

# “Work is Good” – Message Series

## Part 2 – Work is Meaningful

### 1. Greeting

- Baby Dedications

### 2. Reading

- **Part 2 - “Work is Meaningful”**

- Vs meaningless
- Does my work have meaning? How do I find meaning in my work?

- **Ecclesiastes 1:1-6**

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

2 “Vanity[a] of vanities,” says the Preacher;

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

3 What profit has a man from all his labor

In which he [b]toils under the sun?

4 One generation passes away, and another generation comes;  
But the earth abides forever.

5 The sun also rises, and the sun goes down,  
And [c]hastens to the place where it arose.

6 The wind goes toward the south,  
And turns around to the north;

The wind whirls about continually,  
And comes again on its circuit.

### 3. Prayer

### 4. Intro

- Solomon’s perspective at this time in his life is unfortunately through the limited view of “under the sun” – only what can be found in this world and this life.
- **Ecclesiastes 1:8-14**  
8 All things are [d]full of labor;

Man cannot express it.

The eye is not satisfied with seeing,

Nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 That which has been is what will be,

That which is done is what will be done,

And there is nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there anything of which it may be said,

“See, this is new”?

It has already been in ancient times before us.

11 There is no remembrance of former things,

Nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come

By those who will come after.

12 I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be [e]xercised. 14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

- Vanity = His conclusion on ALL work (meaningless)
- Under the sun = from mortal birth to mortal death; this life only
- My struggle with this because I love the younger Solomon but grieve what happened to him in his later years when he turned away from God – the whole theme and point of this book is = he was the man who had it so frankly he is the most qualified man who ever lived to teach us the lesson that work and life lived with finite view only and not heavenly (above the sun) will never lead us to true meaning and fulfillment.
- By trying to find meaning for life and work “under the sun” he inversely proved it couldn’t be done.  
**(LEE STROBEL) – similar outcome because he set out to prove there was not God and actually proved to himself along the way that there was!**

## 5. Message

### 1) JOY (Pleasant to site - Genesis)

- Ecclesiastes 2:24 (enjoy the fruit of your labor)

Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God.

- **Not work to no end (Is 28:23-29 MSG)**
- **Ball in house illustration**
  
- **Who we're doing it for is what gives ultimate meaning!**
- **Love what you do!**
- **Colossians 3:23-24**  
23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for[a] you serve the Lord Christ.
  
- **Meaning can't be found in the stuff... ask the man who had it all!**
- **To work and produce is a joy! A Blessing... a gift!**
- **Work was created for man to be a blessing. Man wasn't created for work.**
  
- **Secular vs sacred kinds of work (no dual life)(all callings equal) – the Bible does not permit any such thinking. All work is sacred when done for the glory of God!**

## 2) INCREASE (Good for food - Genesis)

- Hard work pays off  
**Proverbs 10:4**  
He who has a slack hand becomes poor,  
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
  
- Worthy of wages – it's good to have increase from work  
**1 Timothy 5:18**  
For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."
  
- Lazy won't eat  
**2 Thessalonians 3:10**  
If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.
  
- Increase is part of God's design for blessing and work in His created order (Fruitful and multiply - Genesis).

➤ **God provides increase not man/not your boss or your company** (So, God has right to ask for tithe on all increase). We respect and honor those who provide jobs but don't view them as our providers... **God alone is Jireh!**

- **Increase is NOT the meaning of work... it's part of the blessing from work. For God is where the meaning is found!**

- **Ecclesiastes 2:3-11**

3 I searched in my heart how [b]to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

4 I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to [c]water the growing trees of the grove. 7 I acquired male and female servants, and had [d]servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. 8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and [e]musical instruments of all kinds.

9 So I became great and [f]excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them.

I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,  
For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;  
And this was my [g]reward from all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done

And on the labor in which I had toiled;  
And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind.  
There was no profit under the sun.

- **Suck it up now and live for pleasure? If death was the end and nothing after then maybe so but that's not the truth and hope for the believer. This philosophy correlates horrifyingly with the "new age" philosophy today. What's right for me is right for me and no one has the right to tell me I can't do what I want to make myself happy because that's the end goal.**

**This "new age" thinking ISN'T SO NEW AT ALL.**

**Solomon would say... tried that... didn't work!**

- **if our gaze is only under the sun then we fall devastatingly short of God's invitation and blessing for work!**
- **More increase so more to give away... steward for more increase! (Not earn to keep)**
- **Heavenly treasure vs earthly treasure (won't vanish; burned up)(earthly things eXchanged for heavenly treasure = redeem the time Col 4:5, Eph 5:15-16)**
- **Our work is meant to build His Kingdom not our kingdom.**
- **Solomon built his own empire but found it all to be vanity.**
- **Solomon lost the wife of his youth... all after building "their empires".**
- **Bezos and Gates – 2 of world's richest men have recently lost the wives of their youth. Man's empire does not provide the things that bring true meaning and joy to life.**

### 3) INFLUENCE

- **Work is meant to bring more than personal satisfaction... it yields influence for Him! God wants to bring us influence but not for ourselves... for Him!**
- **Proverbs 3:3-4**  
 Let not mercy and truth forsake you;  
 Bind them around your neck,  
 Write them on the tablet of your heart,  
 4 And so find favor and [a]high esteem  
 In the sight of God and man.
- **Proverbs 18:16**  
 A man's gift makes room for him,  
 And brings him before great men.
- **Proverbs 22:29**  
 Do you see a man who [h]excels in his work?  
 He will stand before kings;  
 He will not stand before [i]unknown men.

- **Gifts refined and increased impact**
- **Your earning potential is worth way more than what \$ we have saved or accumulated thus far.**
  - **Our work helps us serve our families, serve community. A citizen of the Kingdom is tasked with work that has Kingdom implications.**
- **John 15:8** (Jesus says we're meant to be fruitful and the fruit He brings through us will be so amazing that it will bring God glory)  
**By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.**

## 6. Close

- In conclusion... **Ecclesiastes 12:6-14**
  - **The silver cord?**
  - **Only time in we see this phrase in the Bible**
  - **implies death... separation of the spirit and body,**
  - **words of a Shepherd are an anchor**
  - **look beyond this life... above not under the sun for meaning and purpose... this is the conclusion of the journey Solomon went on to find meaning in work and life with a view that was only between birth and death.**

6 Remember your Creator before the silver cord is [b]loosed,  
 Or the golden bowl is broken,  
 Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain,  
 Or the wheel broken at the well.

7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was,  
 And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher,  
 "All is vanity."

9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set[c] in order many proverbs. 10 The Preacher sought to find [d]acceptable words; and what was written was upright—words of truth. 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of [e]scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd. 12 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God and keep His commandments,

For this is man's all.

14 For God will bring every work into judgment,

Including every secret thing,

Whether good or evil.

- Focus above the sun (**Colossians 3:1-2**)  
If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

- **Leads to joy, increase, and influence.**

**IneXhaustible Passion and fire will drive your life when you live for a higher meaning and that's how you're created to live.**

- **Supernatural productivity**  
**(work hard, work wise, work with purpose because work is eternally meaningful)**

**LIFE ABUNDANTLY!!!**