying down self.
It is laying down life.

Love always protects. (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Real love is not passive.
It shields.
It covers.
It stands in the gap.

But protection is bigger than family.

“Learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
bring justice to the fatherless,
plead the widow’s cause.” (Isaiah 1:17)

The weak.
The poor.
The stranger.
The sick.
The elderly.

All are God’s concern.

Jesus showed this heart.

He touched the leper.
He defended the outcast.
He welcomed the children.
He sat with sinners.

Where the vulnerable were,
there He was.

To ignore the weak is to insult God.

“Whoever oppresses the poor
insults his Maker,
but he who is generous to the needy
honors Him.” (Proverbs 14:31)

Protection is action.

Not just good wishes.
Not just soft words.

It is food given.
It is shelter shared.
It is injustice confronted.

Protection may cost.

Reputation.
Comfort.
Time.
Safety.

But Christ is our model:
“The good shepherd
lays down his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)

The church must be a refuge.

A family for the orphan.
A shelter for the widow.
A defender for the weak.

Not a place of indifference.

Not a place of favoritism.

Not a place of neglect.

**When we protect the vulnerable,
we honor Christ.**

“For whatever you did
for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine,
you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

To shield the weak
is to serve the King.

Reflection

Protection is not optional.
It is the call of love.

Guard your family.
Defend the weak.
Stand with the poor.
Shelter the forgotten.

Every act of protection
is worship.
Every sacrifice for another
is service to Christ.

Prayer

Lord,
You defend the weak.
You protect the fatherless.
You shelter the poor.

Make me like You.
Give me courage to stand.
Give me love that protects.
Give me hands that shield.

Let my home be a refuge.
Let my church be a shelter.
Let my life be a shield
for the vulnerable.

Amen.

Chapter 9 - Christ the Carpenter — God with Calloused Hands

Jesus could have come as a king.

He could have ruled from a throne.

He could have lived in a palace.

Instead, He grew up in a workshop.

With sawdust on the floor.

With tools in His hand.

“Isn’t this the carpenter?” (Mark 6:3)

That is how His neighbors knew Him.

Not first as Rabbi.

Not first as healer.

But as worker.

God with calloused hands.

The One who spoke galaxies into being
shaped wood with simple tools.

The eternal Word
drove nails into boards.

Work was not beneath Him.

He embraced it.

He dignified it.

He blessed it.

Every table He made.

Every yoke He carved.

Every repair He finished.

Was holy.

Christ shows us the humility of work.

Not just leading.

Not just teaching.

But laboring.

“Though He was rich,
yet for your sake He became poor,
so that you by His poverty might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9)

He knew sweat.

He knew splinters.

He knew tired muscles.

He knew the rhythm of work and rest.

Our Savior understands labor.

Jesus called workers to follow Him.

Fishermen.

A tax collector.

Tradesmen.

He did not begin with scholars.

He began with ordinary laborers.

And He sent them to change the world.

His parables spoke of work.

A farmer sowing seed.

A shepherd seeking sheep.

A woman kneading dough.

A servant entrusted with talents.

He honored the everyday.

He lifted the ordinary.

Even His greatest work was labor.

“My Father is working until now,
and I am working.” (John 5:17)

Healing was work.

Teaching was work.

Dying for our sins was work.

“It is finished.” (John 19:30)

The cry of a worker
whose task is complete.

The Carpenter became Redeemer.

The hammer that once built yokes
now nailed Him to the cross.

The wood He shaped
now bore His body.

Work and sacrifice met at Calvary.

Now He calls us into His work.

“Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me...
and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:29)

His yoke is easy.

His burden light.

Because He carries it with us.

Christ dignifies our labor.

The mother at home.

The worker in the field.

The student at a desk.

The builder on a site.

All become holy
when yoked with Him.

Reflection

Christ was not ashamed of work.
He embraced it.
He sanctified it.

Your work is not small.
It is not wasted.
It is not beneath God's notice.

The Carpenter of Nazareth
sees.
Understands.
Smiles.

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
You worked with human hands.
You knew the sweat of labor.
You knew the weight of tools.

Thank You for dignifying work.
Thank You for redeeming it.

Help me see my tasks as holy.
Help me labor with You.
Until I hear You say,
"It is finished — well done."

Amen.

Chapter 10 - Paul the Tentmaker — Ministry and Marketplace Together

Paul preached the gospel.

He planted churches.

He wrote letters.

He suffered for Christ.

But he also made tents.

**“Because he was of the same trade
he stayed with them and worked,
for they were tentmakers by trade.”** (Acts 18:3)

Paul worked with his hands.

Leather.

Needles.

Canvas.

He chose labor, not dependence.

“I coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel.

You yourselves know

that these hands ministered to my necessities

and to those who were with me.” (Acts 20:33–34)

Paul paid his way.

He relieved the burden of others.

Work and ministry were not separate.

They flowed together.

He preached while working.

He disciplined while laboring.

He lived Christ at the bench,
not only in the pulpit.

Paul's work gave credibility.

"No one can accuse me of greed.
No one can say I used the gospel for gain."

He was free to speak boldly.
His integrity was clear.

Paul's work gave connection.

He labored among people.
He met travelers.
He knew tradesmen.

The gospel spread
through workplace relationships.

Paul's work gave example.

"For you yourselves know
how you ought to imitate us,
because we were not idle...
but with toil and labor we worked night and day,
that we might not be a burden." (2 Thessalonians 3:7–8)

The church learned diligence
by watching him.

Paul honored quiet labor.

"Aspire to live quietly,
to mind your own affairs,
and to work with your hands,
so that you may walk properly before outsiders." (1 Thessalonians 4:11–12)

No task beneath dignity.
Every task a witness.

Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers too.

Partners in trade.

Partners in the gospel.

Their home became a church.

Their work became ministry.

Dorcas was a worker with cloth.

She made garments for the needy.

When she died,

the widows showed the clothes

she had sewn in love. (Acts 9:39)

Her labor preached louder than words.

Lydia was a dealer in purple cloth.

She opened her home to Paul.

She supported the mission. (Acts 16:14–15)

Marketplace and ministry joined hands.

Paul taught that all work can glorify God.

“Whatever you do,

do it all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Not only preaching.

Not only miracles.

But tents.

Cloth.

Trade.

Work is witness.

Faithful labor shows Christ.

Honest trade honors Him.
Daily diligence reflects His truth.

Paul's tentmaking teaches us this:

You don't need a pulpit to serve God.
You don't need a title to honor Him.
You only need faithfulness.
At the desk.
At the bench.
At the field.

Reflection

Work and ministry are not rivals.
They are companions.
God uses both.

Your labor can open doors.
Your integrity can silence critics.
Your diligence can preach Christ.

Make your tent well.
Share the gospel freely.
Both are worship.

Prayer

Lord,
You called Paul to preach.
You called Paul to work.

Teach me the same.
To labor with integrity.
To serve without greed.
To shine in my workplace.

Make my work a witness.
Make my hands a sermon.
Make my life a testimony
to Your grace.

Amen.

Chapter 11 - Gifts, Limits, and the Body

The church is a body.

Not one part.

Not one gift.

But many.

“For the body does not consist of one member but of many.” (1 Corinthians 12:14)

The hand is not the foot.

The ear is not the eye.

The preacher is not the caregiver.

The giver is not the singer.

Each has a place.

Each has dignity.

Every gift comes from the Spirit.

“There are varieties of gifts,
but the same Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:4)

No gift is self-made.

No gift is worthless.

No gift is all-sufficient.

Limits are part of God’s design.

We cannot do everything.

We are not meant to.

Need is holy.

Dependence is good.

Limits keep us humble.

The weaker are not weaker.

“On the contrary,
the parts of the body that seem to be weaker
are indispensable.” (1 Corinthians 12:22)

Indispensable.

Essential.

Needed.

The hidden are not forgotten.

The ones who pray unseen.

The ones who serve quietly.

The ones who labor in the shadows.

Heaven sees.

Heaven values.

Disability is not disqualification.

The blind man was born

so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:3)

Paul’s thorn was not removed.

Instead God said,

“My grace is sufficient for you,

for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Gifts differ.

Limits differ.

But all belong.

All matter.

Pride says, “I don’t need you.”

Envy says, “I wish I were you.”

The Spirit says, “You are one body.”

Paul worked with this truth.

He planted.

Apollos watered.

But God gave the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6)

No one does it alone.

All labor together.

Even Christ accepted limits.

He grew tired.

He grew hungry.

He needed sleep.

Yet within His limits
the glory of God shone.

The Spirit gives what is needed.

Teaching.

Serving.

Giving.

Leading.

Mercy.

Hospitality.

Different gifts.

One Lord.

The goal is not competition.

The goal is love.

The gifts serve love.

The limits teach love.

Reflection

You are not everything.
You are not nothing.
You are part of the body.

Your gifts are needed.
Your limits are holy.
Your place is indispensable.

Do not despise your weakness.
Do not exalt your strength.
Offer both to God.

Prayer

Lord,
You gave me gifts.
You gave me limits.

Forgive my envy.
Forgive my pride.

Teach me to honor others.
Teach me to value the hidden.
Teach me to rest in weakness.

Make me a faithful part
of Your body.

Amen.

Chapter 12 - Work as Worship and Witness

Work is not separate from faith.

It is not a “secular” thing.

It is holy ground.

“So, whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Worship is not only a song.

It is also a hammer swung.

A table wiped.

A diaper changed.

A paper filed.

Every task,
when offered to God,
becomes worship.

**“Whatever you do,
work heartily,
as for the Lord and not for men.”** (Colossians 3:23)

Not for a boss.

Not for a paycheck.

Not for applause.

For Christ.

This changes everything.

The small is no longer small.

The hidden is no longer forgotten.

The ordinary is no longer plain.

All shines
when done for Him.

Work is testimony.

“The name of God and the teaching
may not be reviled.” (Titus 2:10)

When workers are honest.
When servants are faithful.
When employees are diligent.
The gospel is adorned.

**Work that cuts corners
mocks the gospel.**

Laziness dishonors Christ.
Dishonesty denies Him.
Bitterness clouds His name.

But faithful labor
makes Christ visible.

Jesus said,

**‘Let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father in heaven.’** (Matthew 5:16)

Good works at work.
Integrity at the desk.
Patience on the job.
These are lamps on a stand.

Work is love in action.

Providing for family.
Serving a neighbor.

Caring for the weak.
Supporting the church.

Every act of labor
is an act of love.

Work is discipleship.

Children learn by watching.
Coworkers notice.
Neighbors see.

The way you labor
teaches Christ.

The Spirit fills our work.

Bezalel, the craftsman,
was “filled with the Spirit of God,
with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge,
and with all craftsmanship.” (Exodus 31:3)

Spirit-filled work
is not only preaching.
It is also building,
sewing,
teaching,
healing.

Work is preparation for eternity.

Our labor is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)
God will remember.
God will reward.

The smallest act
echoes forever.

Reflection

Work is not a distraction.

It is devotion.

Not a curse.

But a calling.

Do not divide “sacred” and “secular.”

All is sacred

when done for Him.

Let your labor be worship.

Let your diligence be witness.

Let your work be love.

Prayer

Lord,

I give You my work.

The seen and the unseen.

The big and the small.

Take it as worship.

Use it as witness.

Fill it with Your Spirit.

Let my labor glorify You,

and let my workplace

see Your light in me.

Amen.

Chapter 13 - The Household Economy — Provision, Parenting, Formation

The first workplace was a home.

Adam and Eve in the garden.

A family.

A household.

The household was always central.

It was the economy.

It was the school.

It was the church in miniature.

Provide for your family.

“If anyone does not provide for his relatives,
and especially for his own household,
he has denied the faith
and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:8)

Provision is love in action.

Food on the table.

Shelter overhead.

Clothing for the body.

Provision is not just money.

It is time.

It is care.

It is attention.

It is presence.

A paycheck without love is empty.

Presence without provision is neglect.

Both together reflect God’s care.

Parents are teachers.

“These words that I command you today
shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children,
and shall talk of them when you sit in your house,
and when you walk by the way,
and when you lie down,
and when you rise.” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7)

The home is a classroom.

Faith is the subject.

Life is the lesson.

Children learn what they see.

How you speak.

How you work.

How you pray.

How you forgive.

Every moment teaches.

The Proverbs describe a household economy.

The wise woman provides food. (Proverbs 31:14)

She manages her home with strength.

She cares for the poor.

Her children rise up and call her blessed.

Household labor is holy.

Unpaid work has dignity.

A meal cooked.

A child bathed.

A floor swept.

A prayer whispered.

These do not show up on pay stubs.
But heaven records them.

The household trains the next generation.

Timothy learned the Scriptures
from his mother and grandmother. (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15)

Faith passed down.
Truth handed on.
Lives formed at home.

The household is also generosity.

“Practice hospitality.” (Romans 12:13)

Open doors.
Open tables.
Open hearts.

The house becomes a refuge.
The meal becomes ministry.

The household is a picture of God’s family.

The father reflects His care.
The mother reflects His nurture.
The children reflect His joy.

When homes flourish,
the church flourishes.
When homes are neglected,
the church weakens.

Work at home is not wasted.

It is foundational.
It shapes faith.

It shapes love.
It shapes society.

Reflection

Do not despise home work.
Do not belittle household labor.

Provision is holy.
Parenting is ministry.
Hospitality is worship.

The household is God's design
for forming lives,
for raising faith,
for building His kingdom.

Prayer

Father of every family,
thank You for my home.
Thank You for the work of provision.
Thank You for the work of parenting.

Teach me to see my household
as holy ground.
Make me faithful in small things.
Make me generous in open doors.

Let my home reflect Yours.

Amen.

Chapter 14 - Church as Working Body — Diaconal Life

The church is not an audience.

It is a body.

It is a fellowship.

It is a family at work.

“All the believers were together

and had everything in common.

They sold property and possessions

to give to anyone who had need.” (Acts 2:44–45)

The church cares for its own.

“In those days when the disciples were increasing in number,

a complaint arose...

because the widows were being neglected.” (Acts 6:1)

The apostles appointed deacons.

Servants of tables.

Servants of mercy.

Servants of love.

Serving tables is holy work.

Not glamorous.

Not loud.

But vital.

Meals delivered.

Needs met.

Mercy shown.

Paul wrote,

“Carry each other’s burdens,

and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

This is the work of the church.
Not just sermons.
Not just songs.
But burdens carried.

The church is many gifts, one purpose.

Teaching.
Encouraging.
Giving.
Leading.
Showing mercy. (Romans 12:6–8)

Each part contributes.
Each member matters.

The church protects the vulnerable.

True religion is this:
“To visit orphans and widows in their distress,
and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27)

Not programs.
Not buildings.
But people cared for.

The church gives with dignity.

Not handouts that shame.
Not charity that belittles.

But generosity that honors.
Mercy that lifts up.
Love that restores.

The church is a working body.

Hands that serve.

Feet that go.
Hearts that love.
Minds that plan.

All moving together.
All directed by Christ the Head.

The church labors outward too.

“Let us do good to everyone,
and especially to those
who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10)

The needy inside.
The needy outside.
All are neighbors.

This labor is worship.

Serving widows is worship.
Feeding the poor is worship.
Visiting the sick is worship.

God delights in mercy.

The church’s witness shines through its work.

“They will know you are my disciples
if you love one another.” (John 13:35)

Love displayed.
Service embodied.
Christ revealed.

Reflection

The church is not passive.

It is active.

It is working love.

To belong is to serve.

To follow Christ is to labor.

To worship is to give.

When the church serves together,
the world sees Christ.

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
Head of the church,
thank You for making me part of Your body.

Give me hands to serve.
Give me a heart to love.
Give me courage to carry burdens.

Let my church be a refuge.
Let my church be a servant.
Let my church be a light
in a weary world.

Amen.

Chapter 15 - Working with Integrity

The world is watching.

At the job.

In the shop.

On the site.

Behind the desk.

Your work speaks.

It either honors Christ

or clouds His name.

**“Whatever you do,
work heartily,
as for the Lord and not for men.”** (Colossians 3:23)

Work is not only about what you do.

It is about how you do it.

With honesty.

With faithfulness.

With courage.

Integrity is worship.

No lies on the report.

No shortcuts in the project.

No stealing time.

No cutting corners.

Clean hands.

Straight paths.

Clear conscience.

Integrity is witness.

“They may see your good deeds
and glorify God.” (1 Peter 2:12)

When you work with integrity,
people see Christ.
Your honesty preaches louder
than your words.

Integrity may cost.

Opportunities lost.
Promotions missed.
Friends offended.

But it gains eternal treasure.
It gains God’s smile.

Integrity is strength.

The world bends.
The world compromises.
The world justifies.

But God’s people stand.
Unbending.
Faithful.
True.

Integrity has one goal.

Not applause.
Not reputation.
Not success.

But glory.
The glory of God.

“So, whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

That is the point of work.

That is the purpose of integrity.
Not simply to be moral.
Not simply to be upright.
But to shine His name.
To witness to His grace.

Reflection

Your work is a stage.
Your integrity is the spotlight.

Show Christ.
Shine truth.
Work clean.
Work true.

Integrity honors Him.
Integrity points to Him.
Integrity glorifies Him.

Prayer

Lord,
keep me honest.
Keep me faithful.
Keep me courageous.

Let my work reflect Your truth.
Let my integrity honor Your name.

Let my labor be worship.
Let my life be a witness.

All for Your glory.

Amen.

Chapter 16 - The Hidden Worker — God Sees in Secret

Not all work is seen.

Not all labor is noticed.

Not all service is praised.

But God sees.

**“Your Father who sees in secret
will reward you.”** (Matthew 6:4)

The unseen is not wasted.

The unnoticed is not forgotten.

The hidden is not lost.

Jesus warned against show.

“When you give...
do not sound a trumpet.” (Matthew 6:2)

“When you pray...
go into your room and shut the door.” (Matthew 6:6)

“When you fast...
do not look gloomy.” (Matthew 6:16)

Faithful work
is not for applause.
It is for God.

Humility is the posture of work.

“We are unworthy servants;
we have only done what was our duty.” (Luke 17:10)

No boasting.
No demanding.
No self-glory.

Just service.

Hidden work carries dignity.

The intercessor who prays unseen.
The volunteer who cleans after service.
The giver who slips an envelope quietly.

The world shrugs.
Heaven applauds.

Hidden work requires trust.

Trust that God notices.
Trust that His “Well done”
is enough.

Because sometimes no one else will say it.

Hidden work shapes the soul.

It cuts pride.
It builds faith.
It deepens love.

Serving in secret
forms Christ in us.

Christ Himself lived hidden.

Thirty years in Nazareth.
Obscure.
Ordinary.
Carpenter’s work.

Before miracles,
before teaching,
before the cross—
He labored unseen.

Heaven values what men overlook.

A widow's two coins.
A boy's five loaves.
A servant's towel.

Tiny.
Hidden.
But treasured by God.

Do not despise the unseen.

The Father counts it.
The kingdom needs it.
The King remembers it.

Reflection

Your work may be hidden.
But it is not wasted.

Do not crave the spotlight.
Do not chase the applause.

Be content to be unseen by men,
and known by God.

Prayer

Father,
You see in secret.
You reward in secret.

Keep me humble.
Keep me faithful.
Keep me quiet when pride wants to boast.

Let me serve unseen.
Let me labor for You alone.
Let me trust Your “Well done.”

Amen.

Chapter 17 - Serving the Least — The Work of Mercy

Jesus sees the least.

“The King will say,
‘Whatever you did for one of the least of these
brothers and sisters of mine,
you did for me.’” (Matthew 25:40)

To serve the least
is to serve Christ.

The poor matter.

The hungry matter.
The prisoner matters.
The sick matter.

Not because the world says so.
But because God does.

Mercy is work.

It is not abstract.
It is hands moving.
Feet going.
Hearts giving.

Mercy is feeding the hungry.

Mercy is visiting the sick.
Mercy is helping the disabled.
Mercy is caring for the elderly.

Each act whispers:
“You are not forgotten.
You are loved.”

Mercy is unfashionable work.

Cleaning the church.

Repairing a wall.

Setting chairs.

Serving food.

Not on stage.

Not glamorous.

Not praised.

But holy.

Mercy is costly.

It takes time.

It takes money.

It takes energy.

Often without thanks.

Often without notice.

But God remembers.

Mercy is generous.

“Do not neglect to do good
and to share what you have,
for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” (Hebrews 13:16)

To share is to sacrifice.

To give is to please God.

Mercy is love.

“Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:31)

Not in words only.

But in deeds.

In service.

Mercy is family.

“If one member suffers,
all suffer together.” (1 Corinthians 12:26)

When a brother is weak,
the church carries him.
When a sister is hurting,
the body surrounds her.

Mercy is dignity.

Not pity.
Not superiority.
But honor.

Every person bears the image of God.
Every person deserves respect.

Mercy is joy.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)
Mercy blesses the receiver.
Mercy blesses the giver.

**To serve the least
is to walk like Christ.**

He washed feet.
He touched lepers.
He welcomed children.

He stooped low.
So must we.

Reflection

The church is called to mercy.
Not just preaching.
Not just singing.
But serving.

The least are Christ's brothers.
The weak are His treasures.

Every act of mercy
is an act of worship.

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
You served the least.
You touched the untouchable.
You welcomed the forgotten.

Make me merciful.
Make me generous.
Make me willing to do unfashionable work.

Let me see Your face
in the hungry,
the sick,
the poor,
the disabled.

And let me serve You
as I serve them.

Amen.

Chapter 18 - What Lasts — Work and Eternal Consequence

Not all work endures.

Some fades.

Some burns.

Some is forgotten.

But some lasts forever.

**“Each one’s work will become manifest,
for the Day will disclose it,
because it will be revealed by fire,
and the fire will test
what sort of work each one has done.”** (1 Corinthians 3:13)

God Himself will weigh our labor.

Some work is wood, hay, stubble.

Busy but empty.

Impressive but hollow.

Built for pride,

not for Christ.

The fire consumes it.

Some work is gold, silver, precious stones.

Quiet but faithful.

Hidden but holy.

Built for God,

not for man.

The fire reveals its worth.

Eternal work is work done in Christ.

“For apart from Me
you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

Work apart from Him fails.
Work in Him endures.

Even small deeds last.

“A cup of cold water
given in My name
will not lose its reward.” (Matthew 10:42)

Simple.
Ordinary.
Yet eternal.

Every prayer counts.

Every gift matters.
Every act of service echoes.
Every quiet kindness shines.

Heaven records them all.

Work done for self is temporary.

Fame fades.
Wealth vanishes.
Trophies gather dust.

But work done for God
carries into eternity.

**“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...
their deeds follow them.”** (Revelation 14:13)

Our deeds trail behind us.
They do not vanish.
They walk into eternity with us.

Crowns await the faithful.

The crown of righteousness. (2 Timothy 4:8)
The crown of life. (James 1:12)
The unfading crown of glory. (1 Peter 5:4)

Not for show.
Not for pride.
But to lay at His feet. (Revelation 4:10)

Your work here is kingdom work.

It is not wasted.
It is not small.
It is not forgotten.

When offered to Christ,
it becomes eternal treasure.

Reflection

Not all labor is equal.
Some ends in ashes.
Some shines forever.

Ask:
Am I building for myself,
or for Him?

The world will forget much.
God will forget nothing.

Prayer

Lord,
test my work.
Burn away what is empty.
Refine what is true.

Keep me from pride.
Keep me from wasted effort.
Teach me to labor
for eternal things.

Let my deeds follow me.
Let my work honor You.
Until the Day reveals it all.

Amen.

Chapter 19 - Joy in the Labor — God Establishes the Work of Our Hands

Work was never meant to be only toil.

Yes, the fall brought thorns.

Yes, sin brought sweat.

But God still gives joy.

“There is nothing better for a person
than that he should eat and drink
and find enjoyment in his toil.

This also, I saw, is from the hand of God.” (Ecclesiastes 2:24)

Joy is a gift.

Not from the job itself.

Not from the paycheck.

Not from success.

But from God.

Joy is dignity.

To labor is to matter.

To create is to reflect Him.

To provide is to show love.

To serve is to echo Christ.

This is worth.

This is honor.

This is reason for living.

Joy comes from purpose.

“To work it and keep it.” (Genesis 2:15)

Adam was not idle.

He had meaning.
So do we.

Every honest task is meaningful
when done for God.

Joy comes from strength.

“The joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10)

Strength to endure.
Strength to press on.
Strength to rise again tomorrow.

Work without joy is slavery.
Work with joy is worship.

Joy comes from serving.

“Serve the Lord with gladness.” (Psalm 100:2)

Service is not drudgery.
It is delight.
We serve a good Master.

Joy comes from seeing fruit.

A child growing.
A field yielding.
A home built.
A life changed.

Fruit reminds us:
Labor is not in vain.

Joy comes even when fruit is unseen.

Some plant.

Others water.

God gives the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6)

Faithful labor is never wasted.

God remembers.

Joy witnesses to the world.

Anyone can work with complaint.

Few can work with joy.

When we do,

the world asks why.

And we answer:

Christ.

Joy establishes dignity.

Not pride in self.

But worth in God.

To know:

I am useful.

I am needed.

I am valued by my Maker.

This is joy.

This is life.

**“Let the favor of the Lord our God
be upon us,
and establish the work of our hands.”** (Psalm 90:17)

God makes labor lasting.

God makes labor joyful.

God makes labor dignified.

Reflection

Joy is not found in ease.
It is found in purpose.

Joy is not found in applause.
It is found in God's smile.

Your work is holy.
Your work is worship.
Your work is joy.

Prayer

Lord,
thank You for labor.
Thank You for meaning.
Thank You for joy.

Establish the work of my hands.
Fill it with purpose.
Fill it with strength.
Fill it with dignity.

Let my labor be glad.
Let my service be worship.
Let my life find joy in You.

Amen.

Chapter 20 - Forever Work — The Servants of God in the New Creation

In the beginning, a garden.

Man walked with God.

Man worked with God.

Man kept the soil.

Man named the creatures.

Work was joy.

Work was worship.

Work was life.

Then came the fall.

Thorns.

Sweat.

Frustration.

Futility.

Work bent under sin.

Dignity scarred.

Joy stolen.

Christ came.

The Carpenter.

The Redeemer.

He bore the curse.

He wore the thorns.

And He rose,

to make all things new.

Now we live in the “already.”

The kingdom has come.

Christ reigns in hearts.
Work is redeemed in Him.

We labor with dignity.
We serve with joy.
We witness with faith.

But the “not yet” remains.

Sin still burdens.
Thorns still pierce.
Sweat still stings.

We wait.
We hope.
We long.

The promise stands.

“Behold, I am making all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)
A new heaven.
A new earth.
A new garden.

In the New Creation, work returns.

No curse.
No toil.
No frustration.

Pure joy.
Pure worship.
Pure labor.

“His servants will serve Him.” (Revelation 22:3)

Not idle.

Not bored.
Not aimless.

Serving forever.
Reigning forever.
Working forever—
as it was meant to be.

This is dignity fulfilled.

No more vanity.
No more futility.
Every act eternal.

We will build.
We will create.
We will sing.
We will serve.

All without sin.
All without end.

The tree of life will stand. (Revelation 22:2)

The river will flow.
The nations will walk in His light.
The people of God will labor with joy.

Back to the garden.
Forward to glory.

Reflection

We labor now in hope.
Our work is not wasted.
Our toil is not final.

Christ will return.
The curse will end.
The servants will serve.

Forever work.
Forever joy.
Forever dignity.

Prayer

Lord of eternity,
thank You for the promise of new creation.
Thank You that my labor is not in vain.
Thank You that thorns will end.

Make me faithful now.
Make me joyful now.
Until that day
when work is pure worship,
and Your servants serve forever.

Amen.