

WISDOM

# Wisdom for our Work

Proverbs

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## I. Work is good – so do good work

*In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty.*

*Proverbs 14:23*

- “toil” means work that is strenuous, hard, painful.
- There is value and dignity in ALL work.

I. Work is good – so do good work

*Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,  
and he who guards his master will be  
honored. Proverbs 27:18*

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- We can do our work with diligence because, to God, all work matters.
- The Bible is unique among religious texts in that it teaches work is good, not evil.

I. Work is good – so do good work

- **In the first chapters of Genesis, we find God doing work.**

I. Work is good – so do good work

**And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over...every living thing that moves on the earth.”**

**Genesis 1:28**

## I. Work is good – so do good work

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- **God blesses them by giving them a family and giving them work.**
- **In God's paradise – the ideal environment for human flourishing – God commands them to work.**

## I. Work is good – so do good work

- **If you are not doing any meaningful work, you are being cut off from your humanity and not reflecting the image of God.**

**I. Work is good – so do  
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**II. Work is hard – but don't  
be lazy.**

## II. Work is hard – but don't be lazy

*Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. <sup>7</sup> Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, <sup>8</sup> she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. <sup>9</sup> How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? <sup>10</sup> A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, <sup>11</sup> and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.*

*Proverbs 6:6-11*

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- **The Proverbs often warn of the dangers of laziness.**
- **It takes effort and hard work to survive in this world.**
- **Why? Because we work in a sinful and broken world.**

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- **There is a sluggard deep inside each one of us.**

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*He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame. Proverbs 10:5*

## II. Work is hard – but don't be lazy

*Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.*

***Ephesians 4:28***

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- The ant teaches us prioritized diligence.**
- Wisdom is knowing which commitments we should prioritize.**
- A struggle for many is not laziness, but busyness.**

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- **Many of us struggle with being a “selective sluggard.”**

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- **Many of us struggle with being a “selective sluggard.”**
- **The ant is not praised just for her diligence, but because her diligence is directed at the right goal.**

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- **What important area of your life might you be neglecting for the sake of something that is less important?**

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***Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.***

***Proverbs 22:29***

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- This is true if you are retired.

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- II. Work is hard – but don't be lazy.**
- III. Work is redeemed – so don't lose hope.**

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*Proverbs 15:9*

- Upright is not describing our work, but our heart.
- Who is truly upright?

### III. Work is redeemed – so don't lose hope

*And God said, “Because you have...eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...”*

*Genesis 3:17-18*

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- Why is work so frustrating and hard? Thorns.



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- **The resurrection of Jesus reverses the curse of sin. Our work is already being redeemed.**
- **There is eternal significance to our work.**
- **One day, everything will be made new – even our work. This gives us hope!**

### III. Work is redeemed – so don't lose hope

- The gospel also gives us rest in our work.

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*Matthew 11:28-29*