

BEING A LIGHT IN A DARK WORLD, PART ONE

A Call For A Diligent Work Ethic

I. Introductory Questions

- Why does God expect us to work?
- Should you be defined by your work?
- What should determine your priorities? Your commitment to God, your family, your career?
- Should workaholics be admired for their initiative or reprimanded for misplaced priorities?
- What should you know before you give 45 years to a career?

II. Work Ethic, defined

- An ethical principle that places great value on hard work and diligence.
- The belief that work has a moral benefit and an inherent ability to strengthen character
- **Diligence, defined - determination and careful effort to accomplish a task; exertion of body and mind**

III. God Reveals Himself Through Work

- He is the origin of work - always "it is good" (*Gen. 1:3-25, Gen. 2:2*)
- His creation of man was "very good." (*Gen. 1:26*)
- "I am creative, everywhere, dependable, beautiful" (*Ps. 19:1, Rom. 1:20*)
- The balance of work and rest: Lazy vs. Workaholic habits (*Gen. 2:2*)

IV. The Jewish Concept of Work

- Adam was put in the garden to "tend and keep it." - cultivate and guard (*Gen. 2:15*)
- Abad, *Hbw.* = Avodah: to serve "to work/to worship" is the same word.
- Avodah: the one act of work and worship; not "Sunday is our day to worship and Monday is our day to work"
- **All work is an expression of serving God and people.**
- Judaism does not view work as the center of life or as its primary source of meaning.
- Code of Jewish Law states that man should "**work to live**," not "**live to work**."

and

his work, secondary; in this way both shall succeed. (aish.com/jewishethicist)

V. What Your Work Ethic Reveals

- Character - Honest vs. Dishonest
- Stealing on job comes in many forms: time, property, money. office supplies
- Wasted time is stealing from your employer: 61% employees admit to wasting 30 - 60 minutes a day. That's 2.5 hours / week and 130 hrs/yr. (*inc.com*)
- The average person wastes 28 days per year: 5 days chatting, 4 days making coffee/tea, 4 days checking personal email, 3 days checking social media, personal phone calls, internet shopping. (*telegraph.co.uk*)
 1. Talking on cell phone or texting - 50%
 2. Co-worker chatter - 42%
 3. Internet - 39%
 4. Social Media - 38%
 5. Coffee/snack breaks - 27%
 6. Those who work remotely can be tempted to waste large blocks of time.

- Lack of initiative vs. self-starter - *Eccl. 9:10*
- Skill level - ignorance vs. knowledge
- Abilities
- Attitude - *Col. 3:23-25* Expect a reward! Our work flows out of our gratefulness to Him.
- Personality Traits - Even temperament, moody, complainer, punctual, appreciative
- Christian Witness - *Matt. 5:16, Col. 4:5, I Pet. 3:15*

VI. Six Descriptions Of A Sluggard

- Lazy (*Prov. 18:9, Prov. 24:30*)
- Procrastinator (*Prov. 6:10*)
- Doesn't complete tasks (*Prov. 12:27, Prov. 26:15*)
- Makes excuses for laziness (*Prov. 20:4, Prov. 22:13, Prov. 26:13*)
- Dissatisfied victim (*Prov. 21:25,26*)
- A life of poverty (*Prov. 28:19*)

VII. New Testament Warnings To Lazy Men

- Don't be busybodies (*II Th. 3:11*)
- If you don't work, you don't eat. (*II Th. 3:12*)
- Accept your familial responsibilities or you are worse than infidel. (*I Tim. 5:8*)

VIII. Consider The Ant and Its Ways *Prov. 6:6*

- Trivia: Myrmecologist - one who studies ants.
 1. 10,000 different species
 2. They can lift 20 times their own body weight. (200 lb man = 4,000 lbs)
 3. Can build structures 500 times taller than themselves.
 4. 2 stomachs; one for them, another to store food for others later.
 5. Life expectancy is 45-60 days.
 6. Colonies have been found 35 feet below the ground.
- Nine Things To Consider About The Ant
 1. They have a plan.
 2. They participate with others.
 3. Their intrinsic purpose.
 4. Their solidarity; live as a family and work as a team.
 5. There is sharing; facilities, food.
 6. Their preparedness; no procrastination. (*Prov. 6:7*)
 7. How they care for their family.
 8. How they prepare for their future.
 9. How they persevere; ants ain't quitters #resilient

IX. Scriptures About Diligence

- **Diligence, defined - Visualizing a task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to accomplish it**
 1. *Gen. 31:6, Gen. 32:40* - Joseph
 2. *Prov. 10:4, Prov. 12:11, Prov. 12:27, Prov. 13:4, Prov. 21*

X. Conclusion

- Who do we work for?
 1. For God's glory - for His purpose and reputation
 2. For the founder of organization and the principles it represents
 3. For your employer - to help him complete his job
- Why do we work?
 1. Knowing 'why' becomes your source of motivation.
 2. We work to develop and reveal the glory of God.
 3. To discover the work-worship connection of serving Him and others.
 4. My mission field; an opportunity to point people to Jesus and for them to watch, firsthand, the joys of a life that belongs to Him.
 5. To assure your family a quality of life.
- How do we work?
 1. An attitude of gratitude - for a strong mind/body, for a way to fulfill financial responsibilities, a way to use or develop new skills, opportunities to show God's love
 2. Developing diligence - no loafing
 3. Thoroughness - a standard of excellence, quality control
 4. Completion - a display of perseverance

Cool Quotes About Diligence

- Laziness pays off now. Hard work will pay off later.
- You don't get what you *wish* for. You get what you *work* for.
- Opportunity is missed by most people, because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.
-Thomas Edison
- Hard work spotlights the character of people.
- Some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all.
- Work for a cause, not for applause. Don't strive to make your presence noticed, but make your absence felt.
- **You can't have million dollar dreams with a minimum wage work ethic.**
- All roads that lead to success have to pass through Hard Work Boulevard at some point.
- It takes less time to do things right than to explain why you did it wrong.
- Most of the great achievements of the world were accomplished by tired, discouraged people who kept on working.
- Nothing worth having comes easy.
- Dreams don't work unless you do.
- Like faith, diligence and patience remove mountains.
- Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented from the successful is a lot of hard work.
- **If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?**
- *Eccl. 5:3 "For a dream comes through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words."*

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ." Col. 3:23-24 NLT