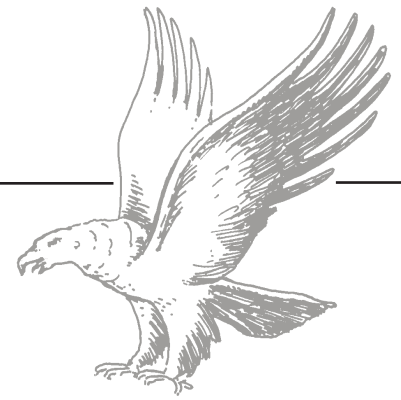


Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



April 22, 2018

Work

We spend the majority of our waking time on this earth toiling in our jobs. Whatever our work might be, it is in the best interest of ourselves and those around us to do it well.

“We urge you . . . that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing” (1 Thess. 4:10-12).

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (Eccl. 9:10).



While talking to an old friend in the construction business, he described his most difficult task to be finding young people who are willing to work. Two decades ago, he could put a help-wanted ad in the local paper and get dozens of calls. Now, an online ad will return maybe two calls—and those candidates are rarely qualified for the job.

This personal anecdote reflects a broader trend in our culture. Younger people have lost interest in work, especially anything that involves manual labor. They want a paycheck, a cushy office, benefits, vacation package, and

advancement opportunities—but struggle to appreciate the value of work for the sake of the work itself.

The majority of our time on this earth will be spent providing goods or services for others. When our passion for work dies out, the volume and quality of goods and services available to others decline as well. Multiply this by several million, and you have a recipe for civilizational suicide. A society that has lost its will to work has forfeited its reason for existence.

Between them, Solomon and Paul offer three reasons why work is essential to our well-being.

First, *work is necessary to sustain life*. Paul says that we work so that we may “lack nothing.” Like Adam, we earn our bread by the sweat of our brow, and despite historical attempts to circumvent it, the connection between our labor and our standard of living is immutable. Paul warns that if someone will not work, “neither shall he eat” (2 Thess. 3:10). That sounds cruel, but that’s the way reality is structured. When we have the ability to work, but

choose not to, we impoverish ourselves. And the blame is entirely our own.

Second, *work enhances our relationship with others*. We work so that we can “walk properly toward those who are outside”; or as another translation puts it, “that you may win the respect of outsiders” (NIV). There are few areas of life in which our integrity, our concern for others, and our core attitude about life itself are on display more than in our work. People who work with enthusiasm and vigor, no matter how mundane their job may be, are admired and appreciated by everyone around them.

Finally, *work gives purpose to our life here on earth*. Solomon’s advice, “whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might,” suggests a sense of urgency about our labor. This life is the only stage upon which we will ever perform, so we have one chance to do it well. How we perform our work is a major component of that calling.

Work should never become our god, but neither should we treat it lightly. For the sake of ourselves and our society, we must “do it with our might.”

– David King