



**The Necessity And
Blessings Of Work**

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The LORD's first Command to man was for him to work or "dress and keep the Garden." No greater happiness exists than for a person to know that he is free to fulfill this Command. The Truth is that a person never receives recompense for any more than he does, both naturally and spiritually. The only way to merit reward is to work. Excluding the privilege of having the LORD's Presence in one's heart, the greatest asset to one's soul is having the courage and willingness to work.

To work long hours and to do hard work, according to God's Purposive Will, is a joyful blessing! Hard work does not cause mental breakdowns, but the worry and resentment of work does. If a person tries to work without Christ's Life-giving energy, he works without living, which is a tedious, boring existence. But the person who works according to God's Purposive Will generates inspiring enthusiasm for more work. If a person wishes to bless and benefit mankind, he must do so through his Christlike works.

Work is the fruit of industrious intelligence. While we may work as though we will live forever, we must constantly live for Christ as though we will die the next moment. We must work ungrudgingly while we gratefully live for Christ's sake. We must not forget that work without Christ's Character of Love, Joy, Peace, and Faith in our hearts will be a dead work.

God-given works that are well done determine our worth. To the LORD, work is indeed a necessity and a blessing. The Book of Genesis records the

first Command the LORD gave to man, which was for him to dress and keep the Garden of Eden.

**And the LORD God took the man,
and put him into the garden of Eden to
dress it and to keep it (Genesis 2:15).**

The Hebrew word for *dress* is *aw-bad*, which means to work, to serve, to will, to enslave, a bondman, bond service, to compel, and to labor.

The LORD God transported Adam to His Garden of Delight and Happiness so that Adam could work and guard it. Even though the Garden of Eden was a perfect place, the LORD God gave man the responsibility of dutifully working there in performing activities that were necessary to maintain it, according to His Purposive Will. The LORD's Paradise was not a place of idleness that exempted man from work; rather, it was a place of responsibility that demanded work. God did not create man to be a lazy, slothful creature. The LORD created man and formed him in such a way that he had the intelligence and capacity to work. God placed man on *Earth*, which is a place that requires work for its keeping. Earth is where God placed man to serve Him according to His Purposive Will.

In the Garden of Eden, the LORD gave His *Oral* Law to Adam to *dress* and *keep* the Garden, which was a command to work. On Mount Sinai, the LORD gave His *Written* Law to Moses, which contained the command for man to work six days. So when the LORD God engraved His Law in stone, He reinforced His Purposive Will that He had spoken in His Oral Law in the Garden of Eden. The LORD God's Written Word said:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: (Exodus 20:8,9).

The LORD's positive Command to rest on the seventh day or the Sabbath Day was founded upon His positive Command that "thou *shalt* work six days." When we work six days, we carry out God's Purposive Will. The LORD's positive Command says for us to labor six days, which provides a foundation for the *rest* He promised on the Sabbath Day. One of the greatest assets we can possess is a willing spirit to perform God's Purposive Will by working six days. If we are to be a blessing and a benefit to ourselves and to others, both naturally and spiritually, we must achieve this through working. All growth depends on working. Work is not a curse. Work is a blessing. Work is the first fruit of intelligence.

We can, by God's Grace, work gratefully, or we can, because of our own resentment, work grudgingly. The LORD God, by His Mercy and Grace, anoints all work with His Brightness and Beauty, when the work is done in His Purposive Will.

The LORD's Command to work is reiterated in the New Testament.

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and **to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;** (IThessalonians 4:11).

A calm, quiet, and peaceable spirit generates a happy worker. Christianity does not discourage believers from taking the responsibility to work with their own hands in order to provide for themselves and others.

The Apostle Paul, a mighty man of God, was a true example of a person who lived by God's Working Principle.

After these things **Paul departed from Athens**, and came to Corinth; **And found** a certain Jew named **Aquila**, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife **Priscilla**; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. **And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers** (Acts 18:1-3).

Although the Apostle Paul had been bred to be a scholar, he had also been taught a trade. Professionally, Paul was a tentmaker. He made tents for shepherds and soldiers. Customarily, Jewish parents taught their children a trade, although they trained them in schools of learning and gave them estates. I, personally had a Rabbi for a teacher, at one time, and he said that if a Jewish parent did not teach his son a trade, it was the same as teaching him to be a thief. Parents considered that if a son had a trade in hand, he was a "fenced vineyard".

The Apostle Paul was a prime example of this kind of teaching and experience. He was brought up at the feet of a teacher named Gamaliel; yet, in his youth, Paul had learned to make tents. Although, as an Apostle, Paul was entitled to maintenance from the believers, whom he had led to the LORD and also from the churches that he

had planted, he worked at tent making in order to earn his daily bread so that he would not be a charge on the believers. This evidenced great humility on Paul's part, which he had learned from the condescension of his Master Teacher, the LORD Jesus Christ, Who Himself was a lowly carpenter. Although Paul had a great spiritual work to do, which was to teach and write the LORD's eternal Truths and Mysteries, he humbled himself and worked with his hands, thus he earned his bread by the sweat of his brow.

Jesus came to minister to others, not to be ministered to. Likewise, the Apostle Paul maintained himself with the labor of his own hands so that he might not make the Gospel of Christ a burdensome stone. The Apostle Paul chose to work with Priscilla and Aquila, lowly tentmakers, because they were rich in God's Wisdom and Knowledge.

The Apostle Paul testified to the Corinthian believers that he had waived his right to receive honourable maintenance from them because he would rather abase himself than have Christ's Word be burdensome to them.

Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and **in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself** (II Corinthians 11:9).

The Apostle Paul made the Gospel free to the Corinthians so that he might cut off all occasions for offense, lest any accuse him of designs to gain monetarily by making the Gospel a profitable business to enrich himself. Paul was not a mercenary man like so many of Christ's ministers are today.

The Apostle Paul strongly rebuked those among the Thessalonians who refused to work.

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly,** and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; **Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought;** but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that **if any would not work, neither should he eat.** For we hear that **there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread** (II Thessalonians 3:6-12).

Some idle believers among the Thessalonians refused to work, so they lived at others' expense,

which the LORD does not recognize as acceptable behavior. Paul described the idle, unacceptable members among the Thessalonians:

- They walked in a disorderly way and were guilty of vain curiosity.
- They were busybodies, impertinently meddling in others' affairs.
- They ate others' bread for nought.
- They were rebellors who refused to follow Paul's example.
- They had lazy hands and refused to work. Instead of working, they spent their time in idle visiting, idle talking, and idle sports.
- They were thieves who stole others' energy by eating their bread.
- They refused to work and eat their own bread in quietness of soul.

Men's minds are busy machines. If men will not employ themselves in doing good and right, they will do evil and wrong. Paul gave the LORD's Verdict, which is this: he who does not labor does not deserve to eat. The laborer is worthy of bread, but the loiterer is not worthy to eat.

The LORD delivered His Judgment on idleness when He told man in the Garden of Eden: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread..." (Genesis 3:19).

The Apostle Paul cautioned the Corinthians about being tempted, in their pride and self conceit, to compare their circumstances to the Apostle's circumstances, as though they were

wiser and stronger in Christ than he. What a gross mistake! They compared their prideful exaltations to Paul's and to the other Apostles' true humility in Christ Jesus. The Corinthians were unaware that when a person is weak, then he is the strongest to give God all the glory!

Even unto this present hour **we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day** (I Corinthians 4:11-13).

The Apostle Paul shared with the Corinthians the particularities inherent in suffering for the Gospel's sake and for Christ's sake. He said that Christ's Apostles suffered hunger; thirst; being naked; being buffeted; having no certain dwelling place; laboring with their own hands; being reviled (yet they blessed); being persecuted (yet they intreated); being made as the filth of the world; and being made the offscouring of all things.

The early Apostles suffered, in their bodies, souls, and spirits, the people's accusations that they were the worst and most vile men and that they were the very dirt of the world. They were treated as common sewers, as it were, into which all the reproaches of the world were poured. How greatly the Apostles resembled their Master and Owner, the LORD Jesus Christ. No wonder God has eternally rewarded them by engraving their

names in the very foundations of the New City, the Jerusalem. For the Body of Christ's sake (the Church's sake), the Apostles did indeed fill up that which was left behind of Christ's afflictions

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and **fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church** (Colossians 1:24).

The Apostle Paul rejoiced for the privilege he had to suffer for Christ's sake. He rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer for the Word's sake. He esteemed it an honour to be Christ's servant and slave. The Apostles could not suffer for the expiation of man's sins. Since Jesus Christ was God's perfect, complete sin offering for man, the sacrifice of His Blood, alone, had the Power to expiate man's sin. But the Apostles did suffer for Christ's sake and the Church's sake, as do all good ministers, so that the Gospel might be preached to lost souls and so that the mystery of Christ's Spiritual Stature that He wants to form in repentant man's New Heart might be proclaimed. The Apostle Paul held fast to his integrity in the midst of all oppositions, hardships, and persecution and worked with his own hands in order to fulfill his LORD's Purposive Will to make His Name known through the LORD Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul commanded believers not to steal God's time and energy by refusing to work with their own hands for themselves and for others.

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with

***his hands the thing which is good,
that he may have to give to him that
needeth*** (Ephesians 4:28).

Idleness makes us thieves of God's time and energy that He gives us. If we work with our hands, which is honourable and good, then we are capable of doing good with the substance we have obtained. It is more joyful and blessed to work and obtain something to give than to be wretchedly lazy and always be the one to receive from others' hands. The LORD's divine, infinite Love constrains us to work for ourselves and for others in order to supply our own needs and others' needs.

All of my life, for Christ's sake and for God's Glory, I have tried to be a daily example of the LORD's Working Principle. The entire Message of the Crucified Way has been built upon God's Principle of Working. What if someone's heart stopped beating in a vain effort to rest, he would be dead immediately! Likewise, when we try to find rest apart from the LORD's Purposive Will, we die! To work is the LORD's Command. To work is a blessed privilege! To work is rewarding, for God will reward all righteous works according to His Purposive Will.

