

The Image of God at Work

Whitney Oxford

We tend to make our work about ourselves: our reputation, our image, our identity, our survival.

Work is about God. Are you working to establish your own image? Or to reflect God's?

I. Work declares God's character

God is the original Worker.

On the Sabbath Jesus said, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working" (John 5:17).

To work is to emulate God: work is a gift from the working God to be like Him.

II. Work declares God's image

Work is intrinsic to man because we bear His image.

Through the image of God we discover utility and abandon futility. So create! Innovate! Solve problems! Improve products! Be efficient!

We were created anew in Christ for good works (Eph 2:10). God is at work in you to work (Phil 2:13).

III. Work declares God's design

– **To produce** (Job 28:1–11; Prov 14:23)

– **To provide** (Prov 11:25; 1 Tim 5:8; 6:18; cf. 2 Thess 3:10–11)

Do you work from lack (Prov 16:26)?

Do you work to get or to give (Eph 4:28)? Working to give is like God.

Do you *have to work* or do you *have work to do* (Eph 5:16–17; 2 Tim 2:4)?

IV. Work declares God's purpose

—our sanctification (especially in authority, submission, and trials)

Christ is the Paradigm as One eternally in a state of submission, diligently doing the will of Another (John 4:34). If you have authority, how do you wield it (Col 4:1)?

Implications	
All work has dignity: there is beauty and purpose in honorable work (Col 3:22–24).	Fear the Lord; work with integrity (Luke 16:10).
For believers the dichotomy between 'secular' work and kingdom work is false.	Sloth degrades and destroys (Prov 18:9).
Non-complainers shine a bright testimony (Phil 2:14–15).	If you try to find your identity in your work, you will feed on futility.

Work, as a reflection of the image of God, is the lifelong context of carrying out good works, within God's parameters, for the good of others and our sanctification.