

Work Life

Week 1: WHY WORK

BOTTOM LINE

Work was God's original design and plan for human beings. Work allows us to serve others and worship God through producing and giving to the world something excellent.

GOAL OF THE GROUP

The goal of this week's group is to discover that work was not a result of sin entering the world, but it was a part of God's original design and plan for humanity.

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:1-5, 1:26-28; 2:15

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share:** Have you ever had a bad job or a job you really did not like? What made the job bad?
- A 2017 Gallup poll found that 85% of the world's one billion full-time workers hate their work.
 - 62% of these workers were described as "not engaged" – they put very little energy into their work
 - 23% were found to be "actively disengaged" – they hated their jobs and would show it by acting out and undermining their coworkers
 - 15% of workers in this world are "engaged" – they feel a sense of passion for their work and will drive innovation and attempt to move their organization forward
 - Is needing to work a result of living in a broken world?
 - Why do so many people hate their work?
- Read Genesis 1:1-5, 26-28 and Discuss:** In these verses God created the world through work. He could have chosen a different way to create. Work was not beneath God, but rather something that brought Him a great sense of joy and satisfaction.
 - Think of something you created that gave you joy and satisfaction. What made this "work" different than other work?
 - Work is defined as "Any activity that we engage in where we expend energy to accomplish or achieve something". It includes those who perform a set of duties and get paid for it, in addition to those who are stay-at-home parents and receive no financial compensation. It also includes those who are students and expend an enormous amount of energy "working" in order to receive a degree. How does our work express who we are?
 - As human beings, we are created in the image of God. Just as God worked, we are designed to work as well. How does this change how we view the definition of work?
 - If God gave us this mandate to work, does that change our identity in Him? Why or why not?
- When sin entered the world, how did it distort our view of work?
- If the purpose of work is to serve and benefit something beyond ourselves, could we feel more fulfilled and successful than if the purpose was about ourselves? Why or why not? Compare this type of work with work that leads to burnout, feelings of frustration and meaningless.
- Read Genesis 2:15 and Discuss:** In addition to work being an expression of our identity and a manner in which we can serve others, God also intended our work to be a means through which we could worship or honor Him.
 - By looking at translations of the original Hebrew word for "work" we uncover that the words "work" and "worship" are intimately connected. What do you think it means to worship God through our work?
 - Worshiping God when you're talking to your boss, studying for an exam, or sitting at your desk looking at spreadsheets sounds funny, but when we do our work with excellence, we honor God by using the skills He's given us. How could this change the way you view your work? What about the work you currently dread?

"Work is not, primarily, a thing one does to live,
but the thing one lives to do."

--- Dorothy Sayers,
British novelist and theologian



TRY THIS

Understanding who we are working for changes the way we work. When we work with God in mind, rather than a paycheck, promotion, boss or our own egos, it transforms our work. Colossians 3:23 says "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." What one or two things could you change about the way you work this week? Pray and ask God to reveal His heart as you consider your work.