

Neighbors & Nations: Made to Worship

Made to Work
Genesis 1:26-28

Recap: Made to Praise → Made to Follow → Made to Belong → Made to Work

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Our Good, God Gives Meaning to the Work of our Neighbors and Nations

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" **Genesis 1:26-28**

Two important truths that will shape our view of work from Genesis 1:26-28

1. Created On Purpose

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." **Genesis 1:26-27**

"And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." **Genesis 1:31**

But they are missing something that is found in humankind.

The Image of God – The Likeness of our Creator.

- Minds and the Ability to Reason

"And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead..." **Acts 17:2-3**

- Creativity and Innovation

"and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze." **Exodus 35:31-32**

- Emotions

"A glad heart makes a cheerful face, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed." **Proverbs 15:13**

- Soul that can Know & Relate to God

"I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live." **Psalms 116:1-2**

"Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me..." **Jeremiah 9:23-24a**

- Dominion over Creation

"And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **Genesis 1:26b**

We might struggle with this for 2 reasons:

a. Work before sin brought the fall and the curse?

"And to Adam he said, '...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; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 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**

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." **Genesis 2:15**

b. Dominion is a rough word in our typical usage

"O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens...When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" **Psalms 8:1, 3-9**

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2. Created For a Purpose

"And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" **Genesis 1:28**

Be fruitful; Multiply and Fill the Earth; Subdue it.

Your work matters. (And not only yours!) Your Work Partners with God - Push back against the curse of sin and care for the needs of the world.

"God could easily give you grain and fruit without your plowing and planting, but he does not want to do so." **Martin Luther**

Our Work Partners with God...

- a) *In Creativity: Building, Cultivating and Bearing Fruit*
- b) *In Provision: Providing for Needs*
- c) *In Redemptive Work: Fighting Against Brokenness in the World*
- d) *In Order: Providing Structure in Society*

Your Work Glorifies God - Excellence and gospel testimony

→ HOW you work matters too.

"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." **Colossians 3:17**

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" **Colossians 3:23**

"Well, I mean, if you can put your name on this day, and be proud of the amount of work you've done, then, by all means, you should tootle on home." **Jo Bennett (CEO of Sabre Corporation) – from The Office**

Does how I work reflect well on the One that I work for?

"Wherever you are, be all there! Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God." **Jim Elliot (Missionary)**

Your work has meaning and purpose.

- Purpose cancels out coasting!
- Purpose contradicts hopelessness!

Will you take time this week to recognize the good work of someone around you?

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Invitation:

"But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I am working.'"

John 5:17

Before anything else, this is the work He wants you to do:

"Then they said to him, 'What must we do, to be doing the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'" **John 6:28-29**

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *The New American Commentary: Genesis 1-11:26* – K. A. Mathews (1996)-
- *Exalting Jesus in Genesis* – Phillip Bethancourt (2024)
- *ESV Study Bible* – Crossway (2008)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- *Opening Up Genesis* – Kurt Strassner (2009)
- *Every Good Endeavor* – Timothy Keller (2012)
- *Rethinking Life @ Work* – Chip Roper (2016)
- *Made to Flourish* – Tom Nelson (2019)
- *Work in the Spirit* – Miroslav Volf (1991)