

MODULE 6: EMPLOYMENT READINESS

SESSION 3: WHY NOT A LIFE OF CRIME?

Key Ideas for This Session:

- Work has intrinsic value over and above “making money.”
- A job well done brings pride, a sense of accomplishment and progress.
- A community working together becomes stronger and is blessed—each person contributing uniquely.
- You are not alone if in God’s favour you are venturing out into the work world.
- Key verse: Psalm 90:17:
May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.

What is the value of “good, honest living”?

The most obvious reason that we work is to support ourselves and those who are dependent on us. However, work has intrinsic value to a person, community and society over and above salary and revenue generation. This value must be acknowledged—and even celebrated. Honest, good work is foundational and builds on itself with positive and progressive outcomes.

The Bible provides key direction on the importance of honest work and the reasons why. In this session we will look at Scripture as the basis to draw out life-giving and transformational reasons to pursue legitimate, honest work.

Read John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

What does a thief contribute? What kind of life does Jesus offer instead?

“Life to the full” can also be translated as “abundant life.” This phrase attests to the generosity and love of God and that He is motivated to give us good things. We may not even know what that is. For example, many think that being rich at all costs will bring contentment. Others recognize that there are things that you cannot put a price tag on—like joy, inner peace, love—that represent true abundance.

Proverbs 12:20

Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy.

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

What are the messages contained in these verses? What positive words do you notice?

Pride In Work:

There is a healthy pride in good workmanship. This is a universal truth and applies to any industry from baking to carpentry to project management, etc. God took the time to step back and appreciate His own creation.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.

Think about a task or project that you have completed, whether small or big. Were you proud? Why or why not?

Sense of Accomplishment and Progression:

A good work ethic means being dependable. This includes being reliable, being on time, following through on your commitments, and giving your best effort. Whether it is a starter job or a senior position, it doesn't matter. Faithfulness on the job is often a reason why people are considered for a promotion or salary increase.

Matthew 25:21

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Luke 16:10

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

What are the ways you can be faithful with a few things?

Why might people be dishonest or unfaithful in their work?

Working Productively Builds Community

1 Corinthians 12:12

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

The comparison of a human body to a community is a great analogy. Although each body part has a different and important role to play, the whole comes together as one and is a powerful force. When you are contributing to this as a

worker there is joy in collaborating, working towards a mutual goal, and contributing positively through your unique style and value.

1 Corinthians 12:15-20

Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

Think about your personality, gifting, and skills. What might your unique contribution be?

How can you combine your personality, gifting, and skills to help others be more productive too?

Work Provides Protection, Confidence, Hope and Joy:

God promises to support you in the good work that He has started within you. The key is to be God-honouring in all you do.

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 17:22

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

What does it mean to be God-honouring? Does it matter what kind of work you would consider (E.g., Trades or service industry; Managing people or projects, etc.)?

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12
And to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, ¹² so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

What do you think this verse means by “living quietly” and “walking properly”?

God The Perfect One Was a Worker—and We Were Created in His Image:

From the very beginning, in the first book of the Bible, God demonstrates the value of caring about one’s work and living purposefully and positively.

Genesis 2:15
The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

This verse comes from the story of the creation of man—Adam and then Eve. We read how God created the land in such a way that it required man to work it (Genesis 2:5) even before man was actually formed. He also asked Adam to name every wild animal and bird of the sky.

Imagine what kind of skills Adam would have been able to put on his resumé based on his job description in the Garden of Eden. Write them here:

You Are Not Alone:

As you prepare for future employment and hopefully settle in with good work, remember the Bible promises that you are not alone. Here is a series of verses that attest to that:

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

What are the commands and the promises of God listed in these verses?

Psalm 90:17

May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.

Break into small groups and discuss the following if there is time, or consider these topics this week:

- *Pray every day this week for guidance on your work life and your future. "Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established." Proverbs 16:3*
- *Set aside a daily time for Bible study and memorize the following verse as inspiration: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Joshua 1:8*
- *As you turn things around there are those in your life who may not have your best interest at heart. Consider this verse written by King David as a comfort for you: "Though an army besieges me, my heart will not fear; though war breaks out against me, even then I will be confident." Psalm 27:3*