

SERIES	The Rest of the Week
BIBLE	Genesis 1:26-28; 3:17-19; 1 Thess. 4:9-12
TITLE	#1: God's Design for Work
OVERVIEW	Work is not a curse, it was given to you because you are made in God's image. Out of the overflow of God's very being, He worked. He created. He created you. And He placed His image on you. Sin has corrupted this image, but the gospel redeems it.
SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN	<p>Working In God's Image (Gen. 1:26-28) There are many things that define humanity, but nothing more than what is contained in these few verses: "Let us make mankind in our image" (Gen. 1:26a). This reality shapes WHY humans are different than animals. No other creature has been blessed with carrying the image of God. This shapes not only our desires and feelings, but it also forms what will actually fulfill us—what will be the "intended" way of living. There are many facets of this image-bearing, but if you look closely in these verses you notice there is a direct connection that flows out of being God's image-bearer: "so that they may rule over..." (Gen. 1:26b). Being made in God's image, apparently applies something to humankind that gives each person an ability, desire, and suitability to work, create, and make something of this world. This is not too surprising considering just a few verses earlier, this is exactly what God does out of the overflow of His nature, and when you are bearing His image faithfully—so do you.</p> <p>We Broke It (Gen. 3:17-19) Unfortunately, it is not too long before humanity messes up what was intended to be a blessing, by breaking the guidelines that God had set up for how we should live. When the fruit was eaten, sin entered into humanity, and one of the products of sin, was that NOW our work will be harder, meaningless at times, and painful. Your image had now been corrupted by sin, and because of this so was the outflow of that image—your work. Just like many things, sin didn't get rid of God's image in you, it just marred it... warped it... made it unholy. Throughout the centuries, humanity has done incredible things through our work in this world, but it has never been to the level of its original intention—work is constantly cheapened through pride, wrong motives, selfishness, control, devaluing of others... and the list goes on. Today we still live in the overflow of this "broken work".</p> <p>God Is Fixing It (1 Thess. 4:9-12) The gospel of Jesus touches every area of our lives. It is a work of redemption. A move of God to restore humanity to the original design. To bring healing to all the areas of our lives that had been corrupted by sin. None more so, than our original outflow of being created in God's image—to work. To work with joy once again, to work to serve other people, to value the places that God has placed us, to be a part of God's redemption to others, to find God's affirmation as the guide for what we work towards. In God's new kingdom, work doesn't stop, sin does. Work gets redeemed and is an important part of being a son or daughter of God. Redeemed work is part of the gospel story.</p>
GOSPEL	<p>Matthew 28:19-20 - This is a commission of what we should do. It is work. It is the most important work!</p> <p>Matthew 21:43 - The Kingdom of God is given to people who will "produce its fruit".</p> <p>Revelation 21:5 - The final image of a redeemed earth, is where everything is made new. This is something we look forward to, but we are also in the process of making.</p>
NEXTSTEPS	What does it mean to let God guide your work? To work for the Kingdom of God, and not the kingdom of man?