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Work as Worship: Honoring God in our Professions

CCI · 5 July 2026

> KEY VERSE
> *Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters. (Col. 3:23)*

One of the greatest misunderstandings among Christians is the belief that worship is confined to church buildings, Sunday services, prayer meetings, or spiritual activities. We often divide life into two categories: the sacred and the secular. We think that pastors, missionaries, and church workers are engaged in "God's work," while teachers, doctors, engineers, farmers, businesspersons, homemakers, administrators, and labourers are engaged in ordinary work. Yet the Bible does not make such a distinction. Scripture teaches that all honest labour, when offered to God with faithfulness and integrity, becomes an act of worship. Stewardship Sunday reminds us that God has entrusted us with many gifts – our time, talents, resources, opportunities, and vocations. Stewardship is not merely about giving money to the church; it is about offering our entire lives to God. Our profession, occupation, and daily work are part of our stewardship before Him. The lessons appointed for today reveal a profound truth: our work is a gift from God, our skills are entrusted by God, our labour is sustained by God, and our service is ultimately offered to God. Whether we work in offices, schools, hospitals, farms, factories, homes, or churches, our work can become worship when done in obedience and gratitude to God. Let us reflect on this theme through four biblical insights drawn from today's readings.

God Gives Gifts and Skills for His Purpose (Ex. 31:1–11)

The first lesson introduces us to Bezalel and Oholiab. God specifically chose them and filled them with wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and craftsmanship to build the Tabernacle and its sacred furnishings. This passage is remarkable because it is the first place in Scripture where someone is said to be filled with the Spirit of God. Surprisingly, the filling of the Spirit was not primarily for preaching or prophecy but for skilled work. God empowered artisans, craftsmen, and workers to carry out His purposes. This teaches us that professional abilities are not merely human achievements. They are gifts entrusted by God. The doctor's healing hands, the teacher's ability to educate, the farmer's knowledge of cultivation, the engineer's creativity, the administrator's organizational skills, and the artisan's craftsmanship are all expressions of God's grace. Too often people think that their careers are disconnected from their faith. Yet God calls people into many vocations. Moses was a leader, David was a shepherd and king, Daniel was a government administrator, Lydia was a businesswoman, and Paul was a tentmaker. God worked through each of them in their professions. Stewardship begins when we recognize that our talents are not our own possessions but God's gifts. We are custodians, not owners. Every skill, qualification, opportunity, and achievement has been entrusted to us for God's glory and the good of others. The question for us is not merely, "What do I do for a living?" but "How can my work serve God's purpose?" When our profession is viewed as a divine calling, our attitude changes. Work ceases to be merely a means of

earning income and becomes an opportunity to participate in God's creative and redemptive activity in the world.

God is the Source and Sustainer of All Work (Psalm 104:1–24)

Psalm 104 is a magnificent hymn celebrating God's creation. The psalmist marvels at God's wisdom in ordering the world. The earth, seas, animals, plants, and human beings all depend upon God's sustaining care. Verse 24 declares: "O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all." The psalm reminds us that human labour is possible only because God first provides creation. We work because God has already been at work. The farmer can sow because God gives soil, rain, and sunlight. The fisherman depends upon the sea God created. The scientist studies laws that God established. Every profession ultimately rests upon God's sustaining power. Modern society often promotes self-sufficiency and pride. We are tempted to believe that success is solely the result of our intelligence, effort, and determination. Yet Scripture reminds us that every breath, every opportunity, every resource, and every accomplishment depends upon God's grace. Stewardship means acknowledging God as the source of all blessings. It means working diligently while recognizing our dependence upon Him. This psalm also broadens our understanding of stewardship. We are not merely stewards of money; we are stewards of creation. The natural world belongs to God. Therefore, our professions should contribute to the flourishing of creation rather than its exploitation. A Christian businessperson, scientist, farmer, engineer, or policymaker should ask: "Does my work honour God's creation and serve humanity responsibly?" When we recognize God as Creator and Sustainer, gratitude replaces pride, and responsibility replaces selfishness.

III. Work Wholeheartedly as Service to Christ (Col. 3:22–25)

The Epistle reading brings us to the heart of today's theme. Paul writes: "Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters." These words revolutionize our understanding of work. Paul was addressing people whose work situations were often difficult and demanding. Yet he teaches that the ultimate audience for our labour is not an employer, supervisor, client, or institution. It is Christ Himself. This means that Christian stewardship includes excellence, integrity, honesty, diligence, and faithfulness in our work. We do not work well only when someone is watching. We work faithfully because God is watching. The Christian employee should be known for reliability. The Christian employer should be known for fairness. The Christian teacher should teach with dedication. The Christian doctor should serve with compassion. The Christian civil servant should act with integrity. The Christian clergy should minister with humility. Martin Luther emphasized that changing a baby's diaper, milking a cow, teaching a lesson, or governing a nation can all be acts of worship when done in faith. This transforms ordinary tasks into sacred service. Many people struggle with dissatisfaction in their work. They may feel unnoticed, undervalued, or burdened. Paul's words offer encouragement. No act of faithful service is insignificant in God's sight. The cleaner who sweeps the floor, the nurse caring for patients through the night, the parent preparing meals, the farmer cultivating the land, and the office worker completing routine tasks can all glorify God through faithful stewardship. Work becomes worship when it is offered to Christ.

Humble Service is the Heart of Christian Stewardship(Luke 17:7–10)

In the Gospel reading, Jesus tells a parable about servants who simply fulfil their responsibilities. After completing their tasks, they do not demand praise or special recognition. Instead, they say:"We are worthless servants; we have done only what we ought to have done."At first glance, this passage

may seem harsh. Yet Jesus is teaching a profound lesson about humility.In God’s kingdom, stewardship is not about earning rewards or recognition. It is about faithful service. Everything we have comes from God. Therefore, when we serve Him, we are merely responding to His grace.Modern culture often encourages self-promotion and recognition. People seek titles, applause, and status. Yet Jesus reminds us that true greatness lies in humble obedience.The steward does not ask, “How much appreciation will I receive?” but “Have I been faithful to the One who entrusted this responsibility to me?”This principle applies to every profession and ministry.

A faithful teacher may never become famous.

A faithful pastor may never lead a large congregation.

A faithful parent may never receive public recognition.

A faithful worker may remain unnoticed by society.

Yet all faithful service is precious in God’s sight.Jesus Himself is the supreme example. Though He was Lord of all, He came not to be served but to serve. His life, ministry, suffering, and death reveal that greatness is found in humble obedience.Christian stewardship ultimately follows the pattern of Christ. We serve not for applause but out of love and gratitude.

Conclusion

Stewardship Sunday invites us to rediscover the sacredness of everyday work. The Scriptures remind us that God gives us our skills, sustains our labour, calls us to work wholeheartedly, and invites us to serve humbly.The carpenter shaping wood, the farmer cultivating fields, the physician healing the sick, the teacher forming young minds, the administrator managing responsibilities, the homemaker caring for family, the labourer working with diligence, and the minister proclaiming the Gospel all share a common calling: to glorify God through faithful stewardship.Work is not merely a necessity of life. It is part of God’s design. It is a gift, a calling, and an opportunity for worship.As we observe Stewardship Sunday, let us dedicate anew our professions, talents, and daily labour to God. Let us remember that every task, however ordinary, can become holy when offered to Him.May our lives proclaim that worship does not end when we leave the church building. Rather, worship continues in our homes, offices, classrooms, hospitals, farms, businesses, and communities.And may we hear the Lord say on that final day: “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Amen.