

# Beyond the Daily Grind

Mike Colaw

Week 1: Work in a Perfect World

Genesis 1:1

## Series opening:

After looking through the prayer cards over the last year it became clear. We need to build a theology of work. So, I started with a reliable source; I decided to google “work” and post some of the first things that popped up. Don’t worry, I have safe search on my computer.

Here is the first one:

We have a picture of Michael Scott from The Office. “When people ask how I handle this job... I’m dead inside.”

When people ask how I  
handle this job...



Here is the second one.

We have a picture of a little girl. “You think I’m crazy you should meet my work mates. I had to adapt to my surroundings.”



Here is the third one.

We have this kid losing his mind while leaving work on a Friday.



Here is what happened. Literally, everything that first came up was negative.

It’s clear – people think work is bad.

Let me propose a thought:

What if work itself isn't evil? God works (Gen. 1:1). Before sin entered the world there was work assigned to humanity (Gen. 2:15). In the heavens there is work (John 5:17). Work is not the curse, work was cursed (Gen. 3:17-19).

## Let's begin a theology of work by looking into Creation.

Quick dad joke:

Does anyone know the first time in the Bible baseball is mentioned? In the big-inning.

## Genesis 1:1-2

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

I want to unpack this text by looking at three words.

### Create:

Ancient Mesopotamian religions also worked to answer the big questions of where did we come from. The Pentateuch was a culturally relevant response also answering the question, "Why were we created?"

The Hebrew word for "create" (*bara*) is used in the Old Testament to refer to divine activity only—Yahweh alone serves as its grammatical subject—implying the writer wanted to emphasize that people cannot create in the way that Yahweh creates and that no other god can claim to be the creator. The verb *bara* also conveys the idea of ordering or determining function, suggesting God's creative activity consists of bringing proper order and function to the cosmos.

-Faithlife Study Bible

### Formless and Void:

The Hebrew terms used here, *tohu* and *bohu*, describe material substance lacking boundary, order, and definition.

### God:

*Elohim* is plural but the word for create is singular. This is charitable love in community (the Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) working as one to create a world of charitable love and order.

God creates all the stuff. Then God gives it boundary, order and definition. It is in this state that he gives it to man. To continue the sub work.

## Final Thoughts:

What can we learn from this?

- The first thing we learn about God is his community, purpose and intention for humanity – meaningful work.
- Our main objective isn't to make money, gain power or beat others. It is to bring the nature of God into chaos.
- Work was not the curse, work was cursed. It truly is “toil” now.

Illustration:

I want to speak to those who are unsatisfied.

We receive so many prayer requests that are directly connected to work. People are really unsatisfied.

I have a confession. I am unsatisfied too.

I think a lot of people wrongly assume that there are people who have found perfect purpose in some form of work, like ministry.

In fact, we have a number of people working towards ordination, studying ministry or who have felt a call to ministry. I want to be really clear – if you think ministry will fulfill you, you are wrong. It won't. Even the work of the minister is frustrated.

I have been reading a book called *Ordering your Private World* by Gordon MacDonald. He contrasts two kinds of people. The Driven man and the Called man. On the outside they can both look the same. On the inside they are really different.

The DRIVEN man is searching for something that can make him feel whole: success, power, money, material things, influence, even his effectiveness in doing good.

The CALLED man has found what makes him whole and is taking that into the chaos.

Let me say it like this:

My strength in my work is directly connected to the embracing of my worth in Christ.

The only way you will truly survive your work, marriage, school, even the work of parenting, is by finding your worth outside of these things rather than from these things.

**Say these things with me:**

- I am infinitely more valuable than any temporal title or job!
- My worth is not found in a job but in being a loved Child of God!
- I don't find worth from my work, I bring my worth to it!

**Next Steps Cards:**

I want you to write out your place of work. It might be temporary, long term, your home as a stay at home parent or even the name of your school. Write it down. I want you to place your hand on what you wrote and pray these words. “\_\_\_\_\_ does not define my worth God, You do!” In a glorious act of surrender I want you to bring your card up and give it to God. When you place it in the basket say out loud, “I give my work to you, the true definer of my worth.”

## Reference:

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