

Sermon by Dr. Clifton R. Clarke
Senior Pastor, New Beginnings Church
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The Purpose and Power of Work

Introduction

Happy Labor-Eve, everyone!

Labor Day is one of my favorite holidays. It's a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of hardworking individuals who build and sustain our society. Labor Day also highlights the value of hard work in achieving the American Dream.

Today, I want to speak about something that touches our lives deeply—work. Our topic is **The Purpose and Power of Work**.

Did you know that we spend about 150,000 hours of our lifetime working? That's nearly half of our lives! If your work doesn't bring fulfillment and purpose, it might be time for a change.

I. Your Work Matters to God; and God Matters to Your Work

Work is W.....: Work is an act of worship because it allows us to honor God through our actions, attitudes, and efforts.

Work is H.....: Work is considered holy as it aligns our actions with God's will and reflects His character in the world.

What is the Purpose of Work?

Ecclesiastes 3:9 (NLT) asks, "What do people really get for all their hard work?" Work was not a punishment; it existed before the Fall:

- **Genesis 3:17-19:** "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food for it all the days of your life..." Work became harder, but not cursed.
- **Genesis 2:15:** "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work."

Historically, work was divided into sacred (spiritual) and secular (worldly) spheres. This distinction was challenged by Martin Luther:

Luther's Doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers:

- **Concept:** All Christians are priests and have direct access to God. Every vocation, whether religious or secular, is a calling from God.
- **Key Points:**
 - **Equal Spiritual Status:** All believers have equal standing before God.
 - **Vocation and Service:** Every vocation serves a divine purpose.

Luther emphasized that all work—whether spiritual or secular—is valuable and serves a divine purpose.

II. The Purpose of Work: W.O.R.K

1. **W.....:** Your work provides an opportunity to witness to others.
 - **2 Corinthians 6:4 (The Message Bible):** Our work as God's servants is validated through our actions. People watch us in all circumstances, and our work should reflect God's love.
 - **Application:**
 - Work with honesty and integrity.
 - Let your diligence and hard work speak to your faith.
2. **O.....:** Work provides opportunities to use your gifts and develop your character.
 - **Luke 16:10-12:** Trustworthiness in small matters leads to greater responsibilities.
 - **1 Peter 4:10:** Use your gifts to serve others.
 - **Galatians 6:4:** Find satisfaction in doing your work well.
 - **Application:**
 - Cultivate trustworthiness and responsibility.
 - Use your gifts to serve and positively impact others.
 - Focus on personal growth and satisfaction.
3. **R.....:** Work is essential to meet your needs.
 - **1 Timothy 5:8:** Providing for your family and household is a fundamental responsibility.
 - **Galatians 6:4:** Pay attention to your work for personal satisfaction and avoid comparison.
 - **Application:**
 - Be diligent in providing for your family.
 - Focus on the quality of your work and your personal growth.
4. **K.....:** Work to help others.
 - **Ephesians 4:28b:** Work to have something to share with those in need.
 - **Proverbs 11:25:** A generous person will prosper.
 - **Acts 20:35:** It is more blessed to give than to receive.
 - **Application:**
 - Work with the purpose of serving and helping others.
 - Embrace generosity and acknowledge God as the source of provision.