

“The Gospel and Your Work (Part 1)” – Genesis 2:5, 15

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[What follows is the transcript of a sermon. It was originally intended to be heard, not read, so the tone is more conversational than academic. It has only been loosely edited, so forgive any grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. If you have questions please contact Southern Oaks Baptist Church through their official website, www.welovethegospel.com.]

Take a Bible and meet me in Genesis 2...

Many of the verses we are about to read from this chapter we have already considered at length, but our focus today (and next week) is going to be on the contribution of two verses to our understanding of work. For most of us, work is something we have a lot of experience with. Because of this the word can conjure up some unpleasant thoughts and an early onset of the “Monday blues.” There’s a reason for that. Our work sometimes has the feel of futility and regularly is marked by frustration. But it hasn’t always been this way, as our text this morning reminds us. And, furthermore, it will not always be this way for God’s people.

The Bible is always realistic about every subject it touches on, and so it should not surprise us that Scripture is transparent about how bitter-sweet our work can be. The problem, it seems to me, is that most people’s understanding of vocation is informed far more by the world around us—perhaps even, dare I say, by the American Dream—than it is by the Bible’s own teaching on the matter. And for this reason, this is a subject that is so important for us to consider. Furthermore, a biblical understanding is also so vital to contemplate not merely because it is so sorely lacking in many of our worldviews, but also because we spend so much of our time working. Clearly this is an important subject, then, for us to think rightly on.

In the forward to a book called, *The Gospel at Work*, David Platt writes the following:

“We in the church desperately need to see how God himself delights in work and God himself designed our work by his grace for our good and for his glory. At the same time, we need to see how work, as a mark of human dignity, has been marred by human depravity. Work that was designed to be fulfilling is frustrating; work that was designed to be purposeful feels pointless; and work that was designed to be selfless has become selfish. As a result, we find ourselves on the one hand overvaluing work to the neglect of our health, our families, and the church, or on the other hand undervaluing work in a culture that fosters the unbiblical ideal of laziness and glorifies the unbiblical idea of retirement.”¹

What he is getting at is that the church has desperate need for a more robust understanding of what the Bible says about work. And because this is such an important topic, I want to spend a couple weeks on it.

I should clarify at the outset that when I speak of “work” I’m not thinking merely in terms of that which we do to collect a paycheck. Not all work nets an income. And the value of work is not measured by the size of an income (or lack thereof). The kinds of tasks that a stay-at-home mother or retired senior adult routinely engages could easily be considered “work” or “vocation” from a biblical perspective, so please keep that in mind throughout.

With those caveats out of the way, let’s do the most important thing and read the text. Follow along as I read, beginning in verse 5...

“When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man

became a living creature. ⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers.

¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Genesis 2:5-17)

This is God’s Word...

It’s important to me when we come at any topic, including that of work, that we consider the topic in light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One way to capture the message of the Gospel is to think of it in terms of the Bible’s major plot movements—namely, creation, fall, redemption, and consummation (or new creation/restoration). You could summarize the message of the Gospel by capturing the heart of what each of these plot points communicates.

For instance, in creation, which is described in Genesis 1 and 2, we are introduced first to the God of the Gospel, who is the perfect and holy Creator of all that exists, including humanity, who were made without the stain of sin and in God’s image. In the beginning there was peace. All was good. Humanity was in perfect fellowship with God.

But then comes the Fall, described in Genesis 3, where sin first enters our story. Adam and Eve, our ancestors, rebelled against God’s instruction, which is to say they sinned and saw their relationship with God and His creation break down as a consequence. They are cast out from His presence and sentenced to death. And since then all of their descendants have been negatively affected by sin—both by nature and by choice. Our sin fosters enmity between us and God, and the spiritual death we inherit, along with the physical death that awaits us, is the cost of our treason against God.

Yet the Bible tells the story of redemption. This story ultimately climaxes in the redemption that God provides by sending His Son, who offered Himself on the cross as substitutionary sacrifice to atone for the sins of His people. He took upon Himself the sinner’s sin and the judgment that they deserved so that, through faith in Him, they would not perish, but have everlasting life because they have been freely forgiven and counted as righteous before a holy God. This is how salvation is accomplished. It’s all of His grace. Not by our works, but by the work of Christ alone. And anyone who would turn from sin and trust in the risen Jesus will receive His salvation. He lives today, continuing to rescue fallen sinners from the hell they deserve until He returns again to claim His own and make all things new.

And this brings us to the consummation (or restoration, or new creation, whatever term you prefer). When Jesus returns, He will judge the living and the dead, usher in the fulness of the new creation, and make good on every promise and threat He has made.

That’s one way of telling the Gospel story. Creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Therefore, if we are going to look at our work in light of the Gospel, I think there is value in considering work through the lens of these fourfold plot points. And that is what I intend to do. However, today we are only going to get through the first two, which means that we will largely be considering the bad news as it relates to our work. But just like with the Gospel itself, you cannot understand the good news about work unless we first understand the bad news. My

goal today is to help us understand why work can be such a frustration today. Then next time we will think on how Christ's work changes our experience of work, increasingly getting us back to the creational design of work. So we are laying a foundation that we will build on, Lord willing, next week. The picture may look a bit bleak by the end of our time today, but I assure you that will only serve to allow the work of Christ to shine all the more brightly by the end of our time next week...

With that in mind, let's first consider...

Creation and Our Work

Even before we get to the creation of mankind, we are given the impression that work is not inherently bad, but good. How so? Because God works. Genesis 1 painted a picture of a creative God who goes about His orderly work, which is again and again assessed by its Creator as "*good*" (e.g., 1:31). Genesis 2 furthers that theme. These two chapters "pulsate with the rhythm of His creative activity: God designs; God commands; God acts."² So clearly there is nothing intrinsically bad about work.³

Furthermore, we were created, as we have seen, to image of God. In a book called, *Work Matters*, Tom Nelson reminds us,

"Being made in God's image, we have been designed to work, to be fellow workers with God. To be an image-bearer is to be a worker... We work because we bear the image of One who works. This is why the Apostle Paul writes to a group of first-century followers of Jesus who have embraced the gospel, 'If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat' (2 Thess. 3:10)... Paul does not rebuke those who, for various legitimate reasons, cannot work, but he does say that an unwillingness to work is no trivial thing. For anyone to refuse to work is in fundamental violation of God's creation design for humankind."⁴

We get a sense of this responsibility delegated to mankind in our passage today. You may recall from a previous sermon that Genesis 2:5 helps us make sense out of the progression of the text. We are told there that "*no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground.*" In other words, the condition of the earth leaves something to be desired, and this is owing to a lack of water to nourish growth and people to work the ground.

So what did God do? We're told in verses 6 and 7 that He caused a "*mist*" (ESV), or perhaps better "*streams*" (NIV), to emerge and that He formed a man, both of which address what was lacking according to verse 5. With these new additions the garden of Eden could now flourish, which is described in verses 8 and 9. Then verses 10 through 14 elaborate the water that God provided for the garden, while verses 15 and following expand on the people God provided for and placed in the garden.

We should conclude, therefore, that humanity was created with work in mind. We come to into existence (at least in part), according to verse 5, "*to work the ground.*" And God placed the first man in the garden, according to verse 15, "*to work it and keep it.*"⁵ Work is not a bad thing. We were created with work prepared for us to do as we set about imaging our Maker. In the next verses we see that Adam went about naming the animals, which was an expression of the dominion God gave him over creation (cf. Gen 1:26, 28). That was part of his assigned work. He, along with his "*helper*" Eve (who we will meet later) were also given the task of cultivating the Garden (2:5, 15), as they fulfilled the mandate to "*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it*" (1:28). "Work is not something incidental to human existence, but part of the very design of creation."⁶ Not surprisingly then, humans were working before humans were sinning. And there is no reason to believe that this was begrudging work anymore than God's own work in creation. It was a joy. A delight.

And yet, that is not what our work feels like at times (if not most of the time), is it? No, our work often feels like toil. It can feel like a necessary evil. Why is that? Because our work now is marked by a curse. And this brings us to considering the effect of sin on our work...

The Fall and Our Work

In Genesis 3, we will read about how Adam and Eve, the first humans, became sinners, those who rejected God's instruction and authority (i.e. the Fall). One of the devastating consequences of their sin is that it drastically changed the nature of work for humanity. We will consider these verses later in the series, but listen to what God said to Adam concerning the consequences of his sin.

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and 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; ¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:17-19)

Reflecting on these verses, Andrew David Naselli comments on how the human experience of work changes after the Fall. He gives five examples of how work becomes more challenging after the Fall.⁷ Perhaps it would be helpful for us to speak of these as five reasons that work can be so burdensome to us.

Sin Makes Work Burdensome

You are a sinner—by nature and by choice—so it is impossible for the work you do to not be touched by sin. Couple that with the fact that everyone you work with or for is also a sinner and we can understand why work can often be such a burden to us. Why do people neglect the work they have been tasked with? Because they are sinners. Why are people lazy? Because they are sinners. Why do some people treat their work as if it were everything and overwork? Because they're sinners. Why do others believe that work is meaningless or merely a necessary evil? Because they're sinners. Why do some people do work that is dishonest or exploitative? Sin. Why is the motivation for work often primarily greed? Because we are marked by sin. Sin messes up our perspective on and engagement in work. And we have probably all felt at some point in our lives that “the worst part about working is not *what* we are doing but *whom* we have to do it with—fellow sinners who can be annoying and cruel.”⁸ “My job would be great,” we've thought, “were it not for all the people.”

The Curse Makes Work Burdensome

The verses I read from Genesis 3 remind us that it is not just humanity that is negatively affected by human sinning—the rest of creation is as well. Genesis tells us that the ground is “*cursed*” because of the sin of Adam. Paul expands on this in Romans 8...

“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.” (Romans 8:19-22)

When Paul speaks of creation being “*subjected to futility*,” he's calling to mind the aftermath of the Fall. This is not something that creation volunteered for. It is the consequence of sin. It's divine judgment. It lingers to this day. The world, even now, “languishes under a pall of human transgression and impending judgment.”⁹ In Genesis 3 this is represented by the emergence of “*thorns and thistles*” that inhibit growth and the work of

human hands (Gen. 3:18), but presumably this could also include various other evidences of turmoil and brokenness in creation—from so-called natural disasters to debilitating diseases. Things are no longer as they were. With sin comes a curse, and our work is burdensome for it. In short, because of the curse, there will be times when our work will make us want to curse.¹⁰ Related to this...

Pain Makes Work Burdensome

God says to Adam, “*in pain you shall eat of [the ground] all the days of your life*” and “*by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground*” (Gen. 3:17, 19). The work He was tasked with will no longer be a source of pure joy, but a primary source of real pain. That pain is not simply because work now requires exertion, because the pater of work and rest already established suggests that exertion was always involved in work, at least for created and finite beings (certainly not for God). Nevertheless, now Adam’s work will require additional effort, and become a source of pain. He’s going to have to break a sweat battling the elements his sin has introduced (e.g., “*thorns and thistles*”). The ground will now resist him.¹¹ It will fight back. He’ll have to exert himself in new ways. What a burden!

And, once again, when we read this in light of Paul’s reflections in Romans 8, we see that the rest of creation shares with us in that agony. Remember what he said? “*For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.*” We have this in common. Not only does Genesis 3 describe the pain of childbirth as a consequence of sin (Gen. 3:16), but Paul, after speaking of the childbirth-like pain experience by creation, immediately adds—“*And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies*” (Rom. 8:23). Pain. Toil. Labor. Groaning. Words like these once had nothing to do with work. Now many would practically count them as synonyms. And it gets worse...

Death Makes Work Burdensome

God’s judgment on sinners climaxes with death. “*For the wages of sin is death,*” wrote Paul (Rom. 6:23). Adam was told that he would surely die for his disobedience. Adam was told he had an expiration date. “*For you are dust,*” God said, “*and to dust you shall return*” (Gen. 3:19). But what does this have to do with the burden of work? Well, for one, it means that some work is by nature now dangerous—whether that work is the labor of childbirth, or the efforts of law enforcement, or fishing for food, or working at a factory, or any number of other examples of dangerous task. People die at work. There are risks to us and there are risks to others. And when we and others die, it can create additional burdens for those who remain. That’s no news to us, but it is new in Genesis 3.

Separation Makes Work Burdensome

One of the consequences from sin is separation—separation from God and from one another. This makes so much of life burdensome, not least of which our work. Adam and Eve carried out their vocations in the context of a unique and intimate fellowship with God. But this was forfeit when they sinned. They were exiled from the garden and, for the first time, experienced a distance from one another. Their work was meant to be carried out in a complementary fashion, but how can this happen when such separation becomes the order of the day? It cannot, at least not easily. And so new relational burdens complicate our work, and even generate from our engagement in work. Indeed, we often use our work in ways that further exacerbate relational distance and cooperation. Bethany Jenkins gives a few examples,

“Instead of serving one another in joy, we compete with one another in jealousy. We envy the success of others, thinking we deserve the promotions they receive. We tell white lies to our managers when telling

the truth is risky. Like Adam, who said, ‘Don’t blame me; blame the woman,’ and Eve, who said, ‘Don’t blame me; blame the serpent,’ we shift culpability away from ourselves, taking credit when sales are up and listing excuses when they’re down...”¹²

So sin messes everything up—including our work. Sin, the curse, pain, death, and separation all combine to make our experience of work a nuisance. We all know this firsthand. But we can see from our text this morning that it wasn’t always like that. There was a time when work wasn’t burdensome. Indeed, there will come a day when the work God has for us will be utterly free of burden. And even now, in Christ, our view and experience of work can be utterly transformed. I’m not saying that Christ makes our work easy. You’re still under the curse. But you know what? Brothers and sisters, you are also under Christ.¹³ As Kent Hughes writes, “God does not remove the curse and its painful, sweaty toil, but He does replace the meaninglessness.”¹⁴ Did you hear that? Christ can infuse our work with meaning.

Perhaps you’re thinking, “That sounds nice, pastor, but you should know that I have one of those ‘secular’ jobs, so...” What does that matter? This sacred/secular divide has really messed up our sense vocation, which basically refers to the work God calls us to do. Do you think the only meaningful or eternally significant work happens at a 501(c)3? Let me ask you this: When Jesus walked this earth do you think the work God called Him to engage in was meaningful work? Do you think it mattered? All of it? Of course it did!

And yet sometimes we only think of His work in terms of His cross, which is understandable, since He came ultimately “*to give His life as a ransom for many*” (Mark 10:45). Obviously that was meaningful. We would have no hope in this life or in death were it not for His atoning work on the cross. But would you say that every moment of Jesus’ life on earth mattered? I suspect you would. And what did Jesus spend the highest percentage of His time on earth doing, as far as we can tell? Apparently the same thing as you—His vocation. Tom Nelson writes,

“Many of us tend to forget that Jesus spent the majority of His time on this sin-ravaged planet in a carpenter’s shop working in obscurity with sawdust on His sinless hands and sweat on His holy brow. Biblical scholars often refer to this period of Jesus’ life, from roughly ages twelve to thirty, as the hidden years. While the gospel writers don’t tell us much about these years, we must not see them as unimportant to Jesus’ incarnational and redemptive mission...

Jesus’ mission, to die on a blood-stained cross to bear our sin and satisfy the wrath of a holy, righteous God, is always primary. But the fact that the incarnate Son of God spend so much time working with His hands, in a carpenter’s shop, speaks to the...importance of work. It is an essential part of our humanity. Jesus honored His heavenly Father both in the carpentry shop and on the cross. Jesus, the craftsman carpenter, affirmed the dignity of human work...”¹⁵

Do you see? Jesus wasn’t wasting His life away as a carpenter. He was doing work that glorified His Father in heaven. He was making tables and working with His hands and repairing stuff for His neighbors. In short, He was doing meaningful, God-honoring work. And so was Adam when he was tending a garden.

Is there any reason the work that you find yourself tasked with—be that in the home with your kids or office with your peers—cannot likewise be meaningful and God-honoring? Unless you are engaged in some employment that is inherently immoral, then why can it not be meaningful? Why can’t it matter? Why can’t it fit into God’s purposes in the world to glorify Himself by helping others enjoy Him forever? It can. And to the degree that we can understand God’s creational design for work and allow Him to change our perspective and the way we engage in work, it will. It helps us to obey the instruction that Apostle Paul gave to the Colossians, when he wrote, “*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord*” (Col. 3:23).

Paul wasn’t thinking in terms of “secular” and “sacred” vocations because such distinctions are not helpful. Usually those distinctions are employed to foster unbiblical ways of thinking. By contrast, Abraham Kuyper is right when he notes, “If God is sovereign, then his lordship must extend over all of life, and it cannot be

restricted to the walls of the church or within the Christian orbit.”¹⁶ Elsewhere, Kuyper famously declared, “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, ‘Mine!’”¹⁷ Or as Jesus even more famously said, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*” (Matt. 28:18). He has authority over every area of your life. There is no area of your life that He does not intend for you to utilize for the glory of God and the good of others.

Therefore, as Kevin DeYoung has pleaded,

“Please don’t ever think you are a second-class citizen in the kingdom of God if you aren’t in full-time ministry [as it’s sometimes called]. You can honor the Lord as a teacher, mother, doctor, lawyer, loan officer, or social worker; you can work in retail, fast food, politics, or big business; you can be a butcher, a baker, or a candlestick maker. You can be just about anything you want as long as you aren’t lazy (Proverbs 6:6-11; 26:13-16), and whatever you do you perform to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).”¹⁸

Are you beginning to see how the biblical view of things is so more compelling than what we are offered in the world? As one author explains it,

“The current economic era has given us fresh impulses and new ways to stigmatize work such as farming and caring for children—jobs that supposedly are not ‘knowledge’ jobs and therefore do not pay very well. But in Genesis we see God as a gardener, and in the New Testament we see him as a carpenter. No task is too small a vessel to hold the immense dignity of work given by God. Simple physical labor is God’s work no less than the formulation of theological truth.”¹⁹

Perhaps you recoil from such claims. Maybe you think the work you do is more valuable than others. Why is that? Could it be because your identity is too highly caught up in your work to the point that you have prided yourself on the status it brings instead of the Savior God has provided? Or perhaps you are on the other side of things. Maybe you feel that your work is meaningless. Could it be because you find your identity in what you do instead of in the One you are to do it for? Isn’t it interesting that our view of various professions—our own or other people’s—can reveal so much about where we find our identity?²⁰ In the end, if the Bible is informing our perspective, we will avoid both of these errors because work is neither ultimate nor meaningless. It reminds us that work is “a good gift from a great God.”²¹ The gospel helps us give work its proper place in our life. But we’re getting ahead of ourselves.

The point I am making today is that work—even the blue collar and entry level work that the world tends to denigrate—can have immense dignity. Whether you find yourself rocking in the chair with the nursing child or on the ranch with the nursing calf it can be meaningful and God-honoring. What happens in the classroom and the cubicle matters to God. You can please the Lord with the pen or the plow. All of these vocations fit into His purposes in this world. All of them can contribute to His mission. They all can be theaters for His glory.

But just how do we do our work for the glory of God? This is where Genesis 2 is so helpful. It helps us to see the purpose of work. It helps us to understand how Christ is renewing those purposes in us. What is the significance, for instance, of Adam’s calling to “work” and “keep” the Garden? And how does this relate to God’s call on our life? As it turns out these words hint at significant truths that can revolutionize our view of our work. This is something we will need to consider next time, along with how Christ’s work in and for us can change our approach to work. Stay tuned. There is good news ahead. I promise.

But as we close, I want to acknowledge that many of you have a difficult relationship with work (sometimes through no fault of your own). You can identify with all this bad news about work. You get it. And you’re not alone. The truth is there are people in this room who can sympathize with you more than you know. But what may be most surprising to you is that Jesus is empathetic as well. Though Jesus was born without sin—which helps us understand the necessity of the miracle of Christmas, as we celebrated in recent weeks—He was born

into the same sinful world that we occupy. That means He knows our pain. He sympathizes with our weakness. But don't take my Word for it. Listen to these words from Hebrews:

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:15-16)

No one in your life can sympathize more with your frustrations in a fallen world (or fallen workplace for that matter), than Jesus. And He offers you help. But if we are to receive the help He offers, it begins with receiving Him. We must confess and turn from our sins, that we might turn in faith to Christ. There is no hope to be found in this world, only futility, unless and until our only hope is found in Christ. So I commend Him to you today. Trust in Christ, not your own efforts and attributes, to make you right with God. Trust in Christ to save you from the power and punishment of your sin. Trust in Christ because He has never turned away the broken and contrite who turn to Him for salvation. You won't be the first. And you won't be the first to discover that in Christ you will always and evermore find mercy and grace to help in your time of need.

Let's pray...

¹ David Platt, “Foreword,” in *The Gospel at Work: How the Gospel Gives New Purpose and Meaning to Our Jobs*, by Sebastian Traeger and Greg Gilbert (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013, 2018), 13-14.

² Daniel Darling, “What Does the Culture Say?,” in *The Gospel and Work* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 93.

³ Leland Ryken also reminds us that “God's work of creation is obviously not toil. It is more like play or the exuberance of the creative artist. It is joyous and energetic.” Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 120.

⁴ Tom Nelson, *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 22-23.

⁵ Nelson writes, “From Genesis 2 we see that the earth itself was created in order to be cultivated and shaped by humankind. Unspoiled pristine nature is not necessarily a preferred state. God desired that there would be harmonious human cooperation within the created order. Not only would the crown of creation have joyful intimacy with their creator, but they would also be given the joyful privilege of contributing to the work of God in his good world.” Nelson, *Work Matters*, 24-25.

⁶ Darling, “What Does the Culture Say?,” 94.

⁷ Andrew David Naselli, “How Should Biblical Theology Trace a Theme's Salvation-Historical Progression?,” in *40 Questions about Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2020), 58-59.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁹ Robert W. Yarbrough, “Romans,” in *Romans-Galatians*, ESVEC (Wheaton: Crossway, 2020), 128.

¹⁰ Nelson, *Work Matters*, 36.

¹¹ Darling, “What Does the Culture Say?,” 97.

¹² Bethany L. Jenkins, “What Are We For?,” in *The Gospel and Work* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 9.

¹³ Naselli, 59.

¹⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, 2nd Ed. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), 150. Also quoted in Naselli, 59. Along these lines, Traeger and Gilbert write that an understanding of the Fall “helps explain why our work will always, to some degree or another, be marked by frustration. Work is hard because both we and the world around us have been affected by our turning away from God. Because of that, it shouldn't surprise us that work is difficult and painful sometimes. Work tends to wear us out and wear us down. It can be a source of massive frustration in our lives. On the other hand, it shouldn't surprise us that when we *do* enjoy our work, there is an always-present danger that our work will swallow whole—that our hearts will come to be defined by it and we will be reduced to nothing *but* workers.” Traeger and Gilbert, 15.

¹⁵ Tom Nelson, “How Should the Church Engage?,” in *The Gospel and Work* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 78.

¹⁶ Abraham Kuyper, *Common Grace* 1.1 (1853 repr., Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), as cited by Jenkins, 20-21.

¹⁷ See James D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 488.

¹⁸ Kevin DeYoung, *Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009), 100-101.

¹⁹ Timothy Keller with Katherine Leary Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Dutton, 2012), 37.

²⁰ Daniel Darling, “What Does the Culture Say?,” 112.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 113.