

The Commandment to Work

Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. There are only two methods of obtaining what you need in this life, that some other person gives it to you, or that you work in something, and you purchase it. Also, there is another option, to be content without that thing. Besides these two methods, there is an illicit form to get things, which is to steal. God commands us to work in that which is honest, and in that which is good to sustain ourselves. **Proverbs 13:11** *Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.* Riches and goods in themselves do not give real satisfaction in this life, but at the same time, it is difficult to live without money. God blesses the good worker. We can add to this, that if you are very good with money, God commands you to use money to help others and not focus on personal luxuries.

What does “a Fool” mean?

The dictionary says that a fool is somebody that does not know what to do, that is ignorant. But the idea in the Bible is not so much this (ignorance). It is rather the force of a person's will where the fool does not want to recognize God in what he is doing. It is a sin. The fool refuses to take eternity into view, and he only thinks about worthless things (things of no eternal value) in every moment.

The Temporal Value of Riches and Goods

Psalms 49:6 *They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; 7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:* **8** *(For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)* **9** *That he should still live forever, and not see corruption. 10 For he seeth that wise*

men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

God focuses on reality for us. There is that which is temporary, and there is that which is eternal. For eternity, when a person must make accounts with God, riches and goods do nothing to help you. They are temporary during life on this earth only. **Romans 14:12** *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* None of the riches of this world will help you in that day of judgment before God. When we contemplate eternity, all that is temporary becomes less important. It is much more important what you will answer to God for your sins. We all sin and have to pay for them with eternal punishment in hell. There is no eternal ransom payment through money, riches, the things of this earth. Only those people who have faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior will avoid that eternal punishment. If a person focuses too much on this world, or exclusively on this world, they will go to hell after they die. They are a fool.

Does money really matter in this life? Of course, it does. Because we need money to live, to buy food, clothes, pay for a play to sleep and live in, it helps us. When God takes us into eternity, how much money will you carry with you? **Job 1:21** *And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*

Job simply declares that the things of this life do not help our spiritual lives much less do they define us, nor what will be our future eternity. Upon dying, we will leave all material things of this world behind.

We live with a View towards Eternity

Ecclesiastes 3:9 *What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth? 10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. 11 He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work*

that God maketh from the beginning to the end. 12 I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. 13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

So, even though we must work and take care of our money and earnings in this life, we never should covet (desire earnestly) these things because they do not go into eternity with us.

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Either one or the other will take priority in your life and be your god, but you cannot serve both. Only humans (not animals) understand eternity, that a person will go to heaven or hell after dying, and everybody continues to live on. This is what is marvelous about how God has made things. We work in order to survive, but work is temporal and less important in contrast with the eternal things. **Proverbs 11:4** *Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.* In the judgment, all will see their labors in the light of eternity. Many will regret that they didn't live their lives differently. **John 6:27** *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

We should all work. But our purpose in working is really to obey God's commandment to work in **Genesis 2:15**. We do not work for money, but to please God in our live. But those that work will also receive abundance. **Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

The Christian as a Worker

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Genesis 2:15 *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden **to dress it and to keep it.*** Since the creation of the human being, God has given men work to do. Even in the garden, their principal work was to dress and keep (guard)¹ the garden, their source of food. So, God wants man to be occupied (to always work). There is a saying that “*idle hands are the devils workshop.*” It is certain that people do not know how to handle prosperity. Just look at the sins people get into in their retirement. In God’s eyes, they dedicate their lives at that point to things without eternal value. God knows that if man focuses on surviving, on sustaining himself and family, etc. that he is less inclined to sin and get into idle vices. **Psalms 128:2** *For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.* There is nothing better than working hard and enjoying the fruit of your labors.

¹ “Keeping” it was what God commanded because Satan always is about trying to ruin what is good.

Working incorrectly

Proverbs 10:2 *Treasures of wickedness profit **nothing**; but righteousness delivereth from death. 4 He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. 5 He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.* God requires that every Christian be diligent in his affairs, and in his work. Negligence and laziness have no place in a Christian’s life. A Christian should earn his living like any other person, but the Christian must watch **HOW HE EARNS HIS LIVING.** If he earns his living by incorrect methods (in God’s eyes), he will bring a curse on himself. **Proverbs 12:11** *He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding.* God wants us to work and earn our living. But God is going to judge us as to HOW we live and HOW we gain that which we need.

Some are Evil Workers

Romans 13:13 *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* There are methods of living in this world which God specifically condemns and are wrong. This verse sets a life of luxury as being wrong in God’s eyes.

Working Well in God’s Eyes

Colossians 3:23 *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.* For the Christian, EVERYTHING that he does in this life is for the Lord. He must do everything earnest. Everything that a Christian does is for the Lord, even working for a secular employer. God will judge him. God will reward everyone according to how they live their lives. **Philippians 2:14** *Do all things without murmurings and disputings:* There are evil workers that always resist hard work. It is a miracle if they get anything done without complaining about it. The Christian, in any workplace, should be the

best worker. He should be honest, a strong worker, and he should do whatever the boss want without problems in his attitude. He should be an excellent quality worker. His life should manifest his salvation in every aspect of his work. Jesus was an exceptional man. Thus, we should model ourselves after our Lord. **1 Corinthians 10:31** *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* The Christian should offer his whole life in his work, and for him it is a spiritual work for the Lord.

How we live shows our Worship

Romans 12:11 *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;* What is difficult for so many people to understand is that the way we live our lives is a form of worshipping our God, even in the small things Christians believe that those things honor their God. Even a housewife, doing housework is actually worshipping her Lord.

Dedicate yourself to what is Worthy.

Proverbs 14:23 *In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury. 24 The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.* We work to earn a living. There is no problem with that. But we should never lose sight of what is important, what is for eternity.

Everything is Because we Love God

1 Peter 4:8 *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: **that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ...*** Being a Christian, everything in his life should give glory to Christ his Lord.